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"There is no status quo": 'Crisis' and Nostalgia in the Vote Leave Campaign

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List of Abbreviations

ACML	Anti-Common Market League
APPG	All-Party Parliamentary Group
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BfB	Business for Britain
BFI	British Film Institute
CAFE	Conservatives Against a Federal Europe
CANZUK	Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFTA	Commonwealth Free Trade Area
CMSC	Common Market Safeguards Campaign
DI	Discursive Institutionalism
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EEC	European Economic Community
ERG	European Research Group
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FSP	Fresh Start Project
GBO	Get Britain Out
GO	Grassroots Out
HfB	Historians for Britain
HI	Historical Institutionalism
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
IPE	International Political Economy
IR	International Relations
KBO	Keep Britain Out
LSE	London School of Economics
MP	Member of Parliament
NFF	New Frontiers Foundation
NHS	National Health Service
NRC	National Referendum Campaign
NRT	Non-representational Theory
RCI	Rational Choice Institutionalism
SI	Sociological Institutionalism
UK	United Kingdom
UKIP	United Kingdom Independence Party
US	United States

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Declaration

The material contained in this thesis has not previously been published by the author. The thesis is the candidate's own work and it has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Abstract

This thesis examines the role of nostalgia in the 2016 Brexit referendum Vote Leave campaign. Extant literature on elite British Euroscepticism has highlighted the persistence of imaginaries of national history in discourses of EU opposition but neglected to explore the emotive dynamics of historical framing. Without reference to emotion, such discussions of Euroscepticism appear rather anodyne. The thesis contributes to addressing that paucity by arguing that one emotion in particular – nostalgia – accounts for the persistence and resonance of dominant ideas about the national past within Britain's Eurosceptic elite. Focusing on the 2016 referendum, it therefore asks how nostalgia was invoked by the Vote Leave campaign and how this relates to the evolution of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions over time. By employing an historically and culturally situated Discursive Institutionalist analytical framework, the thesis explores how background nostalgic structures of feeling have worked with foreground discursive representations of nostalgia to constitute distinctive emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. Drawing on archival documents, visual material and interviews, the thesis charts how interlocking *banal*, *empire*, and *Powellite varieties* of nostalgia have been expressed through time in divergent discursive representations or nostalgia *modes*. It argues that two distinctive nostalgia *modes* have fractured the Eurosceptic movement into two sets of emotional communities, with one faction favouring explicit forms of nostalgic display and the other preferring tempered representations of nostalgia. Showing how Vote Leave emerged from a tempered nostalgia *mode* prevalent within the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement, the thesis then provides a fine-grained analysis of how each of the three *varieties* of nostalgia was invoked by the campaign during the 2016 referendum. In doing so, the thesis explores how nostalgia traverses conventional binaries of reason and emotion, memory and amnesia, past and future, stability and revolution, and illuminates the emotive politics of Eurosceptic appeals to history.

Introduction

On 13th April 2016 the Electoral Commission awarded Vote Leave the status of official Leave campaign in the upcoming referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union (EU), now widely known as the "Brexit" referendum (Electoral Commission 2016). A few days later, Vote Leave figurehead Michael Gove MP addressed the press from the campaign's London headquarters in a speech it later identified as a "major" intervention in the referendum (Gove 2016c; Vote Leave 2016g). Ostensibly a critique of the new membership terms Prime Minister David Cameron had recently negotiated with the EU, the speech also provided a wide-ranging and wordy assessment of the state of the nation following more than forty years of its fatal association with 'Europe' (Gove 2016c). Set out over the course of eighteen typed pages, the speech combined Gove's perceived intellectual authority with a folksy charm that generated a narrative of an embattled contemporary Britain en route to a "positive" and "optimistic" Brexit (Gove 2016c, 1). In this spirit, Gove poked fun at Brexit doomsayers, arguing that:

> The truth is that the day after Britain voted to leave the European Union we would not fall off the edge of the world or find the English Channel replaced by a sulphurous ocean of burning pitch. Quite the opposite. We would be starting a process, a happy journey to a better future. But, crucially, a journey where we would be in control, whose pace and direction we would determine for ourselves. And whose destination we could choose (Gove 2016c, 4).

By contrast, the portrait Gove conjured of the perils of remaining in the EU was decidedly ominous:

> If we vote to stay we are not settling for the status quo – we are voting to be a hostage, locked in the boot of a car driven by others to a place and at a pace that we have no control over. In stark contrast, if we vote to leave, we take back control (Gove 2016c, 8).

These vignettes offer a window into the core themes that animated Vote Leave. 'Crisis', change and control came together in a discursive frame that campaigners referred to colloquially as the "risks of Remain" (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bp). On this view, a Leave vote would only be achieved if the campaign could convince the public that the uncertain path of Brexit was less treacherous than continuing the country's now familiar involvement in the EU. Indeed, evidence from previous referenda held in Britain and abroad was not in favour of the 'revolutionary' Leavers (Cummings 2017a). As Vote Leave Campaign Director Dominic Cummings explained, the rival Remain campaign "had the advantage of having the *status quo* on its side which is intrinsically easier to explain than change is" (Cummings 2017a emphasis original). To counteract this perceived advantage, Vote Leave representatives like Gove therefore emphasised that the "status quo" of Britain's EU membership, and politics more broadly, was neither available nor desirable. In doing so, the campaign drew on an immediate context characterised by intersecting European 'crises' that breathed new life into deep-rooted debates about the merits of further EU integration.

Whilst Vote Leave invoked these crises to insist that "there is no status quo", a tandem strand of its risks of Remain approach downplayed the uncertainties of a vote to Leave. As noted above, campaign representatives like Gove ridiculed those who predicted Brexit disaster and instead made much of Britain's positive post-Brexit future. Yet although campaigners were keen to stress the hopeful and forward-looking credentials of their cause, their messages belied a more complex set of emotive and temporal dynamics. For all that Gove concluded his speech with the uplifting belief that "our best days lie ahead", for example, his ensuing assertion that an independent Britain would be "capable […] *once more* of setting an inspirational example to the world" provided a brief but telling indicator of lingering undercurrents of loss and longing (Gove 2016c, 18 emphasis added). In this sense, the campaign's rejection of the status quo and embrace of the future also drew on a wealth of elite Eurosceptic tradition, which for more than four decades had presented the EU as an emblem of British 'crisis' and decline (Wellings 2010, 489), and articulated interlocking nostalgias for an independent Britain's alternative "branching histories" (Cummings 2017a).

Once diagnosed as a physical disease arising from the homesickness that accompanied extended periods of absence from familiar surroundings (Starobinski 1966), nostalgia is now

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characterised in more diluted emotional terms as a "composite feeling of loss, lack and longing" (Pickering and Keightley 2006, 921). On this view, nostalgia is typically viewed as a response to periods of 'crisis' and change, providing its subjects with comfort by journeying into memories of a superior past (F. Davis 1979). Despite this straightforward conceptualisation, however, a closer examination of nostalgia reveals its many contradictions. As the example of Gove's speech suggests, nostalgia traverses conventional binaries of reason and emotion, memory and amnesia, past and future, stability and revolution, and in doing so sheds light on the emotive politics of Eurosceptic portrayals of the national past. Whereas extant scholarship on Euroscepticism has foregrounded the importance of national history in Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions, however, the emotive dynamics of historical framing have scarcely been articulated. With a particular focus on the Vote Leave campaign, this thesis contributes to addressing that paucity by arguing that nostalgia, with its temporal, spatial, emotive and aesthetic properties, accounts for the persistence and resonance of peculiar imaginaries of the national past within prevailing formations of Britain's Eurosceptic elite. The remainder of this Introduction sets out how the thesis achieves this, first by outlining the central research questions and objectives of the thesis, and then by exploring its research contributions and chapter structure.

1. Exploring the nostalgias of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions – Research questions and research objectives

Whilst I am primarily concerned with exploring the role of nostalgia in the Vote Leave campaign during the contemporary timeframe of the Brexit referendum (2015–2016), I also want to situate Vote Leave within a longer history of elite British Euroscepticism in order to chart how the campaign and its discourses emerged. The central research question motivating this project is therefore: "How was nostalgia invoked by the Vote Leave campaign during the 2016 Brexit referendum, and how does this relate to the evolution of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions over time?". Here, Eurosceptic traditions are understood as discursive constructs that draw on imaginaries of national history, and related constructs of identity and culture, to express opposition towards EU integration (cf. Daddow 2013, 213). Asking how these traditions have developed through time provides an opportunity to identify the

relevant actors of elite British Euroscepticism – where "elite" refers to professional campaigners, politicians and activists – and establish the discursive milieu that these actors cultivated leading up to the 2016 referendum. Whilst this overarching research question suggests an historical approach, however, three sub-questions are necessary in order to specify the parameters of the research. The first research sub-question that the thesis addresses is therefore: "What are the continuities and discontinuities in Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions from the 1975 referendum onwards, and how do they relate to the structure of the Eurosceptic movement?". This question situates the thesis within an historical timeline that extends from the first referendum on Britain's membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1975 to the Brexit referendum of 2016.

Whilst anti-European sentiment had been brewing amongst certain quarters of Britain's political elite since at least the end of the Second World War, the 1975 referendum marked the first time that scepticism towards European integration "spilled over" into concerted political campaigning in the public domain (R. Saunders 2018, 30; also see Forster 2002, 141). Beginning here enables me to trace a genealogy of how these Eurosceptic campaign groups coalesced in 1975, transformed following referendum defeat, and later spread into a contemporary Eurosceptic movement, characterised in large part by extra-parliamentary political organisations who work to contest European integration. Doing so allows me to assess how different elements of this network adopted and adapted Eurosceptic discourses over time. Indeed, the question's focus on the uneven development of these discourses avoids a reductive analysis that simply assumes straightforward path dependence. Whilst this sub-question leads to an analysis that is sensitive to the different developmental textures of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions, however, it is necessary to introduce further sub-questions that enquire more specifically into the content and framing of these discourses. As noted above, Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions draw on imaginaries of history, and related themes of identity and culture. Though extant EU Studies literature has outlined the ideational features of these constructs, however, little has been written about their emotive dynamics. This is a curious omission since, as suggested above, such constructs lend themselves to one emotion in particular – nostalgia.

My second research sub-question therefore addresses this deficit by asking: "How have Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions been emotively framed over time through nostalgic imaginaries, and how was this framing invoked in Vote Leave's campaign communications?". This question encourages an analysis that unpacks the different types of nostalgia that have emerged in Eurosceptic discourse through time, highlights the diverse communicative registers through which such nostalgias have been expressed, and uncovers their relationship with different elements of the Eurosceptic movement. This question is not, however, sufficient to fully capture the complex emotive and narrative mechanisms of nostalgia. As highlighted above, nostalgia has conventionally been conceptualised as an emotional response to periods of exogenous 'crisis' and change. Yet nostalgia's discursive relationship with 'crisis' has received much less attention. My third and final research sub-question therefore asks: "What is the role of 'crisis' in nostalgic narratives and how did such a relationship feature in Vote Leave's communications?". This question allows me to explore how nostalgia and 'crisis' interacted in Vote Leave's multifaceted rejection of the status quo.

These central research questions lead to an indicative set of research objectives guiding the thesis. By exploring my overarching research question, for example, I intend to examine the narrative and emotive dimensions of elite British Euroscepticism over time. The primary empirical objective of my research is then to explore how the nostalgic structures of elite British Eurosceptic discourse featured in the Vote Leave campaign. My primary conceptual objective, meanwhile, is to highlight how different types of nostalgia operate in Eurosceptic discourse and uncover how these nostalgic forms interact. In doing so, I also aim to understand the relationship between nostalgic Eurosceptic discourse and 'crisis', with a particular focus on the role of 'crisis' in Vote Leave's communications. My research questions and research objectives are summarised below in Figure 1. The next section highlights the research contributions that this study makes before moving on to summarise the substantive thesis chapters.

Overarching Research Question	How was nostalgia invoked by the Vote Leave campaign during the 2016 Brexit referendum, and how does this relate to the evolution of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions over time?
Research Sub-questions	• What are the continuities and discontinuities in Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions from the 1975 referendum onwards, and how do they relate to the structure of the British Eurosceptic movement? • How have Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions been emotively framed over time through nostalgic imaginaries, and how was this framing invoked in Vote Leave's campaign communications? • What is the role of 'crisis' in nostalgic narratives and how did such a relationship feature in Vote Leave's communications?
Research Objectives	• To examine the narrative and emotive dimensions of elite British Euroscepticism over time • To explore how the nostalgic structures of elite British Eurosceptic discourse featured in the Vote Leave campaign • To highlight how different types of nostalgia operate in Eurosceptic discourse and uncover how these nostalgias interact • To understand the relationship between nostalgic Eurosceptic discourse and 'crisis', with a particular focus on the role of 'crisis' in Vote Leave's communications

Figure 1 Summary of Research Questions and Research Objectives
Source: Author's own

2. What can be gained by exploring elite British Euroscepticism and nostalgia? – An outline of the primary thesis contributions

This thesis builds on much valuable research that has already explored the nature of elite British Euroscepticism. As I highlighted above, one particularly useful quarter of such research has explored how peculiar imaginaries of British history, and their associated constructs of national identity and culture, have permeated elite Eurosceptic discourse (e.g. Bevir, Daddow, and Schnapper 2015; Daddow 2013; 2015; 2019; Kenny 2015; 2017; Kenny and Pearce 2018; Vines 2014; 2015; Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2016; 2019). By pointing to the politics of such historically rooted ideas, this research has advanced a Constructivist and interpretive path that has expanded our understanding of how, why and by whom European integration is opposed. In doing so, it has problematised the tendency of much EU Studies literature to view European integration – and its contestation – in largely functional and interest-based terms (Manners 2018, 1214). Nevertheless, whilst this work has made important strides in furthering the heterodox ambition of critical EU Studies, it remains puzzlingly detached from broader research in Politics and International Studies, which has

already demonstrated the value of researching not only political ideas, but political emotions (e.g. Mercer 2006; Hutchison and Bleiker 2014; Hutchison 2016; Koschut 2017a).

As such research has shown, without recourse to emotion we are left with a rather anodyne account of how certain ideas prevail and persist through time (Mercer 2006, 298). Although the detachment of Euroscepticism research from the study of political emotions reflects a broader paucity in EU Studies literatures, the lacuna in the former is specifically curious. Given that the most innovative studies of elite British Euroscepticism have emphasised the importance of recurring ideas about national history, their neglect of nostalgia – an emotion that is fundamentally concerned with imaginaries of the past – constitutes a significant oversight. This thesis therefore makes a substantive and original contribution to the EU Studies Euroscepticism literature, and especially to studies of elite British Euroscepticism, with the intention of beginning to address the deficit left by its omission of emotions like nostalgia. Specifically, the thesis argues that understanding how certain ideas and practices of history are embedded in different forms of nostalgia is crucial to our grasp of how Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions have persisted and fractured through time, and how they continue to operate in both complementary and contradictory ways. As I explore further below, the research presented in the subsequent chapters generates a typology of three *varieties* of nostalgia and two *modes* of nostalgic expression that benefits our understanding both of the diversity of elite British Euroscepticism and of nostalgia itself.

As such, the thesis also aims to speak to researchers working beyond the sub-discipline of EU Studies, particularly those interested in political emotions. Indeed, the interdisciplinary themes of the thesis broaden its appeal to further audiences. Brexit studies necessitate that we engage a variety of Politics and International Studies sub-disciplines in order to better explore the referendum's varied subject and context-specific features. In addition to EU Studies, the thesis therefore both draws from and aims to speak to the sub-disciplines of International Relations (IR), International Political Economy (IPE), and British Politics. Researching nostalgia in the context of British Euroscepticism likewise necessitates an approach that draws on concepts and methods emanating from Psychology, Sociology and History, which capture diverse facets of political emotions. The study that such an approach has generated therefore aims to capture the interest of those working in its diverse

constitutive research traditions. As I explore further in the thesis Conclusion, this approach produces auxiliary contributions, which map on to the content and findings of specific chapters. Broadly speaking, these contributions suggest how the conceptual framework that the thesis develops, and its empirical findings, can be applied to a range of political settings – engendering exciting directions for future research. Whilst I unpack these avenues further in the thesis Conclusion, I now provide an overview of the chapter content and structure of the thesis.

3. Thesis chapter structure

The substantive chapters of the thesis open by building a theoretical framework and associated set of research methods, which enable me to explore my central research questions. The questions I introduced above point to core research themes of elite British Euroscepticism, emotion, temporality and 'crisis'. I therefore begin Chapter One by reviewing the extant EU Studies Euroscepticism literature, providing further evidence of its problematic detachment from critical research into emotions. This literature's valuable contributions in highlighting the historical roots of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions – conceptualised, as noted above, as discourses – will continue to inform this thesis. Nevertheless, its neglect of emotions demands that my research into nostalgia builds a new approach that can engage nostalgia's emotional, temporal and aesthetic qualities. Drawing from extant studies of political emotions in diverse disciplines, as well as New Institutionalist approaches concerned with processes of discursive evolution, I conceptualise nostalgia as both a "background" emotional experience (a nostalgia "mood") and a "foreground" form of discursive representation (a nostalgia "mode") (cf. Grainge 2002; Schmidt 2008). This approach provides an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined reading of Discursive Institutionalism, designed to explore the uneven development of nostalgic Eurosceptic discourse over time. It also draws notably on extant work on emotional communities to argue that when background nostalgia moods – sparked amidst perceived 'crisis' – are expressed in discourse via peculiar foreground nostalgia modes, they can assemble Eurosceptic elites into divergent emotional communities, each characterised by a distinctive nostalgic culture. I close the chapter by reviewing the research methods that emanate from this framework – primarily longitudinal

documentary analysis and visual analysis, and contemporary interviews – and outlining the processes of data collection and analysis that the thesis employs.

In Chapter Two, I begin to operationalise my theoretical framework to analyse how Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions have evolved in relation to nostalgia. Whilst my focus is on the period between the EEC/EU referenda held in 1975 and 2016, I first provide a brief pre-history of the 1975 referendum in order to situate elite British Euroscepticism within a longer tradition of anti-European sentiment dating to at least the end of the Second World War. I then build on extant work to suggest that the sense of 'crisis' and decline perceived in Britain's mid-20th Century turn towards 'Europe' catalysed early nostalgic communities of diverse Eurosceptic elites. My analysis then proceeds to use the discursive output of successive Eurosceptic emotional communities to identify the evolution of three interrelated *varieties* of nostalgia and two distinctive *modes* of nostalgic expression. The three *varieties* of nostalgia, which go on to structure the subsequent thesis chapters, refer firstly to imaginaries of heroic Britishness and British 'greatness', particularly those rooted in war memory; secondly to memories of the British empire; and thirdly to a desire to restore Britain's racial integrity. These three thematic *varieties* of nostalgia have cut across all factions of elite British Euroscepticism and have thus demonstrated a high degree of persistence over time. Nevertheless, there has been significant variation in how similar nostalgic themes have been expressed by distinctive Eurosceptic campaign groups. As such, my analysis also identifies the existence of two divergent foreground nostalgia *modes*, each disciplined by peculiar emotional conventions governing the socially appropriate representation of nostalgia, and responsible for the cultivation of two distinctive sets of Eurosceptic emotional communities. I therefore argue that the 2016 Brexit referendum Leave.EU campaign grew from a succession of emotional communities represented by UKIP and some aspects of the Tory right, who favour a more explicit nostalgia mode characterised by overt representations of nostalgic loss, longing and 'pastness'. By contrast, I argue that the 2016 referendum's Vote Leave campaign emerged from a lineage of contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic emotional communities, which have typically viewed an ostensibly forward-looking, tempered nostalgia mode as the most appropriate form of nostalgic display.

The remainder of the thesis chapters are structured according to the preceding chapter's three *varieties* of Eurosceptic nostalgia and are restricted to providing an in-depth analysis of Vote Leave. As the official Leave campaign, whose members and structures have continued to exert considerable influence over elite British politics following the referendum – most notably in Boris Johnson's government from 2019 – Vote Leave merits sustained attention. Limited research time, space and resources also prevent me from providing a detailed analysis of more than one contemporary campaign. Chapter Three therefore focuses on Vote Leave's relationship with the first *variety* of Eurosceptic nostalgia, identified above, relating to heroic and militarised narratives of Britishness. I rename this variety *banal* nostalgia so that I can highlight the role of habit and routine in the content and practice of such narratives. I argue that these everyday nostalgic narratives of British heroism and 'greatness' are enmeshed with prevailing Whiggish historiographies – so named for their origins in the preferences of 17th Century Whig historians. Whig historiography, I argue, both draws on and reproduces banal nostalgia's desire for a continuous and flattering autobiographical narrative of national identity, linking Britain's past, present and future. Interview and documentary evidence suggest that such a Whiggish, nostalgic understanding of history circulated within Vote Leave and was expressed publicly by the campaign via a tempered nostalgia mode common to the emotional communities that had preceded it. Such a foreground banal nostalgia mode appeared in Vote Leave's stabilising aesthetics of linear national 'greatness' which provided a salve for Brexit's tacit uncertainties and, in the context of the campaign's direct invocation of threatening EU 'crisis', in revolutionary narratives that offered to reconnect the nation with its true self. Here, I argue that the campaign positioned Brexit as an opportunity to rehabilitate an image of continuous 'greatness' by reinvigorating the innovative spirit of the national past. Whilst this approach both entailed and obscured an exclusionary politics that prioritised military-masculine ideals of heroism, I contend that it held a persistent cultural appeal to Vote Leave Eurosceptics, who could reject interpretations of simple nostalgia and align themselves instead with history's "forward-looking men" (Zook 2002, 215).

In Chapter Four I continue to explore how such a revolutionary nostalgic temporality played out in Vote Leave's treatment of the second *variety* of Eurosceptic nostalgia. Here, I further unpack *empire* nostalgia into its imperial and colonial variants, which describe a longing for Britain's lost global status and for its familial relations with former colonies. Such nostalgias

always exhibit revolutionary and forward-looking tendencies in Eurosceptic discourse, I suggest, on account of Whiggish understandings of British colonialism's modernising and civilising functions, and prevailing narratives about how EU membership had disrupted Britain's increasingly enlightened, progressive and global path (Wellings 2016, 369). Nevertheless, in Vote Leave's hands, empire nostalgias acquired a particularly forward-looking appearance, thanks in large part to the campaign's treatment of the futuristic subjects of science and technology. In this chapter I therefore explore how ostensibly forward-looking, tempered imperial and colonial nostalgia moods and modes characterised the longstanding political thought of self-confessed science enthusiast, Campaign Director Dominic Cummings, and permeated Vote Leave's public communications. Here, Brexit once more represented an opportunity to reinvigorate the lost possibilities of the past, with documentary and interview evidence suggesting a subtle desire to place Britain back on the increasingly futuristic path of one of its alternative branching histories. This approach connected the campaign to an Anglospherist tradition in elite Euroscepticism, which has long posited technological advance as a core means through which Britain's former white settler colonies can renew their cooperation in a new global era. As such, the chapter also explores how competing imaginaries of the Anglosphere appeared in Vote Leave's campaign materials as emblems of modernity and progress (cf. Wellings 2017; D. Bell and Vucetic 2019). On this view, I argue, the campaign's appeals to the Anglosphere provided a forward-looking foil to the backward, failing, and 'crisis'-riven EU, whilst remaining subtly underwritten by a nostalgic longing for a lost imperial and colonial home.

In the final chapter, Chapter Five, I explore Vote Leave's relationship with the third *variety* of Eurosceptic nostalgia, identified above, concerned with preserving Britain's racial integrity. In this chapter, I rename this variety *Powellite* nostalgia for its resemblance to the incendiary racial politics of former British MP Enoch Powell. Powellite nostalgia draws both on victorious Whiggish narratives of Britain as an island that had historically escaped invasion and ideas about race cultivated during the nation's imperial and colonial encounters. Despite such resonances with the content of Vote Leave's preceding nostalgic themes, however, the deep-rooted association between Powellite nostalgia, a conventionally nostalgic restorative temporality and thus a rather explicit foreground nostalgia mode, appeared at odds with the forward-looking, tempered nostalgic expression that the campaign otherwise favoured.

Indeed, interviewees were also keen to distance themselves from such a racialised form of communication, which they attributed instead to their Eurosceptic referendum rivals, UKIP and Leave.EU. Nevertheless, documentary evidence demonstrates how Vote Leave adopted an increasingly explicit foreground discursive mode of Powellite nostalgia in its invocation of an EU migration 'crisis'. Indeed, in its varied representations of fragile territorial and racial boundaries, the campaign particularly emphasised the perceived threat posed by Muslim invasion. As such, its gendered imperial and colonial imagery of an island nation under renewed siege from an uncivilised foreign 'Other' advocated for the comforting, nostalgic restoration of colonially inflected authority, embodied in calls to "Take Back Control". The presence of this contradictory *variety* and *mode* of nostalgia in Vote Leave's communications, I suggest, points to the campaign's operation within a broader British cultural environment that has long attributed value to overt displays of Powellite emotion in the immigration debate (cf. Gilroy 2005, 23), with inconclusive structural and strategic connotations.

Chapter One: A Framework for Studying the Discursive Traditions and Emotional Communities of Elite British Euroscepticism

In the preceding thesis Introduction, I highlighted my core research themes of elite British Euroscepticism, emotion, temporality and 'crisis'. In particular, I set out several research questions targeted at exploring how nostalgia was invoked by the Vote Leave campaign during the 2016 Brexit referendum and how this relates to the evolution of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions over time. Within this overarching enquiry, I posed research sub-questions that explored specific issues such as the historic development of the discourses and organisations of elite British Euroscepticism from the 1975 referendum onwards, the emotive framing of elite British Eurosceptic discourse via nostalgic narratives, and the relationship between such narratives and the invocation of 'crisis'. In this chapter, I bring together a broad range of literatures to address these themes, building a conceptual framework with a corresponding set of research methods. My approach draws on extant post-positivist understandings of Euroscepticism; psychological, sociological and cultural conceptualisations of nostalgia; broader critical work on political emotions, and New Institutionalist analytical frameworks, particularly those concerned with questions of 'crisis' and change.

I begin the chapter in section 1.1 by summarising how the extant EU Studies Euroscepticism literature remains largely detached from broader research into political emotions. I suggest that this is a particularly puzzling omission in the context of elite British Euroscepticism, where scholarship has pointed to the importance of imaginaries of British history in discourses of EU opposition but neglected to explore the emotive dynamics of such framing. Without recourse to emotion we are left with a rather anodyne account of how certain ideas prevail and persist over time. The thesis contributes to addressing that deficit by examining the role of one emotion in particular – nostalgia. In section 1.2, I unpack how nostalgia can be conceptualised both as a "mood", or structure of feeling, and a "mode" of communication (Grainge 2002). Here, I integrate extant research on nostalgia with broader research into political emotions (e.g. Mercer 2006; Hutchison and Bleiker 2014; Hutchison 2016; Koschut 2017a) to theorise how nostalgia moods and modes are implicated in the constitution of different emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. On this view, historically and culturally situated nostalgia moods imply specific "feeling rules" which govern the socially "appropriate"

representation of emotion in nostalgic modes of communication (cf. Koschut 2019, 84). Such discursive representations are the primary means by which emotional experience becomes constitutive of emotional communities and institutionalised within communitarian emotional cultures (e.g. Hutchison 2016; Koschut 2017b; 2019).

In section 1.3, I therefore expand on the relationship between emotion, discourse and institutions in the context of elite British Euroscepticism. I argue that Discursive Institutionalism provides analytic tools for thinking of the nostalgia mood and mode in terms of "background" emotional structures and "foreground" discursive representations, expressed in diverse "forms" of communication (Schmidt 2008). In order to further explore how nostalgia becomes institutionalised within the cultures of specific Eurosceptic emotional communities with distinctive discursive traditions, I provide an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined reading of DI such that processes of institutional persistence and change might be fully engaged. Indeed, I highlight how doing so is particularly important for the study of nostalgia as it is closely linked with narratives of continuity and 'crisis'. In the final section of the chapter, 1.4, I elaborate on the methodological implications that emanate from a DI framework adapted for research into the interaction of nostalgia and elite British Euroscepticism. I then proceed to explore specific methods of data collection and analysis, including the longitudinal analysis of documentary evidence, visual analysis and interviews. The chapter concludes by summarising these theoretical discussions and methodological reflections before introducing the first empirical chapter.

1.1 Exploring the value of critical emotions research for the study of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions

In this section I provide an overview of the extant EU Studies Euroscepticism literature and unpack it into three schools of thought. Taking Euroscepticism to mean varying degrees of elite opposition towards the EU, I outline how two early schools of thought – Sussex and North Carolina – focused on either overly-purposive strategic or overly-static ideological explanations. I suggest instead that a third school holds the most promise for our understanding of elite Euroscepticism in Britain: "embedded persistence" (Wellings 2019, 15).

This school has departed from earlier bodies of work to use post-positivist, interpretive approaches that better engage how elite British opposition towards the EU has emerged and evolved over time. Scholars employing an analysis of how Britain's longstanding discursive traditions of Euroscepticism have interacted with developments in EU integration, for example, have highlighted how Eurosceptic discourse entails processes of both persistence and adaptation (e.g. Bevir, Daddow, and Schnapper 2015). Yet although this work has helpfully drawn our attention to the importance of persistent imaginaries of British history within these discourses, the emotive dynamics of such framing have been largely overlooked. This deficit, I suggest, reflects a broader detachment of EU studies from critical approaches to political emotions, which are increasingly engaged in a broader "emotional turn" in Politics and International Studies (Clément and Sangar 2018, 6). I therefore suggest that engaging such approaches in the study of one emotion in particular – nostalgia – helps to illuminate the emotive politics of Eurosceptic portrayals of the national past.

Surveying the EU Studies Euroscepticism literature – three schools of thought

Euroscepticism, as articulated in the formative EU Studies literature, captures "the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (Taggart 1998, 366). Though the spirit of this definition has endured, however, its original formulation has been criticised for its inclusivity (see e.g. Kopecký and Mudde 2002, 300), and it has subsequently been honed to account for opposition towards specific EU policies, as well as towards particular iterations of the integration process. Whilst alternative, granular attempts at classifying Euroscepticism have proliferated (see e.g. Conti 2003; Flood and Usherwood 2007; Vasilopoulou 2011), the simpler "hard-soft" refinement introduced by Paul Taggart & Aleks Szczerbiak provides the most useful heuristic for characterising the strength of opposition towards the EU. On this view, "soft" Euroscepticism refers to opposition towards the EU's integration trajectory or opposition towards core EU projects such as the single currency (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008, 250). "Hard" Euroscepticism, meanwhile, appears particularly pertinent to the study of the Brexit referendum since it refers to "principled objection to the current form of European integration in the EU" expressed as a desire for withdrawal (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2000, 10), or to stances that are "tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European

integration" (Mudde 2011, 6, 12).

The hard-soft typology remains useful in defining Euroscepticism and specifying its strength, and I will draw on it in subsequent chapters as I survey how the nature of elite opposition to the EU has shifted over time. Yet although this typology provides a broad framework through which Euroscepticism can be categorised, when used by itself it says little about the drivers of elite opposition towards the EU. The EU Studies literature offers further insights into such questions, and can be organised into at least two (Mudde 2011) or three (Wellings 2019, 15) schools of thought. The first of these, the Sussex school to which Taggart & Szczerbiak belong, provides a predominantly strategic view of elite Euroscepticism in which marginal or protest political parties adopt a Eurosceptic position to distinguish themselves competitively within a country's party system (e.g. Taggart 1998; Sitter 2001). By contrast, the second – North Carolina – school emphasises the role of ideology in determining a party's position towards the EU. Here, pre-existing "ideological commitments" to traditional political issues such as the societal role of states, markets and religion act as "'prisms' through which political parties respond to new issues, including European integration" (Marks, Wilson, and Ray 2002, 585). Further work has sought to reconcile these two schools of thought in order to conceptualise when strategy and ideology are important. It has been argued, for example, that ideology defines a party's broad stance towards the principle of European integration and provides the structural conditions that delimit the potential for strategic contestation of specific EU policies (Kopecký and Mudde 2002, 319–20; Hooghe and Marks 2008, 19–22).

Work that draws on the Sussex and North Carolina schools of thought has made valuable contributions to our understanding of Euroscepticism, particularly in bringing discussion of political parties to a field that was hitherto dominated by "policies" and "polity" (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2000, 4). Yet a reliance on narrow positivist and psephological methodologies has resulted in a view of elite Euroscepticism as a rather ahistoric, static and peripheral phenomenon or outcome variable. Ideological theories, for example, have neglected to convincingly explore how cognitive frameworks emerge, evolve and transmit through time. Strategic perspectives, meanwhile, have typically exaggerated the peripheral nature of elite Euroscepticism and over-emphasised the calculative capacities of party-political actors. As such, both strategic and ideological approaches have tended to view elite Euroscepticism in

rather isolated terms, divorced from a deeper social and historical understanding of the dynamics through which contemporary opposition towards the EU has developed and extended into mainstream politics. A third school of thought, however, holds more promise for the investigation of such questions: "embedded persistence" (Wellings 2019, 15). This school traces a post-positive path towards a better understanding of the enduring and contextual drivers of elite Euroscepticism (Wellings 2019, 15), highlighting the value of discursive epistemologies in examining the historical "creation and contestation of the idea of Europe" (Trenz & de Wilde 2012, 537 cited in Wellings 2019, 15).

One strand of literature that sits within this third school of thought appears particularly promising for the study of elite Euroscepticism. Adopting a post-positivist interpretive perspective, this work has departed from the static view of Euroscepticism to which pure ideological approaches tend to subscribe, to view elite opposition towards the EU instead as an interactive and communicative process. On this view, Euroscepticism is conceptualised not simply as an outcome variable or attitude but as a socially constructed, historically-situated and fluid "tradition", understood as "an ideational construct with distinctive sets of discursive reference points" (Daddow 2013, 213). Much work on Eurosceptic traditions has focused on how EU integration is constructed and problematised in specific national contexts, particularly in Britain where elite Euroscepticism has been a notable if not always central feature of national politics since the advent of the European Community (see Chapter Two). By showing how the EU is discursively constructed and filtered through a national lens, for example, scholars have demonstrated how deep-rooted ideas about national history, and related constructions of identity and culture, have become key reference points in British objections to European integration (e.g. Bevir, Daddow, and Schnapper 2015; Daddow 2013; 2015; 2019; Kenny 2015; 2017; Vines 2014; 2015; Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2016; 2019). In doing so, such scholarship has valuably explored how elite Eurosceptic discourse has drawn on broader imperial, nationalist and populist ideas about British (predominantly English) history to capture the contemporary political mainstream.

The focus on Eurosceptic discourse has also contributed to earlier attempts to combine ideological and strategic perspectives on EU opposition by adopting a dynamic stance of "situated agency" in which actors are able to repurpose traditions in response to new

information, or "dilemmas" (Bevir, Daddow, and Schnapper 2015, 7). Such a traditions and dilemmas approach has opened space for investigating how contemporary dilemmas of EU integration – increasingly viewed in terms of intersecting 'crises' of democracy, legitimacy and policy – are negotiated by political elites through cognitive and discursive traditions that possess both enduring and malleable features. As I explore further in section 1.3, this approach resonates with broader research, which connects the politics of ideas to processes of institutionalisation and change, to produce a view of elite Euroscepticism that is better attuned to processes of persistence and adaptation than the earlier frameworks of the Sussex or North Carolina schools. Despite these valuable contributions, however, a residual detachment remains between this third school of Euroscepticism and the study of political emotions. Such a study is important as without recourse to emotion, accounts of how certain ideas prevail and persist over time appear rather anodyne (Mercer 2006, 298). On this view, without emotion ideas are problematically reduced to "a cold and neutral state of intellectual perception" (James 1884, 193 cited in Mercer 2006, 298). Put differently, analyses that privilege cognition and ignore emotion generate a view of politics that seems "cold, dry, uninspiring and unmoving", providing particularly inadequate explanations of how political collectives form and behave (Mercer 2006, 298). A potential corrective to such shortcomings is, however, already suggested by an "emotional turn" within Politics and International Studies (Clément and Sangar 2018, 6), holding important insights for the study of Euroscepticism and nostalgia. As I discuss further below, such research into political emotions necessitates an approach that draws on *inter alia* the insights of Psychology, Sociology and History.

Residual gaps in the study of elite British Euroscepticism

Recent years have seen Politics and International Studies embrace the study of emotion as a 'new' site of politics. This research exhibits a broad range of ontologies and epistemologies, viewed variously as fruitful for capturing the emotional diversity of the social world (Bleiker and Hutchison 2018, 334–37; Van Rythoven and Sucharov 2019, 7–11) or as encumbered by tendentious interpretations of specialist research in philosophy and neuroscience (Wetherell 2012, 54). One extreme of this continuum of research focuses on the politics of affect, thought of as an atmosphere that is irreducible to specific emotions, is experienced through

an energetic bodily sensation, and precedes both consciousness and discourse (e.g. Massumi 1996; 2002; Thrift 2004; 2008). The other extreme engages specific emotions such as fear, anger or (occasionally) nostalgia, with some work viewing their intersection with discourse as largely cognitive or instrumental (e.g. Campanella and Dassù 2019, chap. 2; see Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 496). Within this continuum, however, a collective of scholars that self-identify as critical have forged a "hybrid" position that aims to strike a balance between these poles (see Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 496; Koschut 2020). This work has argued that persistent debates about the ontology of emotion obscure more pressing political questions that engage emotion's social and political dynamics (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 497). On this view, critical emotions research follows three key tenets – firstly that emotion cannot be easily separated from reason; secondly that emotions transcend the individual, and can be conceptualised in collective, social and discursive terms; and thirdly that emotions are embedded in broader historical and cultural frameworks of meaning (Koschut 2020, 71).

Scholarship that draws on such a critical approach to political emotions has yielded key insights that hold much untapped potential for the study of Euroscepticism. It has, for example, highlighted how emotions work to forge social bonds and constitute political communities at diverse scales (e.g. Hutchison 2016; Koschut 2017b; 2019). It has also explored how emotion is expressed through different communicative registers, particularly in aesthetic representations, and in doing so expanded our understanding of the resonance and power of discourse (e.g. Hutchison and Bleiker 2014; Koschut 2017a; Solomon 2017). Nevertheless, as noted above, the extant Euroscepticism literature has largely fallen behind these developments, reflecting a broader contentment of EU Studies research to survey conventional areas of political life and follow mainstream theoretical and methodological frameworks (see Manners and Whitman 2016; Rosamond 2016). There are, nevertheless, some limited exceptions to this general critique. In line with an agenda that might be referred to as critical EU Studies, research on emotion has filtered into the work of some scholars who engage empirical areas such as trade (e.g. Siles-Brügge 2017; 2019), the EU's external image (e.g. Chaban and Kelly 2017), and its founding myths (e.g. Kølvraa 2016). With respect to Euroscepticism specifically, the 'surprise' result of the Brexit referendum has also opened new pathways for research into emotion. Some of this work has connected with earlier literature on referendum framing, where emotion has been viewed in largely instrumental terms (e.g.

Atikcan 2015, 7; Atikcan, Nadeau, and Bélanger 2020).

Elsewhere, the Brexit referendum has facilitated calls for a greater integration of EU Studies with political psychology, with a need to research the role of emotion in the Brexit debate appearing as a key driver for this dialogue (Manners 2018). On this view, the study of emotion is vital for moving away from simplistic "functional" models of interest-based support for the EU, and advancing research that engages with the constitution of "subjectivity, actions, and rationales" in the contestation of European integration (Manners 2018, 1214). Indeed, beyond the empirical impetus of Brexit, there are also sound theoretical reasons for engaging emotion in the study of Euroscepticism. As scholars of political ideas have already argued, it is vital to develop a conceptual understanding of how and why some ideas are privileged over others (Clift 2014, 157). As I discuss further below, engaging with emotion and concepts of emotional power provides an opportunity to build a framework that is sensitive to how certain ideas have come to resonate and persist within different emotional communities of elite Eurosceptics. Doing so is important as it cultivates a picture of Euroscepticism that moves beyond simplistic and anodyne assumptions of rational and instrumental interests and is calibrated to a diversity of motivations. To date, however, this agenda has only been pursued to a limited extent. Several contributions have made basic reference to the importance of emotion in the Brexit referendum, or to Euroscepticism more broadly, but neglected to expand upon these contentions.

This is the case in many of the interventions that appear in two recent EU Studies volumes designed to survey the state of the art in the Euroscepticism (Leruth, Startin, and Usherwood 2018) and Brexit literatures (Diamond, Nedergard, and Rosamond 2018). Fleeting or conceptually limited reference to emotion is an unfortunate feature of otherwise valuable essays covering, for example, EU theory (Lequesne 2018, 292; Vasilopoulou 2018, 32), Eurosceptic ideology (Flood and Soborski 2018, 40), political parties (Baluch 2018, 115, 123), polity contestation (Trenz 2018, 297, 302); anti-politics (Flinders 2018, 185), British exceptionalism (Nedergaard and Henriksen 2018, 142–43), Brexit and Englishness (Wellings 2018, 149, 155), Brexit and the Commonwealth (Murray-Evans 2018, 199, 204), and the Brexit referendum campaign specifically (Startin 2018, 458, 464). Sustained research into emotion, particularly that which problematises outdated binaries of reason and emotion (see above),

has therefore yet to reach what we might characterise as the contemporary mainstream EU Studies literatures on Euroscepticism and Brexit. A similar critique can also be levelled against the more peripheral body of work, introduced above, that explores Euroscepticism's discursive traditions and dilemmas. Indeed, in the case of this literature, the omission is particularly puzzling. As noted above, scholars that employ an analysis of Eurosceptic traditions frequently argue that imaginaries of national history are a central feature of the discursive problematisation of European integration in Britain. In light of the Brexit referendum, others have briefly observed that historical imaginaries possess significant emotive (Startin 2018, 458) or even nostalgic dimensions (Manners 2018, 1223–25). Indeed, whilst this thesis was in progress, a handful of other studies from the wider politics literature started the work of homing in on intersections of nostalgia and Brexit (e.g. Kenny 2017; Browning 2019; Campanella and Dassù 2019; R. Saunders 2020).

Nevertheless, the link between historical framing, emotion and nostalgia has scarcely been articulated in the EU Studies literature, particularly that concerned with Britain's Eurosceptic traditions (as above). I argue that understanding how certain ideas and practices of history are embedded in different forms of nostalgia is crucial to our grasp of how Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions have persisted and fractured through time and of how these continue to operate in both complementary and contradictory ways. Typically understood as an emotion occasioned in times of 'crisis' and so connected with feelings of "loss, lack and longing" (Pickering and Keightley 2006, 921), nostalgia offers its subjects the solace of an imagined return to an idealised past (see F. Davis 1979, chap. 1). In this thesis I integrate such insights with the tenets of critical emotions research to argue that different forms of nostalgia, sparked by the perception of ongoing 'crises' concerning British membership of the EU, constitute emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. In doing so, I unpack how nostalgia has been institutionalised within the prevailing cultures of different Eurosceptic emotional communities such that it became central to the narration of national history, identity, culture and 'crisis' during the Brexit referendum. In order to develop these arguments, I now turn to a deeper exploration of nostalgia. As I explore further below, my thesis offers a conceptually and empirically distinct approach to the handful of recent treatments of nostalgia and Brexit, cited above, by advancing a view of nostalgia as a *mood* and *mode*, based on a longitudinal analysis of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions and an in-

depth examination of the contemporary Vote Leave campaign.

1.2 Integrating the conceptual tools of nostalgia and critical research into political emotions

In this section, I show how nostalgia can be conceptualised as a *mood* and a *mode* and integrated with broader research into political emotions to discuss its role in constituting diverse emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. Once diagnosed as a potentially fatal medical disease, nostalgia is now commonly understood as an emotion characterised by feelings of "loss, lack and longing" (Pickering and Keightley 2006, 921). Perceived as a mood, nostalgia negotiates periods of 'crisis' by providing its subjects with the comfort of an imagined return to an idealised past. Understood as a discursive mode, nostalgia can be represented in either overt or subtle visual and verbal styles of communication (cf. Grainge 2002). Following extant work on political emotions, I suggest that a nostalgia mood operates as a structure of feeling which, situated in broader historical and cultural frameworks of meaning, implies feeling rules that govern the appropriate display of emotion via a nostalgia mode (cf. Koschut 2019, 84). On this view, discursive representations of emotion (modes) are the primary means by which emotional experiences (moods) become collective and constitutive of political communities, and all the social science researcher has by way of accessing and understanding them (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 505). In the context of elite British Euroscepticism, the presence of diverse nostalgia modes is therefore indicative of the existence of different emotional communities with distinctive nostalgia moods and specific conventions for emotional expression. This plurality, I suggest, is in part a function of whether nostalgia is viewed as a beneficial marker of historicity, or whether it retains some of the pejorative connotations of its early pathological definition.

Introducing nostalgia as a mood and a mode

It is now commonplace for scholars who engage with nostalgia to begin with the emotion's lively history as if it were a novel discovery (Clewell 2013, 4). Whilst noting that such reflections have been well-worn, however, I contend that a brief overview of nostalgia's origins remains a useful starting point for understanding its dominant contemporary

meanings. 17th Century medical student Johannes Hofer is credited with establishing the term *nostalgia* from the Greek *nóstos* (return) and *algós* (sorrow) to describe a feeling akin to the German *Heimweh* or "homesickness" (Starobinski 1966, 84–87). Hofer first observed the malady of nostalgia in 17th Century Swiss soldiers posted overseas, whose ailment was described as "the desire to return to one's native land" (Hofer 1688, cited in Starobinski 1966, 87). With homesickness understood as a medical illness, it was initially hypothesised that bouts of nostalgia could be brought on by changes in material variables such as atmospheric pressure, particularly when soldiers were absent from their usual Alpine environs (Starobinski 1966, 88–89). Though such material explanations of nostalgia gradually lost ground to psychiatric and psychological ones, by the turn of the 19th Century the ailment was still thought to occasion potentially fatal physical effects, with inflammation caused by meningitis or tuberculosis frequently misdiagnosed as a symptom of nostalgia (Starobinski 1966, 97–98).

Due to scientific advances, however, by the turn of the 20th Century the strict pathological understanding of nostalgia remained only in psychiatry, where it was linked to social rather than necessarily physical "maladjustment", and accompanied a propensity for suicidal behaviour (Starobinski 1966, 100–101). Since then, the meaning of nostalgia has been diluted further still, though as I discuss below and in subsequent chapters it has retained some of the pejorative connotations of its medical origins, taken by some to be indicative of weakness and regression (see Robinson 2012; Kenny 2017). Nostalgia is therefore now commonly expressed in everyday emotional terms as "the composite feeling of loss, lack, and longing" (Pickering and Keightley 2006, 921). Here, nostalgia's origins in homesickness related to physical distance from a familiar location have been replaced by a more general sense of dislocation, articulated in a temporal register that reveals a dissatisfaction with the present and a desire to return to an idealised, homely past (see F. Davis 1979, chap. 1). On this view, nostalgia appears as a comforting response to "disruptive events" in an individual's personal circumstances or wider society (F. Davis 1979, 96–116). Indeed, periods of societal and political 'crisis' and change, such as military, environmental or economic disasters, are thought especially likely to spark nostalgic sentiments since, unlike the "scheduled" changes that occur in an individual's life-cycle, these events are typically unexpected and sudden in appearance, and incite nostalgia's hallmarks of loss and insecurity (F. Davis 1979, 102–3).

From this brief description we get a sense of what Paul Grainge has dubbed a nostalgia "mood" (Grainge 2002, 23–27). This interpretation of nostalgia as a psychological and social response to 'crisis' and change is what dominates its extant treatments. In Grainge's words, the nostalgia mood can be "understood as a socio-cultural response to forms of discontinuity, claiming a vision of stability and authenticity in some conceptual 'golden age'" (Grainge 2002, 21). Drawing on the work of Raymond Williams, Grainge further suggests that a nostalgia mood can be thought of as a "structure of feeling", articulated fleetingly as a "concept of experience" (Grainge 2002, 21). This insight holds much potential for our understanding of nostalgia, though Grainge unfortunately neglects to elaborate on its utility. By contrast, critical research into emotions from Politics and cognate disciplines has employed the conceptual tools of Williams' structure of feeling to discuss how emotions forge social bonds at diverse scales (Hutchison 2016, 101–8; Koschut 2017b; 2019, 80–81). Indeed, research into nostalgia has also recognised that it can be an important collective experience that fosters social connection, particularly during unsettling times of 'crisis' (F. Davis 1979, 52–53; Lupovici 2016, 68–69; cf. Hutchison 2016, 81). As I explore in the next section, bringing these bodies of thought together further illuminates *how* a nostalgia mood operates as a structure of feeling. This, I argue, is an important conceptual innovation since it helps us begin to theorise how nostalgia works to constitute emotional communities, such as groups of elite Eurosceptics.

While Grainge could go further in exploring the utility of nostalgia as a mood or structure of feeling, his most valuable contribution arises from his distinctive perspective on the nostalgia mode. Here, Grainge draws on the earlier work of Fredric Jameson to argue that nostalgia can also be understood as "a concept of style, a representational effect with implications for our cultural experience of the past" (Grainge 2002, 21). On this view, a nostalgia mode is apparently detached from its emotional origins in that it has "no necessary relation to loss and longing" and instead simply "transforms the past into image and stylistic connotation" (Grainge 2002, 21, 31). This elaboration of the nostalgia mode has been vital in enhancing our understanding of the variety of discursive forms that nostalgia can take. However, as I explore further below, the theory runs into methodological difficulties when it assumes that some displays of nostalgia are strategic or detached from feeling. By contrast, I adopt the epistemological and methodological position that discursive representation is both "all we

have" by way of accessing emotions and the primary mechanism through which individual emotion becomes collective and constitutive of emotional communities (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 505). As such, I argue that peculiar displays of nostalgia (modes), associated with specific emotional communities, draw on underlying structures of feeling (moods), governed by divergent "feeling rules" for the "appropriate" display of emotion (cf. Koschut 2019, 84). In order to make this argument I first turn to a further exploration of the nostalgia mood or structure of feeling.

The nostalgia mood – nostalgic structures of feeling and Eurosceptic emotional communities

As noted above, Paul Grainge refers to a nostalgia mood as a structure of feeling (Grainge 2002, 21). Here, nostalgia is a "collectively felt and culturally realized experience of longing" occasioned by some form of discontinuity or 'crisis' (Grainge 2002, 36; F. Davis 1979, chaps 3, 5). Grainge briefly links this theorisation of nostalgia to the work of Raymond Williams, describing a nostalgic structure of feeling as "a concept of experience" (Grainge 2002, 21). Yet as this assessment remains so brief, the potentially fruitful links between Grainge's nostalgia mood and Williams' structure of feeling remain underspecified in Grainge's work. Later work on the intersection of emotions and culture has, meanwhile, sought to better unpack Williams' ideas about the structure of feeling (e.g. Harding and Pribram 2002; 2004). Such approaches have filtered into contemporary Politics literatures, and have proved particularly useful in conceptualising the role of emotions in the formation and maintenance of political communities at diverse scales (Hutchison 2016, 101–8; Koschut 2017b; 2019, 80–81). On this view, as I explore further below, structures of feeling contribute to the collectivisation and institutionalisation of emotions within groups. These insights have, however, yet to be fully leveraged in studies of nostalgia. Though scholars have identified nostalgia's potential to forge social bonds in times of 'crisis', these processes remain under-specified and nostalgia's collective dynamics have typically been used only to describe the existence of distinct generations in historical-political time (F. Davis 1979, 102). Indeed, work on nostalgia remains largely siloed, rarely placed in dialogue with broader conceptual work on emotions, and scarcely explored in Politics and International Studies (Lupovici 2016, 69).

My contention here is that integrating the study of nostalgia with broader literatures on emotions brings clarity to our grasp of how nostalgia operates and the functions it performs. Bringing these literatures together and applying them to the study of Euroscepticism in turn highlights previously underexplored dimensions of political opposition towards EU integration. In order to deliver these conceptual and empirical contributions it is therefore necessary to begin by further examining Grainge's nostalgia mood, focusing on what is gained by thinking of it as a structure of feeling. Originating in literary analysis, Raymond Williams' concept of the structure of feeling referred to "the felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time" (Raymond Williams 1975, 47; Harding and Pribram 2002, 416). In this conceptualisation, we can discern the threads of what Grainge highlighted as "experience". As Harding & Pribram incisively put it, Williams' structure of feeling "is equated with the experiential results of living within a specific social and cultural context", where experience is understood primarily in affective terms (Harding and Pribram 2002, 416). At first glance, Williams' structure of feeling therefore appears compatible with literature on affect, narrowly theorised as a form of bodily intensity or excess situated beyond rationality, consciousness and discursive expression (as above). Indeed, Williams himself related the concept to "feeling much more than thought – a pattern of impulses, restraints, tones" (Raymond Williams 1975, 159; Harding and Pribram 2002, 416).

Yet Harding and Pribram's social constructionist reading of Williams departs from exclusive and potentially contentious theorisations of affect as "psychic energy" (e.g. Grossberg 1988, 285; see Harding and Pribram 2002, 873). Their approach is instead closer to the work of critical theorists who utilise the term "feeling" as a way of recognising that even apparently internal or bodily states of being are subject to historically and culturally situated frameworks of meaning (Harding and Pribram 2004, 866, 876; Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 501). As Neta Crawford explains, emotions might be thought of as "the inner states that individuals describe to others as feelings, and those feelings may be associated with biological, cognitive, and behavioral states and changes" (Crawford 2000, 125; 2014, 537). Nevertheless, Crawford continues, the "meaning attached to those feelings, the behaviors associated with them, and the recognition of emotions in others are cognitively and culturally construed and constructed" (Crawford 2000, 125; 2014, 537). With a focus on both context and contingency, this formulation is useful in articulating the collective and political dimensions of a nostalgic

structure of feeling, or nostalgia mood. It suggests, for example, that nostalgia moods both "emerge from and are constitutive of the social and institutional structures and processes that bind society together" (Hutchison 2016, 91). Such an understanding is therefore central to exploring the role of nostalgia in "the construction of discursive and institutional formations" (Harding and Pribram 2004, 879). Indeed, examining a nostalgia mood as a structure of feeling helps us to address the crucial questions of "how, where and with whom individuals belong" (Hutchison 2016, 101).

As noted above, extant psychological and sociological theorisations have suggested that nostalgia can be collectively experienced when it is occasioned by a significant period of disruption or 'crisis'. Such moments, it is argued, reveal the deficiencies of the present and spark collective longing for a notional return to an earlier, idealised time. In the context of elite British Euroscepticism, I adopt a similar position, suggesting that British membership of the EU has been experienced by some as a form of loss, reflecting discourses of national 'crisis' and sparking distinctive (yet sometimes intersecting) nostalgias for renewed British independence. As I have already implied, these nostalgia moods can be thought of not as one universal, societal structure of feeling but as multiple structures of feeling situated within specific cultural contexts (Harding and Pribram 2002, 418; 2004, 871; Hutchison 2016, 106). This plurality, I contend, helps us to account for how the Eurosceptic movement in Britain has fractured into distinctive emotional communities of elite Eurosceptics (see below). Yet although the structure of feeling helps us to understand the collective dimensions of a nostalgia mood in broad terms, some further concepts are required in order to fully engage how nostalgia moves from being simply a collective experience to one that is *constitutive* of distinct political communities. Here, I draw on critical research into political emotions which argues that the discursive display of emotion, or "representation", is the primary mechanism through which individual emotions are collectivised and institutionalised (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 505–6; Hutchison 2016, chap. 3).

This body of thinking rejects the position of so-called non-representational theorists, such as Brian Massumi and Nigel Thrift, to argue that emotional states and experiences do not simply exist "beyond, below and past discourse" (Wetherell 2013, 350), but are always bound up in "layer[s] of interpretation" (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 506). On this view, each structure of

feeling implies a set of "feeling rules" or emotional norms which work to organise and discipline political collectives (cf. Koschut 2019; Van Rythoven and Sucharov 2019, 13). Feeling rules govern the "socially appropriate" display of emotion by indicating the "duration, intensity, timing, and placement of emotions" in discourse (Hochschild 2012, chap. 4; Koschut 2019, 84). This governing code for emotional representation inducts individuals into a specific emotional community by disseminating "cultural scripts", which group members learn, and researchers can discern, through exposure to community outputs such as speeches, documents and visual artefacts (Koschut 2019, 84). As I explore further in the following chapter, I view an emotional community as a collection of specific individual Eurosceptic elites convened into a political collective, such as a campaign group, through a shared emotional culture. On this view, a mood of nostalgia, or structure of feeling instigated in times of perceived 'crisis', suggests a set of feeling rules that govern how nostalgia is discursively represented. Feeling rules in turn collectivise and institutionalise nostalgia in the prevailing cultures of Eurosceptic emotional communities. Put differently, different feeling rules govern how distinctive nostalgia moods are discursively represented via peculiar nostalgia modes, which constitute and sustain discrete Eurosceptic emotional communities. In order to explore these processes further, I now return to what Grainge understood by the nostalgia mode, indicating how his theorisation might be adapted to enhance our understanding of the relationship between nostalgic representation and the constitution of Eurosceptic emotional communities.

The nostalgia modes of Jameson and Grainge

As suggested above, Grainge employed the work of Fredric Jameson as a starting point for thinking about the nostalgia mode (e.g. Jameson 1989; 1991). In Jameson's original conceptualisation, the nostalgia mode relates not to characteristic nostalgic feelings of loss, lack and longing, but rather to a widespread memory 'crisis' or cultural amnesia. Here, Jameson advances a critique of postmodern culture in which, he argues, past and future have collapsed into a "perpetual present" due to radical changes in the way we perceive temporality (Grainge 2002, 30–31). On this view, the rapid developments in production and consumption associated with late capitalism, including the unprecedented circulation of information and imagery, have disrupted our sense of historical order and given rise to a

"depthless culture" that favours superficiality and immediacy amidst temporal disorientation (Grainge 2002, 31; see Jameson 1991). Under these conditions, the past is not commemorated as such but has become "commodified" as an aesthetic style, marked by a "pastiche" or collage of "pop images" (Grainge 2002, 31). As Grainge summarises, Jameson's nostalgia mode "does not represent, approximate or idealise the past but helps reconstruct it for the present as a vast collection of images" (Grainge 2002, 29). As such, whereas earlier psychological approaches to nostalgia argued that the loss and longing of the nostalgia mood could be represented and further cultivated in aesthetic forms of communication (see F. Davis 1979, chap. 4), in Jameson's interpretation of nostalgia the mood appears as a "bankrupt emotion" that has been entirely supplanted by stylistic artifice (Grainge 2002, 36).

Grainge offers retro style as a prime example of a postmodern Jamesonian nostalgia mode. On this view, retro is an aesthetic that recycles and reworks the fashions of the past – most often those of the mid to late 20ᵗʰ Century – into a readily consumable, "kitsch" and emotively detached style for the present (Jameson 1989; Grainge 2002, 29). This style, it is argued, represents "revelry more than reverence, nostalgia without loss" (Grainge 2002, 54–55). As such, retro typically results in a "playful" or "ironic" visual mode of nostalgia that shows a "cavalier and eclectic regard for the past" (Grainge 2002, 54). Indeed, instead of conveying a straightforward sense of longing or 'pastness', retro style is often marked by a "hybridization" that repackages old and new, tradition and modernity, past and future into a "glossy" aesthetic for the present (Grainge 2002, 55). As Grainge summarises, the retro version of Jameson's postmodern nostalgia mode therefore "borrows from the past without sentimentality, quotes from the past without longing, parodies the past without loss" (Grainge 2002, 55). Though Grainge draws on key aspects of this conceptualisation, however, his own view of the nostalgia mode differs from Jamesonian assumptions about postmodernity. Whilst he agrees that the nostalgia mode need not necessarily be underwritten by an experiential nostalgia mood of loss and longing, Grainge argues that Jameson's reliance on memory 'crisis' and amnesia as the postmodern conditions that generate a superficial nostalgia mode mistakenly detach aesthetic forms of nostalgia from memory altogether (Grainge 2002, 36).

In contrast to Jameson, Grainge therefore attempts to reclaim a role for memory in the operation of the nostalgia mode by exploring how aesthetic forms of nostalgia "perform memory work" (Grainge 2002, 12). Here, Grainge's work centres on how "nonrepresentational codes" – understood as "abstract sign systems such as colour and sound that have no referent" – work to "create feel and meaning" (Grainge 2002, 37).[1] Grainge focuses on monochrome – that is black and white or sepia imagery – as a prevalent nonrepresentational code in US cultural and political life in the late 20th Century. For Grainge, unlike traditional treatments of the nostalgia mood, the prevalence of a monochrome nostalgia mode can be explained not by a "general incidence of nostalgic longing" but by a growing "affective economy of pastness" (Grainge 2002, 37). Here, the monochrome nostalgia mode is a commercially and politically valuable aesthetic style insofar as it confers an aura of historically derived authenticity (Grainge 2002, 37). On this view, the nostalgia mode is not a function of memory 'crisis' or collective amnesia, but is rather an aesthetic style that is actively invoked because it has, over time, come to be viewed as a mnemonic marker of legitimacy and historicity (see Grainge 2002, chap. 3). Grainge therefore argues that his version of the nostalgia mode moderates between extremes of a continuum from genuine nostalgia mood to thoroughly detached Jamesonian mode, allowing him to discuss the "memory politics of stylised pastness" (Grainge 2002, 6).

As I argue throughout this thesis, both the Jamesonian and Grangian iterations of the nostalgia mode bear fruit for our understanding of the representation and operation of nostalgia. The Jamesonian nostalgia mode as expressed in retro style, for example, suggests that whilst an image may be detached from the overt display of longing or 'pastness', other aspects of its style (and, I suggest, content) can perform a nostalgic aesthetic that refashions nostalgia's conventional backward-looking orientation into an attenuated hybrid of past, present and future. The Grangian nostalgia mode, meanwhile, directs our attention towards the politically beneficial connotations of temporality and authenticity, which aesthetic styles

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[1] Confusingly, the meaning of nonrepresentation here is different to that advanced by so-called non-representational theory (NRT), which views affect in extra-discursive terms. Here, Grainge uses nonrepresentation to refer to stylistic aspects of an image, which unlike the objects that form an image's content, have no direct referent. As such, what Grainge calls nonrepresentation is actually just another form of representation. This approach is distinct from NRT, which situates affect beyond representation entirely.

that cultivate an air of longing or 'pastness' imply. As I explore further in subsequent chapters, each of these nostalgia modes provides a useful lens through which different elements of elite British Euroscepticism can be viewed, and can be applied to verbal as well as visual forms of communication. In order to take advantage of these insights, however, some modifications are required. Below, I draw on the tenets of critical research into political emotions to highlight the epistemological and methodological difficulties of assuming that a nostalgia mode is somehow detached from a nostalgia mood. Reuniting the nostalgia mode with its structure of feeling, or experiential nostalgia mood, is crucial in helping us to theorise the existence of distinctive Eurosceptic emotional communities.

Reuniting the nostalgia mode and mood in the study of elite British Euroscepticism

At present, both the Jamesonian and Grangian nostalgia modes make problematic assumptions about the absence of underlying emotion in (aesthetic forms of) discourse. The Jamesonian postmodern nostalgia mode assumes that since a straightforward sense of temporality is not aesthetically conveyed and given that conventional perceptions of temporal order are themselves unavailable under postmodern conditions, this form of communication is detached from a genuine experience or mood of nostalgia. As Grainge has observed, this conceptualisation itself exhibits a latent nostalgia on Jameson's part since it suggests that meaningful emotional experience resides only in the deep recesses of time, prior to the onset of postmodernity (Grainge 2002, 35–37). Conversely, where Jameson's nostalgia mode has been associated with irony or a knowing playfulness, such as in the "ironic self-consciousness" of retro style (Grainge 2002, 56), it has produced an inverse "hierarchy of nostalgic forms" in which ironic detachment from the past is self-consciously prized over sentimentality (cf. Bonnett 2010, 42–43). This is problematic not least because it overstates the degree of instrumentality in nostalgic communication, suggesting that "nostalgia is a subtle art which the ignorant can easily get wrong" (Bonnett 2010, 42). Indeed, Grainge's version of the nostalgia mode suffers from a similar drawback by being positioned as a strategic style. Here, the nostalgia mode remains detached from any necessary commitment to genuine emotional experience such that a nostalgic aesthetic can be "mobilised for commercial, cultural and political ends" (Grainge 2002, 37).

My argument is that, considering the insights of critical research into political emotions, the appeals to emotional detachment and its resulting assumptions of instrumentality, strategy or intent discernible in both versions of the nostalgia mode are unsustainable. Both Jamesonian and Grangian approaches raise epistemological and methodological questions about how we might infer when a nostalgic aesthetic is embedded in emotional experience and when it is 'truly' detached from a nostalgia mood and 'merely' strategic. As noted above, Jameson simply assumes that since temporality is not understood or represented in a conventional sense in postmodernity, the nostalgia mood is now bankrupt. Grainge likewise distances temporal aesthetics from a necessary commitment to an underlying nostalgia mood but offers no systematic methods through which we might confirm that these portrayals are entirely strategic. Put differently, in Grainge's framework it is not clear how and under what conditions the mood and mode are really distinct from one another (cf. Pickering and Keightley 2006, 933). Such criticisms of the Jamesonian and Graingian versions of the nostalgia mode are rooted in a critical tradition of research into political emotions, introduced above, which argues that representation is "all we have" by way of accessing emotions (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 505–6). Emma Hutchison provides the best explanation of this perspective through the example of trauma. On this view, whilst emotional experiences of trauma are so complex and distressing that they elude "adequate" discursive expression, they "are in fact reliant on language or other forms of communication for meaning" (Hutchison 2016, 107).

Just as such critical perspectives have been mobilised to highlight the unsustainability of extreme theories of affect, which locate emotional states exclusively in the extra-discursive and sensory realms of the body (see Wetherell 2012, chap. 3; 2013), they can also be used to undermine the assumption of emotional *absence* in the nostalgia modes of both Jameson and Grainge. As Hutchison argues, "all discourses possess emotional underpinnings and effects, even if they do so implicitly or in unobvious ways" (Hutchison 2016, 149). From a critical perspective, a nostalgia mode is therefore reunited with a nostalgia mood such that the discursive representation of nostalgia reflects or responds to the emotional experience (cf. F. Davis 1979, chap. 5). Adopting this position, how might we account for the differences in nostalgic aesthetics advanced by Jameson and Grainge, which I earlier suggested would bear fruit for our understanding of elite British Euroscepticism? Given that discursive

representation is both all we have by way of accessing emotions and the primary mechanism through which individual emotion becomes collective and constitutive (see above), I argue that the Jamesonian and Graingian nostalgia modes reflect different nostalgia moods, or structures of feeling, with distinctive feeling rules for emotional display. From this perspective, the superficially detached Jamesonian nostalgia mode reflects not the absence of genuine nostalgia but the presence of a particular nostalgia mood and associated set of emotional norms, which is constitutive of and circulates within a specific emotional community. By contrast, the Graingian nostalgia mode, with its hallmarks of temporality and authenticity, constitutes and reflects an emotional community with a nostalgia mood and set of emotional conventions that is more comfortable with traditional displays of nostalgic feeling.

As I discuss further in subsequent chapters, beginning with Chapter Two, this distinction is useful for our understanding of elite British Euroscepticism as it helps us to account for the existence of different factions – or nostalgic emotional communities – within the British Eurosceptic movement. The question arises, however, as to how and why, whilst working towards the common Eurosceptic goal of British withdrawal from the EU, distinctive emotional communities have emerged around peculiar registers of nostalgia. A partial answer to these questions, I suggest, relates back to the original, pejorative understanding of nostalgia as medical pathology. On this view, as I discuss further below, groups with tempered feeling rules for the display of nostalgia are sensitive to persistent societal understandings that still view nostalgia as a marker of weakness and backwardness. This is not to suggest that such groups do not experience nostalgia at all, nor that they cultivate a particularly artful or intentional representation of nostalgia, but rather that their prevailing structures of feeling and emotional norms are a function of broader historical and cultural structures of meaning, as discussed above. Whilst I expand on these contentions in the next chapter, it is first important to develop an analytical framework that can address how and why such communities develop through time. Doing so necessitates bringing emotions research together with theories that engage discursive representation, institutionalisation, and temporality in the context of elite British Euroscepticism.

1.3 Building a Discursive Institutionalist framework of analysis

In this section I build an analytical framework that engages the conceptualisation of nostalgia as a mood and a mode and specifies the processes by which emotional experience becomes constitutive of, and institutionalised within, the prevailing cultures of emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. In doing so I necessarily engage themes of persistence, 'crisis' and change and elaborate on how they are deeply connected to the emotional experience and discursive representation of nostalgia. As such, I speak of temporality in two senses – firstly in terms of a meta-theoretical understanding of how institutions and discourses evolve through time, before discussing temporality as an important framing device specific to nostalgic narratives. I therefore begin by returning to the contention that the discursive representation of emotion is vital to the constitution of emotional communities and the researcher's access to emotional experience. As representation is the primary means by which emotion becomes institutionalised in such groups, I suggest that it makes good sense to set the discussion of discourse and emotion explicitly in institutional context. I therefore advance an adapted Discursive Institutionalist (DI) analytical framework where a nostalgia mood can be thought of as a background emotional structure, and a nostalgia mode is the foreground discursive mechanism through which emotion is represented in different forms of communication. In order to elaborate on how nostalgia becomes institutionalised within the prevailing cultures of specific Eurosceptic emotional communities, I then suggest how DI can be interpreted in an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined fashion.

Discourse, emotional representation & Discursive Institutionalism

As the discursive representation of emotion is both the primary means by which individual emotions become collective and constitutive of emotional communities, and all the researcher has by way of accessing and understanding emotions, it is necessary to further conceptualise the relationship between discourse and emotional representation (cf. Hutchison 2016, chap. 3). Broadly speaking, "Discourses are the frames through which we all come to comprehend and make sense of the world around us" (Hutchison and Bleiker 2017, 501). For some, such a conceptualisation entails viewing discourse as a broader construct to representation. On this view, discourse refers to "the codes, conventions and habits of

language (spoken or otherwise) that mediate one's experience of the social world and bestow it with culturally and historically located meaning" (Hutchison 2016, 119). Representations, meanwhile, are thought of more specifically as "mediums through which [emotions] can attain and proliferate wider social meanings" (Hutchison 2016, 111). Put differently, specific representations of emotion cultivate meaning from their position within broader frameworks of sense-making, viewed as "established discourses" (Hutchison 2016, 112). In this thesis I adopt a similar stance on the relationship between discourse and emotional representation, however I seek to set this relationship more explicitly in institutional context. Given the concepts I have set out so far in this chapter, there are good reasons for applying an institutional approach to the study of how nostalgia works to constitute emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics and produce distinctive Eurosceptic traditions.

Extant work on emotions and emotional communities has referred to the "institutionalisation" of emotions within communitarian emotional cultures, either through pre-existing and prevailing "feeling structures" (e.g. Koschut 2020, 78–79) or through organisational practices that cause dominant formations of emotion to persist (Crawford 2014, 547). These approaches, however, remain largely detached from the so-called New Institutionalist literature, typically understood to comprise Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI), Sociological Institutionalism (SI), Historical Institutionalism (HI), and Discursive Institutionalism (DI). I contend that providing an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined reading of DI resonates with extant treatments of institutionalisation in the political emotions literature and, further, helps us to specify how emotional communities both produce and are produced by distinctive discursive representations of emotion over time. Doing so also bears fruit for our understanding of nostalgia in particular since, as highlighted earlier, it is intertwined with notions of temporality, 'crisis' and change. Given that examining the discursive representation of emotion is central to my methodology, and indeed to my ontological and epistemological view of emotion, Discursive Institutionalism (DI) is therefore the logical starting point for this institutionalist discussion. DI originated as a critique of the older New Institutional approaches, which were thought to be too skewed towards the analysis of stability and incapable of explaining institutional or broader political change (Schmidt 2008, 311). By contrast, DI is positioned as a theory that is better equipped to explain such change by turning towards the causal importance of ideas and discourse. Here, ideas are

the "substantive content" of discourse, and discourse is defined as the "interactive processes by which ideas are conveyed" (Schmidt 2008, 305).

Unlike the other New Institutionalisms, within DI institutions appear not simply as "external-rule-following structures" but "simultaneously [as] structures and constructs internal to agents" (Schmidt 2008, 303). Put differently, DI at once allows institutions to be viewed in contextual (structural) and contingent (agential) terms (Schmidt 2008, 314). By assembling these theoretical building blocks, DI theorists therefore argue that agents' structural "background ideational abilities", situated within a surrounding "meaning context", account for the creation of institutions, whilst their more agential "foreground discursive abilities" facilitate institutional change through a persuasive "logic of communication" (Schmidt 2008, 303, 314). This framework appears well-suited for adaptation to the theorisation of nostalgia as a mood and a mode that I outlined in the preceding sections. On this view, what currently appears in DI as an agent's background ideational abilities approximates what I have referred to as a nostalgia mood or structure of feeling. Early work in DI suggested that an agent's background ideational abilities could be viewed in similar terms to Bourdieu's "habitus", or "logic of practice" (Schmidt 2008, 315). Critical emotions theorists such as Hutchison, meanwhile, have aligned the structure of feeling, and its associated feeling rules, with work that prefers the term "*emotional* habitus" to describe similar processes through which individual emotions become collective (Hutchison 2016, 103, emphasis added). Combining these insights within a revised DI framework, the nostalgia mood should therefore hold a similar position to that currently occupied by background ideational structures.

Similarly, what Vivien Schmidt terms an agent's foreground discursive abilities can be used to expand on what I have called the nostalgia mode, or discursive representation of emotion. In her original theorisation of DI, Schmidt suggests that the foreground discursive expression of ideas could be distinguished by different "levels" (from specific policy propositions to broad worldviews), "types" (both interpretive and normative) and, perhaps most importantly for our understanding of the nostalgia mode, different "forms" (Schmidt 2008, 306-13). Here, "forms" comprise "narratives, myths, frames, collective memories, stories, scripts, scenarios, images etc." (Schmidt 2008, 309). I suggest that these forms provide a useful way of thinking about the many means, both verbal and aesthetic, within which nostalgia can be discursively

represented via a nostalgia mode. Adapting DI to the study of nostalgia therefore helps us to unpack how the background structures of a nostalgia mood, situated within an established meaning context, can be discerned in the foreground discursive representations of a nostalgia mode, which can take both verbal and aesthetic forms. Understanding this relationship, I argue below, helps us to better unpack how the nostalgia mood and mode interact to produce specific Eurosceptic emotional communities with distinctive discursive traditions.

Discursive Institutionalism, nostalgia and Eurosceptic emotional communities

As I introduced above, a Discursive Institutionalist framework of analysis already resonates with my theorisation of nostalgia as a mood and a mode. Here, I expand on how these complementarities can be leveraged in the study of the emotional communities of elite British Euroscepticism. In earlier sections of this chapter, I suggested that emotions are constitutive of, and become institutionalised within, the prevailing cultures of emotional communities through feeling rules, expressed in cultural scripts that govern emotion's appropriate display. Here, I bring these insights together with my adapted DI framework to expand on how the background structures of a nostalgia mood combine with their surrounding meaning context and the foreground discursive representations of a nostalgia mode to constitute Eurosceptic emotional communities. On this view, as I summarise in the diagram below (see Figure 2), a background nostalgia mood implies a set of feeling rules – or emotional conventions governing the appropriate display of emotion – linked to the value attributed to nostalgic expression within a broader meaning context. Feeling rules are in turn communicated via the foreground discursive representations – or cultural scripts – of a nostalgia mode, which feed back into the emotional experience of nostalgia to delimit socially appropriate feelings (a nostalgia mood). Schmidt's DI suggests that such processes – where emotions become institutionalised in the prevailing culture of an emotional community – are rather straightforwardly open to instrumental manipulation by individual Eurosceptics. Indeed, there is some provision for this degree of agency within work that posits the hierarchical organisation of emotional communities and gives great weight to the "emotional authority" of community leaders in generating and enforcing emotional cultures and cultural scripts (Koschut 2019, 84).
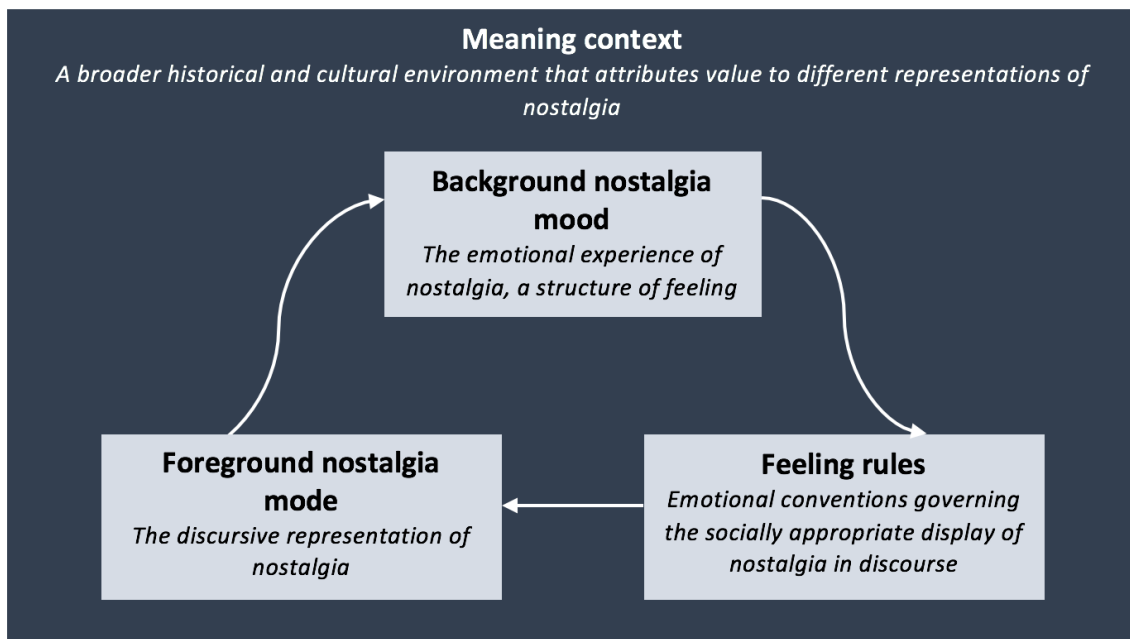
Figure 2: The formation of nostalgic emotional communities
Source: Author's own elaboration

Whilst I accept that some degree of agency is important for our ability to theorise change, however, I depart from assumptions of simple intention or instrumentality. This perspective aligns with research which suggests that emotions cannot be viewed in straightforwardly intentional (Fierke 2014) or causal terms (Hutchison and Bleiker 2017, 502). Indeed, these insights are particularly relevant to nostalgia, the experience of which often eludes adequate recognition by the nostalgic subject (Boym 2001, 41). As such, I seek to provide an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined reading of DI that is better attuned to emotional cultures and persistent processes of institutionalisation (cf. Schmidt 2006, 113). As noted above, extant work on emotional communities has highlighted that feeling rules are important in inculcating communitarian emotional cultures and governing emotional expression. A sociologically-inclined reading of DI suggests that such feeling rules, otherwise referred to as emotional conventions or norms that govern socially appropriate forms of emotional display, resonate with an institutional "norm-based logic of appropriateness" that sociological approaches assume actors follow (Schmidt 2008, 314). A sociologically-inclined reading of DI therefore helps us to better define what is meant by "socially appropriate". I argued above that a particular structure of feeling, or nostalgia mood, implies a specific set of feeling rules. I also suggested, however, that the structure of feeling was situated in and influenced by a surrounding historical and cultural meaning context. On this view, a sociological

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interpretation of DI suggests emotional communities adopt and exhibit particular feeling rules because they are "widely valued within a broader cultural environment" (P. A. Hall and Taylor 1996, 949; see J. L. Campbell 1989; J. G. March and Olsen 1989, chap. 2). In the study of nostalgia, it is particularly useful to render the role of such a meaning context explicit, because broader cultural understandings about nostalgia's desirability – some of which are still deeply enmeshed with its original meaning as a medical disease – are crucial in explaining the diversity of nostalgic feeling and expression.

By providing a sociological interpretation of DI we therefore rebalance the scales towards a structural understanding of the role of emotions in general, and of nostalgia in particular. This framework contributes to the study of emotional communities, which has tended to view feeling rules in rather agential terms (Koschut 2020, 78). As I discuss further in Chapter Three, although my approach provides for some degree of agency in processes of change, it directs greater attention towards how actors behave habitually (Steinmo 2008, 126; cf. Crawford 2014, 547), in accordance with culturally derived conventions and norms of appropriateness. As I explore further below and throughout the thesis, the attention towards habit resonates with wider research, which has emphasised how emotions "seep into everyday discourse […] and become part of the taken for-granted-assumptions that underpin the decisions of agents" (Fierke 2013, 209; see also Koschut 2017a, 492; Crawford 2014, 547). Here, emotions and emotional representations are not purposive as such but persistent, possessing a structural form of power that is implicated in drawing "the boundaries of what is visible and invisible, thinkable and unthinkable, seemingly rational and irrational" (Hutchison and Bleiker 2017, 501). In order to explore these claims further, I argue below that the current sociological reading of DI also needs to cultivate an historically-sensitive approach to dynamics of institutional evolution and persistence. Below, I draw on the insights of Historical Institutionalism to further consider how discourse "is patterned in certain ways, following rules and expressing ideas [and in this case, emotions] that are socially constructed and historically transmitted" (Schmidt 2008, 313).

Historical Institutionalism and processes of change

Schmidt's observation that discourse is both "socially constructed and historically transmitted" directs our attention to how discourses, and by implication the institutional conventions that inform them, develop over time, allowing us to engage their path-dependent evolution whilst remaining alert to potential fluidity. Here, I suggest that aligning DI with the insights of Historical Institutionalism provides the "background" analytical tools through which we can engage the nature of such processes (Schmidt 2008, 304). Broadly speaking, Historical Institutionalism can be categorised into two schools of thought with differing views of how change occurs. On the one hand, those who favour a Punctuated Equilibrium model argue that change is occasioned when an external event or "exogenous shock" interrupts a long period of institutional stability and creates a "critical juncture" in which agential action becomes possible (Krasner 1984, 234–35; P. A. Hall 1993). On this view, change occurs only in brief bursts as such ruptures spark path dependent processes that foreclose possible future routes of action and go on to provide structure in later periods (Pierson 2004, 20–22; Blyth, Helgadóttir, and Kring 2016, 10). On the other hand, those who favour a gradual model argue for an endogenous perspective in which change occurs within institutions incrementally over time (see Mahoney and Thelen 2010). This approach affords agency a sustained role, positing that coalitions of "change agents" can cause institutional disruption not at critical junctures but consistently through time (Mahoney and Thelen 2010, 15–18).

By contrast, I suggest that each of these schools of thought can offer important insights into the nature of institutional change through time, and therefore the tribal divide between them is redundant. Here, I draw on Constructivist work that has criticised conventional HI models for their competing approaches to temporality. This work has instead developed a hybrid approach, dubbed "Punctuated Evolution", to advocate that change is "neither simply evolutionary, nor simply stepwise", but rather a combination of these temporal patterns (Hay 1999, 327). Using the empirical example of the advent of Thatcherism this hybrid model has, for example, argued that critical junctures can bifurcate periods of incremental evolution (Hay 1999, 327). On this view, the election of Margaret Thatcher as British Prime Minister in 1979 was initiated by a 'crisis' of the British state – a critical juncture that was preceded and

facilitated by the persistent public sector labour strikes of the so-called Winter of Discontent, and followed by an era in which the policies now known as Thatcherism accrued incrementally (Hay 1996; 1999, 326–27). I suggest that the hybrid spirit of this temporal analysis can also be applied to DI to illustrate the combination of ways in which discourses, and the institutions governing appropriate expression, evolve through time. Indeed, these analytic tools are a welcome addition to the study of emotional communities which, having advocated a similar longitudinal analysis, has offered scant details about how such change might be conceptualised (Koschut 2019, 91).

Unlike in Colin Hay's application of Punctuated Evolution, and in Schmidt's approach to DI more broadly, my aim here is not to generate a causal explanation of broader political events. Though it is tempting to conclude that the vote for Brexit was a function of the persuasive powers of Eurosceptic campaigning embedded within wider processes of change, as I noted above, straightforward causal analysis sits uncomfortably with my focus on emotion. My concern here is instead more meta-theoretical such that I might perform an analysis that allows me to trace the uneven evolution of Eurosceptic traditions through time and assess their relationship with nostalgia. Such an analysis is important as it directs attention to how different forms of nostalgia have emerged over time to structure emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics and become expressed via distinctive nostalgia modes. Put differently, linking with the sociological reading of DI I introduced above, this approach is suggestive of how nostalgic Eurosceptic discourse has been governed over time by institutional conventions to become patterned by specific emotional communities in distinctive ways (cf. Koschut 2019, 91). On this view, discourses of nostalgia possess a structural power or what we might term – to adapt for use with emotions Martin Carstensen and Vivien Schmidt's DI framework of ideational power – power "in" emotions (Carstensen and Schmidt 2016, 321). Here, nostalgia is important neither in a persuasive (power "through" emotions) nor compulsory (power "over" emotions) capacity, but in the ways in which it delimits what it is possible for community members to feel and express (cf. Carstensen and Schmidt 2016).

This perspective departs once more from a rather agential reading of Schmidt's DI to direct further attention to the sticky, or persistent, structuring aspects of nostalgic discourse.

Nevertheless, applying the spirit of an HI Punctuated Evolution model of change through time precludes an analysis that simply *assumes* a structural path dependence. Extant work on political emotions has indeed suggested that emotions "display a high degree of attachment and entanglement resulting in relatively stable patterns and webs of interconnections" (Koschut 2019, 92). Such work has, however, also ventured that emotions are also "often fluid and shifting" (Koschut 2019, 92). Utilising the tools of a hybrid HI model of change through time, then, is valuable as it suggests that the nostalgic discourses of Eurosceptic emotional communities are marked by both continuity and discontinuity. In other words, whilst the dominant patterns of such discourses may persist over long periods, they are subject to change in both incremental and abrupt ways. One endogenous driver of change emanates from the circulation of multiple structures of feeling and agents' simultaneous membership of several emotional communities at once. Such plurality can result in struggles over meaning, where "cultural scripts and feeling rules become openly contested", leading to the evolution of the institutional conventions guiding emotional feeling and display (Koschut 2019, 93). Another source of institutional and discursive change, however, emanates from seemingly exogenous sources. As I discuss further below, interrogating this form of change is particularly important for illuminating nostalgia's close relationship with temporality.

'Crisis', nostalgia and the narrative form of discourse

In order to problematise seemingly exogenous sources of change it is necessary to further consider what is meant by a critical juncture or 'crisis'. As noted above, early HI theorists in the Punctuated Equilibrium tradition tended to view a critical juncture as the product of an exogenous shock – or an event that had occurred outside of the institutions in question. This perspective became the subject of criticism not only from HI theorists in the incremental tradition, but also notably from Constructivists who highlighted a disconnect with scholarship on the politics of ideas (Blyth, Helgadóttir, and Kring 2016, 158). This Constructivist perspective departs from the latent materialism of much HI scholarship to argue that all 'exogenously' derived critical junctures can in fact be viewed in endogenous terms. On this view, the identification of such a rupture or 'crisis' always involves processes of internal interpretation that engage the institutional filters of ideas to make sense of seemingly external events (Widmaier, Blyth, and Seabrooke 2007). 'Crisis' can then be discursively

defined and communicated through a selective narrative that tells a story about its character and causes such that appropriate responses can be proposed (see Hay 1999). Indeed, the narrative form of discourse is particularly important for the invocation of 'crisis' since narratives tell stories that impose "coherence and continuity" on that which is chaotic (Hutchison 2016, 117–18; see also Browning 2008, chap. 3). In an agent-centred Constructivist perspective, this process of narrativisation is often viewed in strategic terms (Subotic 2019, 66), with the invocation of 'crisis' presenting an opportunity for decisive action towards institutional or broader political change (Widmaier 2016, 342).

This conceptualisation of 'crisis' can also be adapted to describe another aspect of the meta-theoretical processes through which change in emotional conventions and discourse occurs. On this view, emotions join ideas as the filters through which seemingly external events are processed and communicated. In DI parlance, such background structures inform, define and frame the foreground mechanisms of discourse through which 'crisis' is invoked. At the same time, this critical moment also provides the opportunity for the institutions structuring the discourse to be rapidly adapted themselves. This approach to discursive 'crisis' and change shares some affinities with extant EU Studies Euroscepticism work, introduced above, which employs an interpretivist lens in order to theorise the relationship between traditions and dilemmas. In this model of "situated agency", it is argued, actors are able to adapt their discursive traditions of Euroscepticism in the face of "new information", thought of as dilemmas (Bevir, Daddow, and Schnapper 2015, 7; Daddow 2013, 212). Though exogenous in appearance, dilemmas must be endogenously interpreted and presented as critical junctures, usually taking the form of substantive developments in European integration, such as the Maastricht or Lisbon treaties, or more recently, intersecting financial and migration 'crises' (Bevir, Daddow, and Schnapper 2015, 5, 12). Subsequently, as Birgitte Poulsen summarises, "through the occurrence of dilemmas, agency constantly transforms and reinvents existing traditions" (Poulsen 2009 cited in Bevir et al., 7).

Other scholars following an interpretivist research tradition have, however, departed from such an agent-centred approach. In the context of British Euroscepticism, Ben Wellings and Helen Baxendale, for example, have argued that some traditions are "slightly more determinative" in that they appear both as interpretive lenses and as solutions to the

dilemmas apparently posed by continued British membership of the EU (Wellings and Baxendale 2015, 125). In their words, "history and tradition are promoted as the point of destination", as well as of departure (Wellings and Baxendale 2015, 125). This is an important insight, which chimes with the conceptual framework I introduced above and sheds further light on the relationship between nostalgia and 'crisis'. As noted above, conventional treatments tend to view nostalgia as something of an automatic response to exogenous forms of disruption. Yet as Stuart Tannock has argued, "discontinuity, far from being simply experienced by the nostalgic subject, and far from being simply the engendering condition of nostalgia, is also and always at the same time a discontinuity posited by the nostalgic subject" (Tannock 1995, 456). This theorisation links nostalgia with an endogenous reading of 'crisis' and change. As Tannock observes, the nostalgic subject generates a "lapsarian" narrative in which a "lapse" – a critical juncture or 'crisis' – is portrayed as having interrupted a past 'Golden Age' and created a present felt as "lacking, deficient, oppressive" (Tannock 1995, 456).

This perspective is instructive not only of the close relationship between 'crisis' and the narrative form of discourse, highlighted above, but the interrelationship between 'crisis', narrative and nostalgia. On this view, the narrative form is most suited to the expression of nostalgia as both are concerned with "always piecing together what is always falling apart" (K. Stewart 1988, 236). As noted above, this conceptualisation of nostalgia exhibits similarities with Wellings and Baxendale's contention that history and tradition appear as cognitive and discursive bookends for periods of perceived 'crisis'. Nostalgia is similarly implicated not only in the discursive invocation of 'crisis', but also in its attempted resolution. Put differently, in a nostalgic narrative the past is not simply mourned but appears as an object of "retreat and retrieval" (Tannock 1995, 459). In this sense, nostalgia "manipulates" its subjects (Jobson 2015, 672). As I explore in subsequent chapters, these insights contain important implications that problematise conventional binaries of past and future, stability and disruption. For the present discussion of institutional change, however, I suggest that whilst the endogenous interpretation of 'crisis' may well provide an agential moment in which actors can adapt their emotional conventions and discourses, this cannot simply be assumed. As Crawford suggests, "once [emotional] institutionalisation occurs, the framing of problems and solutions are normalized and may become taken for granted" (Crawford 2014, 548). Detecting the

presence or nature of institutional change is therefore an empirical question (S. Bell 2012, 717), which I turn to in the next section where I recap the building blocks of my theoretical framework before reflecting on its methodological implications and introducing my specific research methods.

1.4 The methodological implications of exploring nostalgia in the context of elite British Euroscepticism

I began this chapter in section 1.1 by summarising how the extant EU Studies Euroscepticism literature remains largely detached from research into political emotions. I suggested that this was a particularly puzzling omission in the context of elite British Euroscepticism, where scholarship points to the importance of imaginaries of British history in discourses of EU opposition but overlooks the emotive dynamics of such framing. Focusing on nostalgia, in section 1.2 I unpacked how this can be conceptualised both as a mood, or structure of feeling, and a mode of communication. Here, I integrated extant research on nostalgia with critical scholarship on political emotions to theorise how nostalgia moods and modes are implicated in the constitution of culturally distinctive emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. On this view, historically and culturally situated nostalgia moods imply specific feeling rules which govern the socially appropriate representation of emotion in nostalgic modes of communication. Such discursive representations are the primary means by which emotional experience becomes constitutive of, and institutionalised within, the prevailing cultures of emotional communities. In section 1.3, I therefore expanded on the relationship between emotion, discourse and institutions in the context of elite British Euroscepticism. I argued that Discursive Institutionalism (DI) provides analytic tools for thinking of the nostalgia mood and mode in terms of background emotional structures and foreground discursive representations, expressed in diverse forms of discourse. Nevertheless, in order to further explore how nostalgia becomes institutionalised within specific communitarian emotional cultures with distinctive discursive traditions, I suggested that DI needed to be interpreted in an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined fashion that engages persistence, 'crisis' and change. I now turn to an exploration of the methodological implications of this framework and a review of the specific research methods employed in this study.

Methodological reflections

Throughout the chapter so far, I have highlighted several important methodological tenets, which I expand on here. Firstly, that the foreground discursive representation of emotion via a nostalgia mode is both the primary way that background nostalgia moods become constitutive of emotional communities, and all the social science researcher has by way of accessing them. Secondly, that the aesthetic and narrative forms of the nostalgia mode are particularly important sites of analysis as they speak to the politics of nostalgia surrounding the invocation of temporality and 'crisis'. And thirdly that conducting a longitudinal analysis of discursive representations is essential in uncovering how emotional communities, and their emotional norms and discursive traditions are intertextual and have evolved through time. Taken together, these methodological tenets imply that it is necessary to mobilise an assemblage of methods capable of addressing different aspects of these assumptions (cf. Bleiker 2015, 877–79; Solomon 2017, 500). Whilst I outline the specifics of data collection and analysis in the following subsections, here I expand on the general principles guiding my study of how nostalgia is implicated in the constitution of Eurosceptic emotional communities and their discursive traditions. Since the analysis of discourse, understood in verbal and visual terms, is so important for our understanding of emotions, it is necessary to first consider how the discursive representation of emotion can be discerned. A close analysis of textual and visual primary sources is, I suggest, required in order to capture the indeterminacy of nostalgia (cf. Hutchison 2016, 106).

In some cases, emotions are expressed directly through "emotion terms", understood as words that explicitly invoke emotion like "fear" or "anger", and their corresponding adjectives and adverbs (Koschut 2017a, 483). In the case of nostalgia, however, I suggest that such directness is unlikely. Though some studies have sought out precise references to "nostalgia" in political speech, nostalgic discourse rarely operates in such a straightforward fashion (e.g. Jobson 2018). As noted above, nostalgia's complexity can lead to it escaping adequate identification by the nostalgic subject, whilst its often pejorative meaning can result in its subtle discursive display. I therefore argue instead that nostalgia is more likely to be discerned in indirect representations, such as emotional "connotations", "metaphors" and "comparisons and analogies" (Koschut 2017a, 483). Connotations refer to the use of "loaded"

language, which conveys emotional meaning without naming specific emotions as such (Koschut 2017a, 483). As nostalgia is imbricated with portrayals of a lost past, we should therefore be alert to the loaded ways in which history, temporality and loss are invoked in discourse. This necessitates an analysis that is attuned to the "small words" and silences as much as it is to grand statements, as seemingly minor utterances like "still" and "back" can be freighted with sentiments of nostalgic loss and longing (Billig 1995, 105–9), whilst apparent silences can also contain a wealth of emotional meaning (Hutchison 2016, 119; Koschut 2017a, 484).

Directing attention towards emotional metaphors, comparisons and analogies is also vital in the context of nostalgia for similar reasons as these discursive representations operate by mobilising indirect "mental imagery", such as the figurative language of temporality or "historical references that are widely known and shared" (Crawford 2000, 145; Koschut 2017a, 484). Unpacking such representations of nostalgia is important across different discursive forms, though perhaps particularly in the case of narratives and images. As noted above, narratives are stories that are typically invoked to make sense of 'crisis' and provide a roadmap that connects past, present and future. This process involves "analogical reasoning" and "lesson drawing" through which 'crisis' is discursively interpreted, and perhaps resolved, by reference to historic 'crisis' events (Samman 2015, 984–85) and longstanding discursive traditions (Wellings and Baxendale 2015, 125). Given nostalgia's close psychological relationship with 'crisis' and temporality, and the close relationship between 'crisis', temporal analogy and the narrative form of communication, 'crisis' narratives therefore appear to be prime sites for the analysis of nostalgic representation. Visual images also appear to be particularly ripe for the exploration of nostalgia since, as noted above, the medium provides diverse opportunities for nostalgic display either through the overt figuration of temporality – via, for example, monochrome photography or the use of light – or the aesthetic quotation of retro style. In order to capture this diversity, such an analysis has to contend with different aspects of an image, including its composition, content, and socio-historic meanings (see Bleiker 2015; Rose 2001).

History and temporality are therefore important to the study of nostalgic discourse in two ways: firstly, as a component of discursive content and style, and secondly as a meta-

theoretical process that describes how discourse itself evolves. These insights necessitate a longitudinal, diachronous analysis in order to capture the intertextuality and uneven development of discursive representations of emotion and the emotional communities that such displays belong to (Koschut 2019, 91–93; see Brinton 2015). This analysis is also important as it challenges the existence of a single, universal nostalgia mood, and helps us to identify the presence of different nostalgic structures of feeling and their related discursive strands, disaggregated into distinctive *varieties* of nostalgia expressed in different *modes* of communication. Here, the analytical focus is on "specific deployments of emotion at specific historical junctures with particularized effects" (Harding and Pribram 2004, 870), and how they persist or change over time. As I explore further below, this approach implies the need to collect a wide range of primary sources from a historical timeframe, and assemble a collection of "canonical texts" into a timeline in order to discern changes in the way discourse is emotionally patterned (Koschut 2019, 91). Despite the large initial size of the corpus, I prefer to conduct a manual analysis of texts rather than use dictionary-based or other content analysis software. Whilst such software can be useful, particularly in tracking specific emotion terms, for this project I prefer manual analysis in order to grapple with the indeterminacy of nostalgic representations, especially in images. As such, I advocate an analysis of discourse[2] that operates via a close reading of primary sources that is attuned to the diversity of nostalgic communication outlined above and so capable of unpacking its discursive strands.

My primary sources fall into two main categories – documents (including visual material) and interview data. Documentary analysis of verbal and written material is useful in detecting how nostalgic Eurosceptic traditions have been adopted and adapted by different Eurosceptic campaign groups, conceptualised as emotional communities. As such, documents imply both structural and agential features. Interviews, meanwhile, are more useful in a structural sense as they provide evidence of how Eurosceptic individuals have been socialised into distinctive nostalgic cultures, indicated by how individual interview responses discursively represent and understand nostalgia (Solomon 2017, 500–501; Clément and Sangar 2018, 23; Delori 2018), and how such individual responses compare to one another. Images also possess structural

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[2] I use "analysis of discourse" rather than "discourse analysis" in order to avoid the Foucauldian or Critical Discourse Analysis implications of the latter term, which suggest specific methodologies that I do not engage.

properties that convey deep-rooted nostalgic meanings, as implied above. For my longitudinal analysis, my starting point for the collection of documentary evidence was the 1975 referendum on British membership of the then European Economic Community (EEC). This is a useful place to begin as, whilst elite anti-European sentiment had been simmering since at least the end of the Second World War, 1975 marked a "spilling over" of such sentiments into concerted political campaigning in the public domain (R. Saunders 2018, 30; also see Forster 2002, 141) (see Chapter Two). I then traced how nostalgia has been implicated in constituting successive campaign groups, understood as emotional communities, and how their discursive traditions evolved over time to constitute the Leave campaigns during 2016's Brexit referendum on EU membership. My analytic focus then turned to the 2016 referendum as I am particularly interested in Vote Leave – the official Leave campaign. As I discuss further below and in the next chapter, though I also make contextual reference to the rival Eurosceptic Leave.EU campaign, I am particularly interested in Vote Leave due to its status as the official Leave campaign and its continued embeddedness in Conservative political traditions and party structures (cf. Wellings 2017, 7). As such, my documentary and interview data collection from the contemporary Brexit referendum pertains primarily to Vote Leave and to the period of campaigning from October 2015 to polling day on 23rd June 2016. Though interviews are supplementary to the analysis of discourse in documentary evidence, they are useful for triangulating this data, and also in uncovering the informal activities and cultural interpretations of Vote Leave campaigners. Before I explore the interview method further, I first turn to a more detailed review of processes of document collection and analysis.

Document collection and analysis

In order to access primary sources for my longitudinal analysis, I undertook archival research. For the collection of sources pertaining to the 1975 referendum, I consulted physical and digital archives held at the British Film Institute (BFI), the London School of Economics (LSE), the University of Warwick, and the Houses of Parliament. Specific details of the records consulted can be found in the Appendix and Bibliography. I was able to use digital archives to access sources from later time periods. Formal digital archives used include those hosted on the Margaret Thatcher Foundation website, the John Enoch Powell Speech Archive website,

and the UK Parliament website. It was also necessary to cultivate informal archives by rehabilitating lapsed web pages of defunct Eurosceptic campaign groups using the Internet Archive (see Internet Archive: Wayback Machine n.d.). Again, further details of the records consulted can be found in the Appendix and Bibliography. My research drew on an extensive range of sources, both textual and visual, in order to establish how nostalgia was implicated in the formation of Eurosceptic campaign groups over time, and the development of their Eurosceptic traditions. Though I initially consulted a wide range of sources, however, for a detailed analysis I narrowed these down to a few canonical texts per campaign group. As noted above, this is a simplifying analytical strategy advocated by scholars of emotional communities in order to assess how the emotional norms, or institutions, of particular communities have evolved through time.

Drawing on the broad scope of my initial analysis, I therefore took canonical texts to be those that were most representative of a campaign's discourses – usually its primary leaflets, speeches or web pages. In order to discern change in emotional norms over time, I established a timeline of these sources. From secondary literature, I also generated a timeline of key events in the history of British membership of the EU to assess how any change in emotional norms was related to such dilemmas, and whether or how these events were construed as 'crises'. Through a close reading of these historical sources I identified the evolution of three persistent *varieties* of nostalgia. I also determined that successive Eurosceptic campaign groups tended to be formed from the same elite personnel over time. I then utilised these insights to establish how the official Leave campaign – Vote Leave – had grown from earlier emotional communities in the largely Conservative Eurosceptic movement, and assessed how the three varieties of nostalgia were implicated in the campaign's communications during the Brexit referendum from October 2015 to June 2016. This analysis also necessitated unpacking how the rival emotional community of the British Eurosceptic movement, that associated with the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), had evolved over time and culminated in the Leave.EU campaign. As such, I was able to establish how Vote Leave interacted with, and to some extent was shaped by, the emotional communities and traditions of rival factions of the British Eurosceptic movement.

For my analysis of the Brexit referendum campaign period, I was able to access primarily digital archival sources. As Vote Leave famously deleted most of its campaign materials from its website shortly after the referendum result (see e.g. Waugh 2016), I again used the Internet Archive (Wayback Machine) to gain access to lost pages. Using this method, while drawing on further digital sources hosted on the LSE Digital Library, I generated an archive of campaign material in excess of five hundred documents, including speeches, email newsletters, leaflets, and research reports. For my visual analysis, I supplemented these texts, which already included some visual material, by creating an archive of visuals that the campaign produced for social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook, and for videos hosted on YouTube and disseminated via social media and televised broadcasts.[3] Again, further details of these sources can be found in the Appendix and Bibliography. I employed a similar method of analysis to that I undertook for the documents within my historical timeframe. I initially cast my net widely in a comprehensive review of Vote Leave's primary source material before narrowing the corpus down to its canonical texts. Again, I took these to be the campaign's primary leaflets, speeches, visuals etc. – many of which the campaign had itself identified as its "key" interventions (see Vote Leave 2016g), or interview subjects had highlighted as representative sources.

Throughout the thesis I cite these canonical sources often and weave them together with evidence gleaned from the wider corpus where additional detail or context is required. In order to access the emotional norms or institutions of the campaign, I read these documents closely for their representation of emotion, remaining alert to the potential for nostalgia to be expressed in indirect ways (see above). As expected, visual and narrative forms of discourse proved particularly ripe sources of nostalgia. My assessment of visual material engaged the image itself as the primary site of analysis as questions of technical production and audience reception were beyond the scope of my research questions (Rose 2001, 15, 23–24). As suggested above, my interpretation of visuals was attentive to issues of content,

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[3] I conducted a thorough analysis of Vote Leave's video content hosted on YouTube, making detailed notes. In early 2020, however, the campaign's YouTube channel was deleted, and its content could not be recovered using the Internet Archive (Wayback Machine). In referencing the thesis, I have therefore tried to direct the reader to other sites where some of these videos are currently still available. These sites include Vote Leave's Facebook page and the Box of Broadcasts internet video archive. I have also made efforts to preserve the remaining videos for future use by using the Internet Archive to index them.

composition and historical meaning. Indeed, though the study of both aesthetics and emotions is reliant on interpretive methodologies, I was careful to triangulate the evidence of a range of primary and secondary sources in my analysis. As such, where appropriate I have supplemented my core analysis of Vote Leave's official campaign materials with interview data and other primary sources such as the blog posts, press interviews and parliamentary evidence of campaigners. Though I have focused on primary sources in an effort to screen out the bias implicit in extant secondary accounts of past events (see Thies 2002), I have sometimes drawn on secondary journalistic sources (such as those reviewed in Oliver 2019) for additional contextual or factual information.

Interview data collection and analysis

My first step in generating interview research participants was to develop a database of the formal organisational structure of Vote Leave, gleaned primarily from the evidence the campaign provided to the Electoral Commission in its application to be designated as the official Leave organisation (Vote Leave 2016am; 2016an; 2016ao; 2016ap; 2016aq; 2016ar; 2016as; 2016at; 2016au; 2016av; 2016aw; 2016ax; 2016ay; 2016az; 2016d). By conducting additional desktop research utilising information publicly available on social media sites such as Twitter and LinkedIn, I was able to further develop my database of names and build a contact sheet of prospective participants. My initial research suggested that Vote Leave was governed primarily by two campaign committees (one meeting daily and one weekly), as well as a board of directors (as the organisation was registered as a limited company). The campaign also comprised further committees dealing with financial and legal issues, a core staff led by a senior management team responsible for key operational areas such as communications and research, regional teams of staffers responsible for localised campaign efforts, and "councils" of parliamentary and business supporters who served as campaign representatives.[4] Membership of these organisational tiers included current and former politicians, business owners, professional political aides and campaign consultants, junior political activists, and ad-hoc campaign staff. My goal was to interview former Vote Leave campaigners from all tiers of the organisation – from the lower ranks as well as the

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[4] The campaign was, of course, augmented by many more grassroots volunteers (see Cummings 2017b, 3).

hypothetical centre – in an attempt to mitigate against responses biased towards hagiography and social desirability. Once my project had been reviewed by my institution and received ethics approval, I began sending out invitations for interview, primarily via email.

Uptake of these invitations was initially slow. During this time, beginning in early 2018, Brexit was very much a live issue – indeed perhaps 'the' issue – on the British political and media agendas. The contentiousness of the prolonged debate between Leavers and Remainers over the terms on which Britain might finally leave the EU, in addition to ongoing formal investigations into alleged campaign misconduct during the referendum itself, cultivated an environment marked by hostility and suspicion towards intellectual enquiry about Brexit. Though I am prevented from providing specific details due to ethical considerations, it is worth documenting in general terms some of the negative responses I received to my invitations for interview, as they speak to the challenges of conducting fieldwork in such an environment. Some respondents attempted to undermine the value of my research by criticising my understanding of the topic or directing me towards journalistic or first-hand accounts of the referendum, such as blogs by former campaigners, which they viewed as comprehensive extant sources of information. Others were reluctant to participate in academic research due to constraints of time or location, despite open-ended offers to meet at their convenience. Several MPs declined to participate on the grounds that I was not one of their constituents. Many of my invitations received no response at all, though I made concerted efforts at making contact multiple times and through diverse channels. Despite these challenges, however, some did respond positively to my approaches and I was able to leverage personal and institutional connections to generate a 'snowball' effect that eventually delivered thirteen interview participants.[5]

All participants were inducted into the project using approved research information sheets and consent forms, which adhered to norms of ethical best practice in the collection and handling of human data. All participants were offered anonymity in order to protect their identities and so their responses appear throughout the thesis as, for example, "Anonymous 1, 2018". The thirteen participants can be anonymously profiled according to the following

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[5] Three additional subjects with links to the Conservative party initially agreed to participate but did not commit to a time and place for the interview.

categories. All thirteen participants had been involved with Vote Leave during the Brexit referendum: twelve had worked in a formal capacity "for" the organisation and one had worked in a more ad-hoc capacity "with" the organisation. At least four participants had worked for or with more than one Leave organisation during the entire referendum period (October 2015 – June 2016). Ten participants were still formally involved with Vote Leave on referendum day. Four participants were Vote Leave board members, three were Vote Leave senior staff, five were staff from the intermediate to junior ranks of the campaign, and one was an ad-hoc campaigner. Across these groups, two participants were politicians, three were businesspeople and the remainder were professional political aides or activists. Most participants had formal ties with one or more political parties: six were or had previously been linked with the Conservative party, four with UKIP, and three with Labour. One further participant had no formal affiliation with a political party but had previously worked for a third sector organisation with ties to the Conservative party. All participants were white; twelve were male and one female. Interviews took place at nine discrete points between May 2018 and February 2019 (see Appendix for a list of exact dates). Twelve interviews were conducted in person – nine in London, one in Coventry, one in Cardiff, and one in Swansea. One interview was conducted via Skype.

Interviews lasted on average about an hour, within a range of around forty to ninety minutes. Most participants agreed to be recorded, and I transcribed our conversations as soon as possible after meeting. Two participants declined to be recorded but allowed me to take detailed notes throughout the interview. During the meetings, participants were offered the option of receiving a copy of the interview transcript or notes, which fewer than half took up. The interviews followed a semi-structured format in which I asked a range of largely open-ended questions organised into four thematic groups. An indicative interview schedule is available in the thesis Appendix. To summarise, I usually began with broad questions about campaign life and the participant's personal experiences working for or with Vote Leave. I then moved to more technical questions about campaign organisation and interpretive and normative questions about campaign messaging before ending by asking the participants to reflect broadly once more on their campaign experiences. I piloted my questions during my first two interviews in which, as I explore in subsequent chapters of this thesis, I found participants to be somewhat resistant to questions about nostalgia. In subsequent interviews

I adapted my schedule slightly to make specific reference to nostalgia only towards the end of questioning – after enquiring into broader related themes such as the role of history and emotion in the campaign – so as not to prematurely close down the conversation. Following the initial meeting, I sent a limited amount of additional questions to several participants via email, asking for clarification of specific points raised in the first interview. In most of these cases, subjects did not respond with further information.

Nevertheless, my interview sample was successful in representing a good cross-section of subjects from several tiers of Vote Leave, and several formal party-political affiliations. The breadth of this sample enabled me to access insights into a range of operational functions within the campaign and mitigated to some extent against hagiographic and social desirability effects. In total, though the number of interview participants was relatively small, interviews generated over one hundred and eighty typed pages of data – a healthy amount for conducting an in-depth qualitative analysis. I conducted this analysis in both a synchronous and dialectical fashion – beginning after the first interview and then continually moving between interview data and other primary documents for triangulation as the project progressed. As I carried out my fieldwork, for example, I made notes of common themes that were emerging in interview conversations, and also recorded any responses that were substantially different and might be thought of as outliers. This process enabled me to get an initial sense of how interview responses compared with one another. Once all thirteen interviews had been conducted, I commenced a more detailed analysis via a close reading of all interview transcripts and meeting notes. I organised this data into common themes to provide a comprehensive review of how responses corroborated or contradicted one another. As suggested above, this analysis was useful primarily in two ways – firstly in uncovering some of the informal structures and mechanisms through which Vote Leave was organised, and secondly in revealing how participants thought about or interpreted the campaign's communications and culture. As such, I have drawn on interview responses throughout the thesis, weaving the evidence together with that provided by other primary sources, such as the documents and visuals discussed above, for further context and triangulation.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have explored how I can build a conceptual framework, and corresponding set of research methods, that addresses my core research themes of elite British Euroscepticism, emotion, temporality and 'crisis'. I began the chapter in section 1.1 by summarising how the extant EU Studies Euroscepticism literature remains largely detached from research into political emotions. I suggested that this was a particularly puzzling omission in the context of elite British Euroscepticism, where scholarship has pointed to the importance of imaginaries of British history in discourses of EU opposition but overlooked the emotive dynamics of such framing. This thesis contributes to addressing that deficit by examining the role of one emotion in particular – nostalgia. In section 1.2, I unpacked how nostalgia could be conceptualised both as a mood, or structure of feeling, and a mode of communication. Here, I integrated extant research on nostalgia with scholarship from a broader critical emotions research tradition to theorise how nostalgia moods and modes are implicated in the constitution of different emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics. On this view, historically and culturally situated nostalgia moods imply specific feeling rules which govern the socially appropriate representation of emotion in nostalgic modes of communication. Such discursive representations are the primary means by which emotional experience becomes constitutive of, and institutionalised within, the prevailing cultures of emotional communities. In section three, I therefore expanded on the relationship between emotion, discourse and institutions in the context of elite British Euroscepticism. I argued that Discursive Institutionalism provides analytic tools for thinking of the nostalgia mood and mode in terms of background emotional structures and foreground discursive representations, expressed in diverse forms of communication.

In order to further explore how nostalgia becomes institutionalised within specific Eurosceptic emotional communities with distinctive emotional cultures and discursive traditions, I provided an historically-sensitive and sociologically-inclined reading of DI capable of engaging processes of institutional persistence and change. I also highlighted how doing so was particularly important for the study of nostalgia as it is closely linked with narratives of continuity and 'crisis'. In the final section of the chapter I reiterated the methodological implications that emanate from a DI framework adapted for research into the interaction of

nostalgia and elite British Euroscepticism. I then reflected on the methodological implications of this framework, outlining strategies for discerning emotion in discourse. Setting out the historical parameters for my study, I proceeded to explore specific methods of data collection and analysis for my two major types of primary sources: documents produced by successive Eurosceptic campaign groups from the 1975 referendum on British membership of the EEC to the EU referendum of 2016, and the interview evidence of thirteen of those who formerly worked for or with the Vote Leave campaign during this most recent referendum. In the next chapter I begin to operationalise the principles set out in the conceptual discussions above to study how the discursive traditions and emotional communities of elite British Euroscepticism have evolved over time.

Chapter Two: The Development of Elite British Euroscepticism – Nostalgic Traditions and Emotional Communities

In the previous chapter, Chapter One, I set out a theoretical framework for how elite British Euroscepticism can be understood as a collection of competing nostalgic emotional communities. In this chapter, Chapter Two, I explore that contention by surveying the evolution of elite British campaigning against 'Europe', from the first membership referendum held in 1975 to the second one held in 2016. My focus in what follows is on elite Eurosceptic *campaign groups* rather than the Euroscepticism embodied in Britain's parliamentary politics, *per se*. Although campaign groups share personnel with major political parties, and the Eurosceptic cause has been furthered through a combination of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary activities, the latter arena has received insufficient attention in the academic literature. Whilst UKIP remains a notable exception to this rule, other extra-parliamentary campaign groups affiliated with a contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement remain largely overlooked. This is a substantial oversight as it is the social and discursive connections forged within such groups that laid the foundations for the official Leave campaign created to contest the Brexit referendum: Vote Leave. In this chapter, I therefore address that oversight, leveraging my previous theoretical discussions in order to show how elite British Euroscepticism has progressively fractured into two sets of extra-parliamentary campaign groups, conceptualised as emotional communities each characterised by a distinctive brand of nostalgic representation (or nostalgia mode).

In addition to exploring the constitutive role of these two *modes* of nostalgic communication for Euroscepticism's emotional communities, in this chapter I also chart the evolution of three thematic *varieties* of nostalgia relating to dominant imaginaries of Britain's past, which go on to structure the remaining thesis chapters. I begin the chapter in section 2.1 by providing a brief pre-history of the path towards the 1975 referendum before exploring how the referendum's designated Leave campaign embodied two such varieties of nostalgia. One of these nostalgic themes focuses on prevailing understandings of Britishness, particularly those rooted in heroic imaginaries of the Second World War, whilst the other exhibits traces of Britain's imperial and colonial past. Building on extant work on elite British Euroscepticism, I argue that campaigners' distress at Britain's mid-20th Century turn towards 'Europe' sparked

these background nostalgia moods and generated a nostalgic emotional community from previously diffuse Eurosceptic individuals. Although this emotional community exhibited a variety of nostalgic representations in its campaign output, I argue that it is best characterised by a foreground nostalgia mode that prefers to temper direct forms of nostalgic display. Whilst the 1975 referendum is an important point of departure in the development of elite British Euroscepticism, however, defeat for the Leave side marginalised such campaigning until Margaret Thatcher's election as British Prime Minister. Thatcher's stance on 'Europe' eventually hardened into a critique that drew on the two extant varieties of Eurosceptic nostalgia, whilst favouring a more explicit mode of nostalgic expression.

Thatcher's canonical declaration of such sentiments in the late Eighties contributed to the creation of further Eurosceptic emotional communities and the progressive fracturing of the elite British Eurosceptic movement into two rival nostalgic factions. In section 2.2 I therefore take my analysis into the 21st Century in order to review the evolution of two distinctive sets of Eurosceptic emotional communities in the years immediately preceding the Brexit referendum. In this section, I show how the tempered version of the nostalgia mode characterises a collection of successive campaigns comprised primarily of contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic elites, whilst the nostalgia mode's more explicit iteration describes a rival faction of Eurosceptics, represented by UKIP. Here, I also chart how the emergence of UKIP develops a third *variety* of Eurosceptic nostalgia embedded in a desire to maintain Britain's racial integrity amidst immigration 'crisis'. In the final section of the chapter, 2.3, I explore how the three thematic *varieties* of nostalgia and two nostalgia *modes* identified in the preceding analysis contributed to the creation of two Eurosceptic campaign groups in the 2016 Brexit referendum. Whilst the three varieties of nostalgia have always cut across the competing factions of British Euroscepticism, albeit with varying degrees of emphasis in their specific content, I argue that the genealogy of the Vote Leave and Leave.EU campaigns maps on to the two diverging nostalgia modes. On this view, Vote Leave emerged from the lineage of contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic elites and discourses corresponding to a tempered mode of nostalgic expression, whilst Leave.EU fell into the UKIP tradition of a more overt mode of nostalgic display.

2.1 Charting the Eurosceptic movement – A history of British campaigning against 'Europe' in the late 20ᵗʰ Century

In this section, I begin to explore how the discursive traditions and emotional communities of elite British Euroscepticism developed in the late 20ᵗʰ Century. I begin with a brief pre-history of the 1975 referendum on Britain's continued membership of the EEC as a means of locating its primary Eurosceptic actors and arguments within a longer British tradition of opposing 'Europe'. I then move to a more detailed analysis of the 1975 referendum's National Referendum Campaign (NRC), identifying two primary nostalgic themes. The first of these themes responds to the loss of imperial Britain's former global status, and close ties with the empire's former colonies, and the second refers to stereotypical understandings of Britishness, particularly those rooted in war memory. Here, I build on extant work on elite British Euroscepticism to argue that a perceived 'crisis' of national decline and loss of 'greatness' following Britain's mid-Century turn towards Europe sparked background nostalgia moods which, when expressed via foreground nostalgia modes, assembled disparate Eurosceptic elites into emotional communities like the NRC. Though the NRC sometimes employed a rather conventional nostalgia mode of loss, longing and 'pastness', however, much of its communications departed from such explicit nostalgic expression and instead advanced a tempered hybrid of past, present and future. Following a brief overview of how the NRC's referendum defeat contributed to the renewed marginalisation of Euroscepticism in British politics for several years, I then turn my attention to the Thatcher era. Margaret Thatcher's gradual embrace of Euroscepticism throughout the Eighties inspired the British Eurosceptic movement to really flourish. I therefore explore how her landmark speech at Bruges perpetuated and adapted the two nostalgic themes identified in the NRC's communications, adopting nostalgia modes that favoured rather overt expressions of emotion. I conclude the section by reviewing how Thatcher's nostalgias filtered through to the debates of the Maastricht era and contributed to a proliferation of Eurosceptic emotional communities throughout the late Nineties.

A brief pre-history of the 1975 referendum

As noted in the previous chapter, the bulk of my historical analysis begins with the 1975 referendum on Britain's continued membership of the EEC. This is a logical place to start as 1975 was the first time Britain's involvement with European integration was put to a popular vote, marking a "spilling over" of Eurosceptic arguments from elite institutions into the extra-parliamentary and public domain (R. Saunders 2018, 30; also see Forster 2002, 141). As such, 1975 was also the first notable instance of diffuse Eurosceptic elites uniting against European integration in a formal and public campaign group. Whilst a comprehensive review of the political machinations leading up to the 1975 referendum is beyond the scope of this thesis, however, it is important to recognise that the Eurosceptic constellations that emerged to contest the referendum did not materialise overnight. In this subsection, I therefore provide a brief pre-history of the path towards the 1975 referendum, and particularly of the antecedents of 1975's Eurosceptic – or, to use the parlance of the time, anti-Market – National Referendum Campaign. Doing so is important as it locates the referendum's key actors and arguments in a much longer political tradition of opposing 'Europe'. From the end of the Second World War, for example, anti-European sentiment had progressively filtered into elite British politics, with much of it resting on recent memories of that conflict (Forster 2002, 136). As the European Economic Community (EEC) solidified and Britain mooted joining the six founding member states in the Common Market, broad anti-European sentiment morphed into specific anti-Market campaigning (Forster 2002, chap. 8).

As suggested above, from Britain's first attempt at joining the EEC in 1961 until the early Seventies, most of this wrangling was confined to party, parliament and Whitehall institutions (Forster 2002, chap. 8; R. Saunders 2018, 30). In the early Sixties, the Labour party led by Hugh Gaitskell best exemplified an anti-Market position with a critique of EEC membership notoriously underwritten by Britain's incompatible and exemplary "thousand years of history" (see Gaitskell 1962). After Gaitskell's death in 1963 Labour continued to be the dominant critic of European integration, with most of the parliamentary party opposing British membership in some form for the remainder of the decade (Forster 2002, 131). Despite such opposition, a second attempt at applying to join the EEC in 1967, led by Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson, received historic cross-parliamentary support (R. Saunders

2018, 50). As for Britain's 1961 attempt at joining the EEC, this application was vetoed by French President Charles de Gaulle, who leveraged many of the same arguments about Britain's distinctiveness that Gatiskell had advanced, and which continue to characterise the Eurosceptic cause (Grob-Fitzgibbon 2016, 299). Following de Gaulle's death in 1969, however, the application was resurrected by Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath (Ludlow 2015, 18). With a more sympathetic French President (Georges Pompidou) in power, British entry finally seemed more likely (R. Saunders 2018, 51). In 1971, an intense six-day British parliamentary debate ensued and secured approval for Britain's European venture, with the country officially joining the EEC in 1973 (Ludlow 2015).

The intensity of the 1971 "Great Debate", however, foreshadowed persistent elite dissatisfaction with the EEC. During this debate, anti-Marketeers from both sides of the aisle voiced concerns that Britain's EEC membership would damage relations with its former colonies in the Commonwealth. Calls to "safeguard" Commonwealth ties rested in part on a desire to continue to exploit "cheap food" resources in Britain's former white settler colonies, which would be circumscribed by the EEC's alleged protectionism (Ludlow 2015, 24–25). MPs also stressed Britain's strong emotional bonds with majority white Commonwealth countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, with Conservative anti-Marketeers particularly keen to emphasise the possibilities for global free trade that such links implied (Ludlow 2015, 25). Each of these positions was wrapped in a broader emotive and historically-rooted imaginary of Britain's exceptional character and institutions (Ludlow 2015, 24–26). In the years immediately surrounding the Great Debate, Labour MPs Michael Foot and Tony Benn and Conservative MP Enoch Powell were the primary proponents of such an exceptional narrative, although in Powell's case his distaste for the British Empire prevented him from adopting the Commonwealth appeals favoured by other anti-Marketeers (R. Saunders 2018, 54, 61)(see Chapter Five). Employing the anti-German overtones of the earliest post-war anti-Europeans, Powell instead focused on what he argued were the natural and spiritual dimensions of English nationhood, where the country's distinctive history exceeded its misguided imperial exploits and proved that its people simply "did not belong" in any continental federation (Powell 1972 cited in R. Saunders 2018, 54-5) (see Chapter Five).

As such, even when a majority of parliamentarians agreed that Britain should join the EEC, the country's position in the Community was far from settled. Pressure for a membership referendum was already building within a parliamentary contingent of anti-Marketeers galvanised by Conservative MP Neil Marten (R. Saunders 2018, chap. 2). These tensions came to a head around the general elections of 1974, where Labour was elected (twice) on manifesto promises to renegotiate Britain's EEC membership terms and submit them to a plebiscite (R. Saunders 2018, chap. 2). When the referendum was subsequently held, in 1975, it brought together the key anti-Market politicians of the preceding years with extra-parliamentary anti-Market groups that had been mobilising unsuccessfully since the early Sixties (see e.g. Grob-Fitzgibbon 2016, 350; R. Saunders 2018, 131–33). The two leading organisations in the 1960s were the Anti-Common Market League (ACML) – a Conservative group led by business executive John Paul, and Keep Britain Out (KBO) – a Liberal group most notably represented by journalist SW Alexander and businessman Oliver Smedley (Saunders 2018, 131-2). In the late Sixties, the two groups had attempted to consolidate their activities under the banner of a new organisation: The Common Market Safeguards Campaign (CMSC), led by the Conservative politician Robin Williams and Labour's Douglas Jay (Grob-Fitzgibbon 2016, 350; Saunders 2018, 131-133). With the union marred by financial disagreements, however, KBO soon elected to reassert itself as an independent organisation (Saunders 2018, 133).

Despite these extant tensions, the 1975 referendum temporarily reinvigorated the loose anti-Market coalitions of preceding yeas and attempted to crystallise them under the umbrella of the National Referendum Campaign (NRC). This new organisation primarily comprised the CMSC, which supplied Jay as one vice-chair, and KBO (now, following Britain's accession to the EEC, renamed Get Britain Out (GBO)), which supplied the campaign's other vice-chair in the form of "libertarian" solicitor Christopher Frere-Smith (Butler and Kitzinger 1976, 97; R. Saunders 2018, 134). The organisation was chaired overall by Conservative MP Marten, who was also vice-chair of the ACML (McIlroy 1975). Otherwise, the NRC was represented predominantly by a group of seven Labour cabinet members who had rebelled against the Wilson government's official pro-European position. Known as the "dissenting ministers", this group included high-profile parliamentarians such as Tony Benn and Michael Foot, highlighted above (Benn et al. 1975; Get Britain Out 1975). Enoch Powell, now a member of

the Ulster Unionist Party, also joined the campaign (R. Saunders 2018, 136). Such a diversity of politics and personalities produced an uneasy coalition, with arguments over the NRC's leadership, membership and operations regularly reported in the (largely pro-European) press (McIlroy 1975; D. Watt 1975; Young 1975; R. Saunders 2018, chap. 4). Nevertheless, to the extent that the NRC can be considered the first coherent Eurosceptic emotional community, it was one characterised by distinctive types of nostalgia which, as I explore below, drew on old arguments about Britain's historic incompatibility with 'Europe'.

Summoning Churchill – campaigning for an independent Britain in the 1975 referendum

The NRC's four primary referendum broadcasts, televised on the BBC in the two weeks prior to polling, are a useful starting point for unpacking the campaign's nostalgic themes (National Referendum Campaign 1975i; 1975j; 1975k; 1975l; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975a; 1975c; 1975d; 1975e).[6] Each broadcast opens with an audio-visual sequence initiated by the chimes of the Palace of Westminster's "Big Ben" clock. This recognisable sound is followed by a graphic of the campaign's overarching slogan "Out and into the World", where the "O" appears as a globe showing a map of the British Isles against a sea green-blue background (see Figure 3 below). The title sequence then gives way to a photograph of the statue of former Prime Minister Winston Churchill, situated in London's Parliament Square against the backdrop of the Palace of Westminster's Victoria Tower topped by a fluttering Union Jack. As the soaring notes of Edward Elgar's *Nimrod* (from the *Enigma Variations*) begin to play, a famous Churchill quote scrolls up the screen:

> Britain could not be an ordinary member of a federal union limited to Europe in any period which can at present be foreseen…If you ask me to choose between Europe and the open sea I choose the open sea (e.g. National Referendum Campaign 1975l; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975e).

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[6] Each broadcast was organised around a specific issue from food prices (National Referendum Campaign 1975i; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975a) to jobs and trade (National Referendum Campaign 1975j; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975c), the impact of Common Market membership on different British regions (National Referendum Campaign 1975k; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975d), and on sovereignty more broadly (National Referendum Campaign 1975l; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975e).

Shortened versions of this sequence typically concluded each broadcast, with the full Churchillian iteration used to mark the end of the final one, televised on 3rd June 1975, around thirty-six hours before voting commenced (National Referendum Campaign 1975l).[7]

Redacted image.

National Referendum broadcast logo: "Out and into the World". White letters on sea green-blue background.
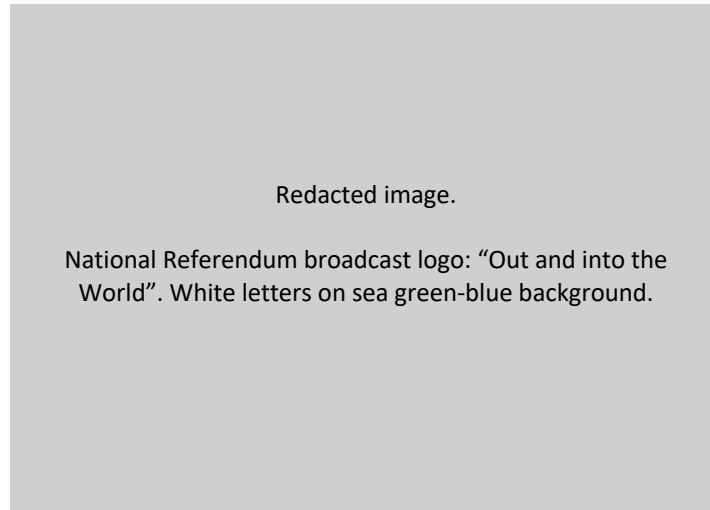
Figure 3: National Referendum Campaign broadcast logo
Source: BBC 2014

The campaign's broadcast aesthetics are indicative of how the figure of Churchill embodies two inter-related types of nostalgia which the prior anti-European and anti-Market forces, noted above, had also exhibited in varying degrees. Firstly, Churchill's alleged preference for the "open sea", reflected in the NRC's expansive "Out and into the World" slogan and logo, suggests an imperially-rooted desire to rehabilitate Britain's global maritime heyday. Secondly, his association with the core institutions of British political life (like Parliament) and key moments in national history (particularly the Second World War), is suggestive of an everyday kind of nostalgia linked to stereotypical notions of Britishness. These interpretations are supported by further evidence from the NRC's referendum broadcasts and wider campaign materials. In the first broadcast, for example, the campaign employs an image where the outline of England and Wales, cut from a Union Jack, crowns a sea green-blue globe (National Referendum Campaign 1975i). Arrows emanate from the 'British' island towards the rest of the world above a banner, which again depicts the NRC's slogan. Similar graphics were also used at the campaign's press conferences (see e.g. R. Saunders 2018, 135), and

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[7] Although my research into the NRC's broadcasts comes from archival sources held by the British Film Institute and the Houses of Parliament, there is a publicly accessible snippet of the 3rd June 1975 broadcast on the BBC website, where you can see the Churchill sequence I refer to here (see British Broadcasting Corporation 2014).

provided the aesthetic backdrop for the NRC's focus on the merits of global free trade. As the organisation's Chair, Neil Marten, wrote in an internal memo on the day the campaign launched, "We stand for maximum trade everywhere" (Marten 1975). Similar sentiments were echoed in a letter announcing the campaign's formation, where one of its primary stated aims was "re-establishing" Britain's free-trading power (National Referendum Campaign 1975f). Indeed, it was common for the campaign to speak of "regaining" or "winning back" Britain's "trading freedom", as in one of only four unique leaflets produced directly by the NRC (National Referendum Campaign 1975d). [8]

The campaign made further references in its broadcasts, public statements, and printed materials to "trading with all the world" and "look[ing] out towards […] the world market" (National Referendum Campaign 1975d; 1975i; 1975l; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975a; 1975e; Benn et al. 1975). As one of the broadcast presenters summarised, "We don't think we should walk off the world. Quite the opposite. We think we should walk out of the Market and into the world" (National Referendum Campaign 1975j; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975c). Though such statements were framed in largely pragmatic and economistic terms, they were suggestive of the former global status of an imperial Britain. Further imperial and colonial connotations appeared in the NRC's appeals to "our old friends in the Commonwealth", which were notably leveraged in the context of high food prices in Seventies Britain (Benn et al. 1975, 2). Here, the campaign echoed arguments previously leveraged in the Great Debate to insist that Britain's "traditional food suppliers" – its former white settler colonies – could be relied upon to provide cheap produce following EEC withdrawal (National Referendum Campaign 1975g, 2; Winnifrith 1975; see also Benn et al. 1975; National Referendum Campaign 1975d, 2; 1975e, 4). Despite the imperial and colonial vestiges apparent in the NRC's communications, however, campaigners resisted interpretations of empire nostalgia. Marten, for example, rejected suggestions that the

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[8] The NRC produced four two-page issue-specific flyers (on sovereignty, jobs, food prices, and the future) comprising a cover that called on the reader to "Vote No" and a reverse that outlined the core arguments on that issue in brief (National Referendum Campaign 1975a; 1975b; 1975c; 1975d). The campaign also produced a "window bill" summarising its four main flyers (National Referendum Campaign 1975h, 1). A further summary leaflet was issued by the British government on behalf of the NRC, as it was for the 'Remain' campaign of the time (National Referendum Campaign 1975e). The NRC's constitutive organisations and affiliates also produced and financed leaflets that supplemented those of the umbrella campaign (Robin Williams 1975).

campaign was "dreaming of the era when Britannia ruled the waves" and insisted instead on the "common sense" of Common Market withdrawal (British Broadcasting Corporation 1975b, 1).

The NRC's communications also provide further evidence of its mobilisation of stereotypical, Churchillian markers of Britishness. In the campaign's final televised broadcast, for example, Michael Foot used an analogy with Britain's wartime history to highlight the urgency of EEC withdrawal, stating that: "This country has been saved on some great occasions in our history, in 1940, because the voter had a right to put out a government" (National Referendum Campaign 1975l; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975a).[9] By invoking Churchill, campaigners provided a popular face for their prominent desire to "restore" parliamentary sovereignty (National Referendum Campaign 1975f) and aligned the Eurosceptic cause with the convenient connotations of an exceptional and resilient wartime Britain carving its own path and 'standing alone' against the continent. In this sense, the solitary image of Churchill's statue, scored by Elgar's *Nimrod* – a composition frequently used in Britain to commemorate the nation's heroism in the 20th Century world wars – was a striking feature of the campaign's televised broadcasts. Indeed, in further materials where the NRC asserted the British right to self-government, the phrase "Vote no for our right to rule ourselves" called to mind the anti-German themes favoured by early post-war anti-Europeans (National Referendum Campaign 1975a; 1975e, 2; 1975l; British Broadcasting Corporation 1975e). On this view, such phrasing conjured Britain's prior escape from Nazi occupation and the ongoing threat to British life posed by a continental 'oppressor'. The evidence presented in this subsection is, I argue, therefore indicative of the NRC's embeddedness in two distinctive *varieties* of nostalgia enmeshed with a long political tradition of opposing 'Europe'. The first of these nostalgias is related to the loss of the global status of an imperial Britain, and close ties with the empire's former colonies, and the second refers to stereotypical understandings of Britishness, particularly those rooted in myths of Britain's world war experiences.

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[9] Although not a strictly accurate reflection of the events that led to Churchill's installation as Prime Minister in May 1940, at a crucial time in the Second World War (see e.g. Shakespeare 2017), Foot's intervention tapped into the NRC's chosen definition of sovereignty, which in populist manner emphasised the authority the British people delegate to their parliamentarians for a term only (Benn 1974; Marten 1975).

Extant work has already noted that British membership of the EEC has been viewed by elite Eurosceptics as a moment of "Commonwealth betrayal" (Murray-Evans 2016), the "ultimate institutional expression of British and English decline" and an affront to traditional perceptions of national 'greatness' (Wellings 2010, 489). Yet although such claims are tinged with themes of nostalgic loss and longing, their explicit relationship with nostalgia remains underexplored. I therefore build on such work to suggest that the 'crisis' perceived in Britain's alleged turn away from a 'glorious' imperial and military heritage in favour of new European horizons has sparked background nostalgia moods which, when expressed via foreground nostalgia modes, have constituted successive Eurosceptic emotional communities like the NRC. Indeed, in the context surrounding the 1975 referendum, the sense of British decline and 'crisis' was particularly acute as key economic indicators exhibited concerning trends.[10] The perception of such 'crisis', I suggest, occasioned nostalgia moods and modes that brought together diverse political elites who defined British decline as a problem of EEC membership to be resolved by restoring continuity with a lost imperial, colonial and military past. As such, sometimes the NRC's communications represented background nostalgia moods of loss and longing in particularly explicit foreground nostalgia modes, which approximated the classic hallmarks of nostalgic display outlined by Grainge (see Chapter One).

This was the case in the campaign's use of the restorative language of "re-establishing", "regaining" and "winning back" Britain's lost global status, as discussed above. The use of Elgar in the referendum broadcasts, alongside images of Churchill, parliament and the national flag, also operated in a similarly overt fashion, conveying a sense of momentousness and historicity, which positioned the referendum as the latest 'battle' between Britain and Europe. Indeed, as Alice Cree observes in the context of British military remembrance, Elgar's composition is "awe-inspiring" and its motifs recur in contemporary commemorative tunes due to its ability to instantly convey nostalgic "meaning and a sense of imperative" (Cree 2020, 227). Nevertheless, although such overt instances of nostalgic display were striking moments in the campaign's communications, for much of the referendum the NRC was

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[10] This 'crisis' has been characterised elsewhere in terms of rising unemployment, a balance of payments deficit and inflation, particularly in oil, food, and commodity prices (Butler and Kitzinger 1976, 2; King 1977, 4–5). In the year preceding May 1975, for example, consumer prices rose by 25%; unemployment also increased by over 60% from the end of 1973 to May 1975 (Butler and Kitzinger 1976, 4).

marked by a nostalgia mode that suggested the presence of feeling rules – conventions governing the appropriate display of emotion – which circumscribed such explicitness. The tempering of nostalgic expression was particularly evident, for example, in the campaign's veiled references to Britain's imperial and colonial past primarily via the "euphemistic" and economistic terms of free trade, which served to silence the violent historic roots of a global Britain (El-Enany 2020, 177). The graphics used to animate the NRC's global slogan also eschewed the straightforward aesthetic representation of backward-looking longing, typically conveyed through visual codes such as monochrome, and were instead reminiscent of the temporally flat graphics characteristic of an attenuated Jamesonian hybrid of past, present and future (see Chapter One). Below I briefly explore how elite British Euroscepticism evolved following the NRC's eventual referendum defeat, before moving on to assess how the campaign's imperial and militarised *varieties* of nostalgia, and its *modes* of nostalgic expression, developed in the Thatcher era.

The marginalisation of Labour Euroscepticism and the Conservative Eurosceptic turn

Although the NRC was the first notable example of a formal Eurosceptic campaign group – or emotional community – the public salience of European integration in 1975 should not be overstated (Butler and Kitzinger 1976, 1). Indeed, the NRC failed to convince voters of the merits of EEC withdrawal and lost the referendum by over two votes to one (Miller 2015, 25). As *The Daily Telegraph* reported, following defeat the NRC's tentative alliances instantly "evaporated" along with its campaign apparatus (Comfort 1975; also see Forster 2002, 133). Nevertheless, the Eurosceptic effort was kept alive in the immediate aftermath of the referendum primarily within the Labour party. Longstanding anti-Marketeers such as NRC veterans Benn and Foot rejected the result of the referendum and pushed the officially pro-European party towards an increasingly Eurosceptic position (Gowland, Turner, and Wright 2010, 83–84). Indeed, under Foot's leadership, between 1980 and 1983, Labour echoed the strength of feeling exhibited in the early Sixties by Gaitskell and advocated once more for outright EEC withdrawal (Forster 2002, 130). In 1981 such a hard Eurosceptic position contributed to the "Gang of Four" pro-European MPs – Roy Jenkins, David Owen, Bill Rodgers and Shirley Williams – leaving Labour to form a new Social Democratic Party (Gowland, Turner, and Wright 2010, 84). Difficulties persisted into the general election of 1983 when,

despite campaigning on a manifesto that arguably tuned in to a lack of popular excitement about Britain's EEC membership (Gowland, Turner, and Wright 2010, 84), Labour returned its worst electoral performance in post-war history (Audickas and Cracknell 2018, 4).

Such setbacks, however, were yet to completely deter Labour from a hard form of Euroscepticism. Under the leadership of Neil Kinnock from 1984 to 1988, for example, the party continued to advocate for EEC withdrawal, although such advocacy was now framed in weaker terms that afforded the organisation the opportunity to "reform" before a firm decision was made (Forster 2002, 69, 130). By the late Eighties, however, as Labour remained confined to Her Majesty's Opposition, the party began to "modernise" and truly shed its hard Eurosceptic proclivities, ushering in a more pro-European New Labour era (Forster 2002, 130-2). The framing of party *modernisation* itself reflected a longstanding tendency of pro-Europeans on both sides of the aisle, going back to the Conservative leader and mid-20th Century Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, who preferred to present themselves as automatically and virtuously forward-looking in contrast to Eurosceptics, who were pejoratively dubbed nostalgic (Ludlow 2015, 29; Grob-Fitzgibbon 2016, 278).[11] Whilst I return to the relationship between pro-Europeanism and nostalgia in the thesis Conclusion, however, it is unfortunately beyond the scope of my main analytical focus in this project. Indeed, although in this section I have provided a brief overview of Labour Euroscepticism from the 1975 referendum to the late Eighties, the marginal position of Labour and Euroscepticism in British politics during this time prevents me from going into further detail. As noted in the preceding chapter, my concern in the thesis is for the prevailing Eurosceptic communities and discourses that eventually led to the 2016 Brexit referendum Vote Leave campaign. As I explore further in the final section of this chapter, Vote Leave was deeply embedded in the Conservative political sphere, reflecting how the Eurosceptic cause effectively switched parties from the late Eighties onwards.

As such, I now turn to the Conservative Euroscepticism sparked in the late Thatcher era, which foreshadowed a period of concerted and high-profile opposition towards European integration both within parliament and, notably for the creation of Vote Leave, in the extra-

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[11] As noted in the previous chapter and as I discuss further below, similar temporal cleavages are also present *within* Euroscepticism.

parliamentary arena (Forster 2002, 133-4). On this view, it took Margaret Thatcher's repositioning of the Conservative Party on the issue of European integration, most famously exemplified in her speech to the College of Europe in Bruges 1988, for the Eurosceptic movement to really flourish (Thatcher 1988). In her capacity as Conservative leader, Thatcher had herself played a minor role campaigning for continued EEC membership during the 1975 referendum (e.g. Thatcher 1975). As British Prime Minister from 1979, Thatcher advanced the traditional Conservative preference for a marketised Europe, with Britain playing a central role in authoring the Single European Act and in developing the single market (Kenny and Pearce 2018, chap. 5). It is unclear, however, whether she initially grasped the full political implications of this treaty change, which set the course towards ever closer union (Kenny and Pearce 2018, 115). Nevertheless, by the late Eighties Thatcher's stance on European integration had hardened, with her speech at Bruges now commonly thought of as a landmark intervention in Eurosceptic discourse. In the next subsection I therefore explore Thatcher's Bruges speech and interrogate its relationship with the *varieties* and *modes* of nostalgia that I identified in the NRC materials above.

Margaret Thatcher and the Bruges speech

Like the NRC in 1975, Thatcher exhibited Churchillian inspiration with respect to Britain's world role and its relationship with 'Europe'. Compatible with his preference for the open sea, Churchill had argued that Britain held an exceptional position at the intersection of three spheres of influence, comprising continental Europe, "Anglo-America", and the British Commonwealth and Empire (Gamble 2012b, 473). In a departure from NRC campaigners who had favoured the Commonwealth, however, Thatcher typically emphasised the American sphere of influence (Gamble 2012a). At Bruges, for example, she concluded symbolically by invoking the "Atlantic Community – that Europe on both sides of the Atlantic—which is our noblest inheritance and our greatest strength" (Thatcher 1988). The speech was further peppered with telling references to America as an economic exemplar and historic guarantor of security and freedom (Thatcher 1988). Despite such an emphasis on the so-called special relationship between Britain and the United States, however, the Bruges speech did contain some favourable references to European integration – possibly in response to advice Thatcher had received from the director of the Conservative Centre for Policy Studies, Hugh Thomas.

Notes from an initial meeting between Thatcher and Thomas suggest that her early "positive" reference at Bruges to Britain's European "destiny" may have been motivated by a desire to make stronger claims against the project's "federalist ideas" later in the speech (Whittingdale 1988; see also Daddow, Gifford, and Wellings 2019, 8–9).[12] Indeed, further analysis of the speech suggests that, despite her apparently favourable overtures towards Europe, Thatcher possessed a distinctive understanding of the national past, which cast Britain and Europe in largely oppositional terms.

Thatcher's Bruges speech was substantially historical, with references to history accounting for around a third of its content (Daddow, Gifford, and Wellings 2019, 15). As Oliver Daddow, Chris Gifford and Ben Wellings have summarised, the speech's historical framing took on three major themes: British exceptionalism, war memory, and (economic) imperialism (Daddow, Gifford, and Wellings 2019, 15–18). The authors argue that the prominent appearance of these themes in the final version of the speech reflected Thatcher's victory in several "battles" with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) which, records suggest, had tried to dilute some of the most contentious aspects of her chosen historical reference points (Daddow, Gifford, and Wellings 2019, 15–18). These victories, the authors argue, mean that the Bruges speech should be viewed as a "strategic narrative", one that advances "history with a purpose", in service of furthering Thatcher's Atlanticist agenda, and preference for a weaker form of European integration (Daddow, Gifford, and Wellings 2019, 15). Whilst recognising that strategic framing is part of any public form of communication, however, I suggest that predominantly strategic interpretations overlook the structural power of history's nostalgic dynamics. I argue instead that Thatcher's Bruges speech reflects the persistence and adaptation of extant Eurosceptic nostalgias for Britain's imperial, colonial and military past – identified in the NRC materials above – implicated in drawing the boundaries of the Prime Minister's policy preferences. On this view, Thatcher's nostalgias continued to respond to declinist interpretations of Britain's global standing, which suggested a desire for national "renewal", and utilised the Cold War context to heighten perceptions of Britain's

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[12] Interestingly, meeting notes were recorded in the hand of Thatcher's aide, John Whittingdale, who would advance her Euroscepticism upon his own election to Parliament in 1992 and go on to become a member of Vote Leave's campaign committee (Vote Leave 2016c).

historic separateness from Europe and similarity with America (Gamble 2012a, 224–25; Kenny and Pearce 2018, 108–13).

Thatcher's references to the desirability of global trade liberalisation recalled the arguments of the NRC in the 1975 referendum which, couched in a nostalgia mode that tempered the overt expression of nostalgic loss and longing, was nonetheless an echo of a lost imperial past (Thatcher 1988). Yet despite these somewhat muted tones, the majority of the Bruges speech was cast in a nostalgia mode that was much more explicitly emotive and suggested the presence of feeling rules that valued the overt display of emotion. Indeed, Thatcher herself described her historical framing in emotive terms, suggesting at Bruges that her chosen reference points were "no arid chronicle of obscure facts from the dust-filled libraries of history" (Thatcher, 1988 cited in Daddow et al. 2019, 15). As such, in this speech, Thatcher constructed a striking nostalgic narrative in which Britain (or a combination of Britain and America) appeared as regular saviours of a continental Europe now threatening to emulate Soviet federalism. This approach built on dual nostalgias for militarised Britishness and colonial connection previously expressed by the NRC. Like in the NRC's televised broadcasts, for example, Thatcher now adopted an evocative nostalgia mode, which conjured Britain as an "island fortress" from which "the liberation of Europe itself was mounted" (Thatcher 1988). Placed within a broader account of Britain as a beacon of liberty from the rights enshrined in Magna Carta 1215 to its historic position as "a home for people from the rest of Europe who sought sanctuary from tyranny", such interventions were suggestive of a desire to reconnect with a distinguished lineage of national identity (Thatcher 1988).

A similar propensity for nostalgic narratives of temporal reconnection had been on display earlier in Thatcher's premiership when she argued in the Conservative Party 1983 general election manifesto that "Our history is the story of a free people – a great chain of people stretching back into the past and forward into the future. All are linked by a common belief in freedom and in Britain's greatness" (Thatcher 1983). Thatcher's nostalgias therefore appear to have exceeded the exigencies of the Bruges speech alone, suggesting that her victories over its historical framing are at least in part indicative of nostalgia's structural power within persistent narratives of British separateness and 'greatness', which made her opposition towards European federalism the obvious conclusion. Indeed, the nostalgic

sentiments expressed so clearly at Bruges in turn became a touchstone for further generations of Eurosceptic campaigners, with the legacies of Thatcher's Euroscepticism arguably only increasing following her exit from office (Fontana and Parsons 2015, 97). The speech, for example, spurred the creation of a think tank of the same name, the Bruges Group, co-founded by Lord Harris, a former director of conservative think tank the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), with Thatcher as Honorary President (Matthew Barrett 2013). Ostensibly responsible for producing research on Britain and Europe, the Bruges Group also enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with a significant number of Conservative parliamentarians and became an organising component of the 1992-1993 parliamentary rebellion over the Maastricht Treaty (Matthew Barrett 2013). As I highlight below, the prominent role of Thatcher's ideological "children" during the Maastricht era led, over time, to the constitution of further emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics (Young 1998, 396; Fontana and Parsons 2015, 97).[13]

Thatcher's 'children' and the Maastricht era

The procedural intricacies of the Maastricht era have been explored in detail elsewhere (e.g. D. Baker, Gamble, and Ludlam 1993; 1994; Young 1998, chaps 10–11). Nevertheless, it is pertinent to reflect briefly here on how earlier nostalgias seeped into the Eurosceptic discourse of this time. Though not a monolithic group, the so-called Maastricht rebels were all generally concerned by the Treaty's progression towards "irrevocable" economic and political union (D. Baker, Gamble, and Ludlam 1994, 46). As perhaps the most visible and active member of this group, Conservative MP Bill Cash rehearsed a series of arguments against these plans that perpetuated earlier seams of nostalgia for the British "way of life" (Young 1998, 403). As Hugo Young summarises, "a critique developed which asserted that the differences between island and mainland were written into history: were unalterable: were, sadly, part of the ineluctable order of things" (Young 1998, 403) . At times during this period, anti-German sentiment, which had underscored nostalgic references to Britain's wartime

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[13] The 1992 intake included Thatcher's former aide John Whittingdale, future Conservative party leader Iain Duncan-Smith, and now prominent Eurosceptic figures such as Liam Fox and Bernard Jenkin. Contemporary Conservative politicians who have gravitated towards Euroscepticism were also circling parliament during this era, including David Davis in his capacity as the government's Assistant Chief Whip, and Boris Johnson, from his position as a journalist at the *Telegraph* (D. Baker, Gamble, and Ludlam 1993, 152; Young 1998, 433; Fontana and Parsons 2015, 97).

'greatness' from the 1975 referendum to Thatcher's premiership, was rendered particularly explicit. Such sentiments were codified in a Eurosceptic volume that Cash published in 1991, in which he implied "that Germany was an arrogant menace to the peace, epitomized in [Cash's] observation that "her previous bids for power have been made in the name of 'Europe'"" (Cash cited in Young 1998, 390). Elsewhere, sentiments of Britain's essential separateness from Europe were echoed by Conservative MP Michael Spicer, who also represented the empire variants of Eurosceptic nostalgia, advocating free markets and free trade (Young 1998, 391, 404–5).

The persistent repetition of these themes throughout the early Nineties, largely couched in an overt nostalgia mode that was suggestive both of deep-rooted nostalgia moods and of the cultural value that Tory rebels afforded to explicit forms of nostalgic expression, led Conservative Prime Minister John Major to comment exasperatedly that his party was "harking back to a golden age that never was, and is now invented" (Major 1993 cited in Baker et al. 1994, 37). Although the Maastricht Treaty's adoption was eventually approved by Parliament, this era of campaigning against European integration led to an explosion in the number of formal Eurosceptic organisations. The Bruges Group later catalogued twenty-seven such groups, many of which enjoyed the patronage of Baroness Thatcher herself, or of her ideological 'children' (Young 1998, 391). At their inauguration, these organisations operated along the length of Szczerbiak and Taggart's hard-soft spectrum of elite Euroscepticism (see Chapter One). Towards the softer end of the spectrum were groups who rejected specific EU policies and further integration measures, but not the prospect of European cooperation per se. These groups included Conservatives Against a Federal Europe (CAFE) – organised around the "Whipless Eight" Tory rebels and veteran Eurosceptic Sir Richard Body (see Isaby and Elliott 2017; Rotherham 2018), Spicer's European Research Group (ERG), Cash's European Foundation, and the Bruges Group (D. Baker 2001, 278). At the hard end of the spectrum were those who advocated outright withdrawal from what was now the European Union. Such groups included those founded by members with ties to the Bruges Group, such as the Anti-Federalist League (later known as UKIP) and the think tank Global Britain (D. Baker 2001, 278).

The groups at the softer end of this spectrum were united by a preference for the renegotiation of Britain's EU membership terms, referendum on further integration measures and the repatriation of powers from 'Europe'. Although employed in service of a dry legal argument about national sovereignty, the language of repatriation, reportedly initiated in a speech by Howard in 1996 (Young 1998, 402), called to mind wartime efforts to ensure that British invalids were returned to the national homeland. It also recalled the meaning implied by the "old Tory right" when figures such as Enoch Powell had advocated the "repatriation", or return 'home', of 'invading' immigrants (Young 1998, 402)(see Chapter Five). Despite the expressly nostalgic connotations of temporality and home that the term implied, however, its use by Howard and others in the post-Maastricht era actually represented a watering down of earlier nostalgia modes which, as discussed above, had advanced more specific (anti-German) imaginaries of British wartime heroism. CAFE's calls to "regain control" over national fishing and agricultural policies exhibited a similarly tempered relationship with nostalgic themes (e.g. Conservatives Against a Federal Europe 1998). Although "regain" tendered a restorative claim, and the desire for "control" spoke subtly to imaginaries of historic 'greatness' (Wellings 2016, 373), when attached sparingly to dry legal discussions the nostalgia mode was more suggestive than it was explicit. Indeed, a somewhat muted nostalgia mode was a consistent theme of CAFE's digital presence which – unlike the website of Cash's European Foundation, for example (e.g. European Foundation 2000) – exhibited little collegiality with America and conveyed imperially-inflected nostalgias only through seemingly neutral references to the merits of trade "throughout the world" (e.g. Conservatives Against a Federal Europe 1998). I begin the next section by exploring how a rather muted nostalgia mode also characterised leading Eurosceptic campaign groups in the early 21st Century.

2.2 Eurosceptic emotional communities in early 21st Century Britain

In this section, I explore how the two *modes* and two *varieties* of nostalgia discussed so far, evolved, and were supplemented through different Eurosceptic emotional communities in early 21st Century Britain. I begin to unpack how divergent foreground nostalgia modes – one that favours conventional forms of nostalgic expression and one that tempers such tendencies – characterised two distinctive factions of elite British Eurosceptics. I begin the

section by exploring how the No Euro campaign, active at the turn of the Century in contesting Britain's proposed adoption of the single European currency, reflected the latter mode of nostalgic expression, and catalysed a network of like-minded Eurosceptic professionals that would eventually form the 2016 Vote Leave campaign. Vote Leave's future director Dominic Cummings began his career in Eurosceptic campaigning by leading No Euro before later setting up his own Eurosceptic think tank, the New Frontiers Foundation (NFF). Each of these organisations drew on the imperial and nationalist-militarist varieties of nostalgia, introduced above, but rejected unmodulated displays of backward-looking nostalgic loss and longing. This was particularly true of the NFF, which advanced a temporally complicated but ostensibly forward-looking nostalgia mode. UKIP emerged as a formal Eurosceptic political party around the same time as the groups associated with Cummings but, by contrast, exhibited a more conventional appreciation of nostalgic display. The party also developed a third – anti-immigrant strand – of Eurosceptic nostalgia. Allied to an explicit nostalgia mode, the backward-looking, restorative gaze of UKIP interventions would go on to engender Vote Leave's Eurosceptic referendum rival, the Leave.EU campaign. In the meantime, however, the connections forged through the No Euro campaign were laying the social and discursive foundations for Vote Leave through further Eurosceptic emotional communities tied to an emotionally and temporally tempered nostalgia mode.

The No Euro campaign and the genesis of a contemporary Eurosceptic movement

As the new Millennium approached, with an ostensibly pro-European New Labour government intent on exploring possibilities for Britain converting to the single European currency, Maastricht-era concerns for the EU's progression towards full economic and political union became more urgent. In 1998 Daniel Hannan – a researcher for Spicer's ERG – helped to establish Business for Sterling, a pressure group advocating the maintenance of the British pound, backed by businessman Rodney Leach (later made a Conservative peer), and initially led by future Vote Leave Campaign Director Dominic Cummings (Knight 2016). In September 2000 the group joined with New Europe, an organisation with similar concerns chaired by the Social Democrat Lord Owen, forming the cross-party No Euro campaign to contest the proposed adoption of the single currency (No Euro 2004c). This campaign represented something of a shift in tone from the Maastricht era, eschewing much of the

"decorous intellectualism" of the prior decade (Young 1998, 398) in favour of a simplified and practical focus that presented calls to preserve national sovereignty in terms of the Euro's everyday impact on jobs, pensions, mortgages, small businesses, and public services (No Euro 2004a). During Cummings' tenure at the head of the campaign, for example, the National Health Service (NHS) became the focus of messaging that equated the cost of switching currencies to a year's funding for public health and urged the government to "concentrate on real national priorities" (No Euro 2001a).[14] Yet despite such a shift in tone, the No Euro campaign exhibited some notable continuities with its Eurosceptic forebears, which suggest that it represented a further iteration of a Eurosceptic emotional community.

Though communicated in practical terms, the invocation of the NHS was subtly suggestive of a nostalgia for stereotypical British institutions, and was later joined by campaign materials that called on such diverse national bastions as the British pub and the rebellious spirit of punk rock band, the Sex Pistols (No Euro 2004c). A similar nostalgia rooted in prevailing understandings of Britishness was expressed in particularly striking fashion in a viral campaign video that featured comedian Rik Mayall as Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and suggested that the creation of the single currency was a project akin to the Third Reich (No Euro 2002b). Though apparently a humorous intervention, which even won a marketing award, the comparison between the EU and Nazi Germany drew some controversy and called to mind earlier seams of Eurosceptic nostalgia that drew on imaginaries of Britain's heroic world war roles against 'the Germans' (N. Watt 2002; No Euro 2004c; see also Croft 2012, 112). The EU's oppressive connotations were also conveyed more generally in campaign materials that engaged visuals of handcuffs, which were suggestive of prior Eurosceptic claims that being 'shackled' to the EU ran counter to the natural liberty implied by Britain's geography and history (e.g. No Euro 2000; 2001b). Indeed, on its first anniversary, the No Euro campaign released an advert showing then Chancellor Gordon Brown in handcuffs alongside the phrase "If we joined the euro he would lose control of our economy" (No Euro 2001b). This phrasing reflected a

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[14] As noted in Chapter One, I have accessed materials from defunct Eurosceptic campaign groups through the Internet Archive (Wayback Machine). In the case of the No Euro campaign, confirmation of the specific dates for each of the campaign's core messages is listed on a version of their website from 2004 (No Euro 2004c). It is this page that I have used to accurately date my sources.

broader theme for the campaign, which implicitly quoted earlier interventions of Eurosceptic groups like CAFE in its calls to "keep control" of Britain's economy (No Euro 2004b; 2004e).

Such calls were again suggestive of the vestiges of national 'greatness' underwriting contemporary claims on national sovereignty. Like Eurosceptics of the Thatcher and Maastricht eras, the campaign exhibited a notable Atlanticism that looked beyond the EU and across the high seas to the US as an institutionally more compatible role model and ally (No Euro 2004d; 2004e). Such communications tended to present Britain as possessing a political economy and culture better aligned with its transatlantic cousins than with an EU whose single currency was marred by parallels with the doomed Exchange Rate Mechanism of the early Nineties (No Euro 2004e) and purportedly responsible for economic stagnation and unemployment amongst its early adopters (No Euro 2002a). This specific sense of 'crisis' developed earlier Eurosceptic concerns for British decline and fed persistent nostalgia moods founded on imperial and colonial understandings of Britain's former world role. The No Euro campaign's nostalgias were also expressed, like in the digital interventions of campaign groups like CAFE, considered above, in rather muted tones via a nostalgia mode that only ever hinted at nostalgic loss and longing for Britain's former glories, disguising them instead in practicality, comedy and a forward-looking veneer. As I explore further below, this nostalgia mode was to prove particularly persistent within one faction of British Euroscepticism – a set of emotional communities connected to a "genesis of people" around Cummings and Leach (Anonymous 9, 2018), which formed the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement. I begin to unpack these themes further in the next subsection through a discussion of Cummings' work with a think tank called the New Frontiers Foundation.

Dominic Cummings and the New Frontiers Foundation

The New Frontiers Foundation (NFF) was a short-lived think tank co-founded by Cummings in early 2004 following his exit from the No Euro campaign in 2002 and a brief spell as strategy director for Conservative party leader Iain Duncan-Smith (New Frontiers Foundation 2005a; Mount 2017, 12)[15]. Inspired by US think tanks the Heritage Foundation and the American

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[15] Under the auspices of the NFF, Cummings also helped to create an anti-EU constitution campaign (New Frontiers Foundation 2005a). The new No Campaign (formed from Cummings' initial Vote No

Enterprise Institute, organisations characterised elsewhere as neo-conservative for their devotion to the monetarist economics of Milton Friedman (Klein 2008, 14–15), the NFF promised to develop an "alternative national strategy" for Britain (New Frontiers Foundation 2005a). For the NFF, the EU's integration trajectory was a "step backwards" that doomed the organisation to "failure", "impotence", "decline" and "crisis" on economic, military, cultural and democratic grounds (New Frontiers Foundation 2005b). On this view, participation in the EU was damaging Britain's "influence" and a "renaissance" in education, democracy and liberal economic principles was required such that the country could optimise for its future, "take back powers" and set "a better example to Europe" (New Frontiers Foundation 2005b). Here, like in the No Euro campaign, America appeared as the ultimate ally and exemplar, a country that was purported to be more advanced than Europe on "economic, demographic, technological and cultural" measures, and thus more capable of partnering Britain in "new international trade and defence alliances better able to deal with 21st Century challenges" (New Frontiers Foundation 2005b). Of these 21st Century challenges, Cummings appeared particularly interested himself in scientific and technological progress, lamenting that Britain had "lost its way" in keeping pace with such developments (Cummings 2005, 1).[16]

Here too America appeared as a key exemplar to Britain, especially in its programmes for space exploration, and dedicated and substantial funding for broader technological research and development (Cummings 2005). Such appeals to the US were suggestive of a persistent Atlanticist thread in elite British Euroscepticism, expressed here – like in the earlier No Euro campaign – via a rather muted nostalgia mode that merely implied the historic institutional similarities between Britain and America. Indeed, in some respects Cummings appeared keen to avoid any association with history or nostalgia, such that he could present the "relentlessly future-oriented" projects of scientific and technological advancement in stark contrast with the "backward" EU (Cummings 2005, 1). Yet despite such a forward-looking veneer,

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campaign and the Centre for a Social Europe) reproduced many of the same messages as the earlier No Euro campaign (No Campaign 2005a; 2005b; 2005c). This was most notably apparent in calls to "keep control" of Britain's economy and other aspects of national sovereignty (No Campaign 2005a; 2005c). As I have already covered such arguments in the preceding subsection, I focus here on the NFF as it illuminates further dimensions of Cummings' political thought, which would later animate the Vote Leave campaign.

[16] This blog post appeared on the NFF website and was also published by magazine *The Business* (see Cummings 2005).

Cummings' vision for Britain was rooted in a nostalgia mood which fused the revolutionary possibilities of futuristic technological progress with nostalgic imaginaries of the national past. Cummings opened one NFF article, for example, by invoking Barnes Wallis – the inventor of the 'bouncing bomb' famously portrayed in *The Dam Busters*, a mid-century film about British heroism in the Second World War – and a speech Wallis gave about "a new Elizabethan age" of technological progress in which Britain would once again find itself at the centre of the world (Cummings 2005, 1). Cummings' invocation of Wallis is suggestive of how the futuristic connotations of technological development are linked with the two persistent strands of Eurosceptic nostalgia identified so far in this chapter, embodied in heroic narratives of Britain's imperial and military past (cf. Zaidi 2008). As Stuart Croft has noted, the heroic portrayal of Wallis and his colleagues in *The Dam Busters* advanced a narrative about "individualistic brilliance overcoming systemic conservatism; how the nature of (new) Britishness can overcome the (stifling) old ways" (Croft 2012, 135).

By invoking Wallis, Cummings therefore implied that the capacity for inspirational and courageous innovation was a fundamental feature of the British national spirit, cultivated primarily during the experience of the Second World War but now lost through the nation's close association with the 'backward' EU. Indeed, later in the article, Cummings made further references to the importance of a stereotypical understanding of British culture for national achievement, praising the "expanding culture" of Wallis' formative years and the potential, though "unformed", of then Chancellor Gordon Brown's nascent appeals to national identity (Cummings 2005, 1). Cummings' example of Wallis – and the "new Elizabethan age" he called for – also connected future technological advances to Britain's early imperial exploits, likening contemporary innovations to those fostered under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Indeed, Cummings extended the imperially-rooted comparison further by arguing that Britain's EU membership foreclosed the possibility of "an independent global role base on technological exploration", later lamenting the "once global but now-parochial Britain" (Cummings 2005, 1). Whilst these reference points exhibited some of the traditional nostalgic hallmarks of loss and longing, however, they were always leveraged as part of a narrative that placed great emphasis on the scientific possibilities of the future. As such, the nostalgia mode that Cummings advanced at the NFF was characterised by a complex temporality in which nostalgic loss was superficially tempered by future promise, whilst the ability to achieve such

a future remained underwritten by nostalgic imaginaries of past accomplishments. Such a temporality permeated Cummings' desire to "mak[e] Britain again a global leader articulating a sense of the nations future [sic]" through "a national rediscovery of future orientation" (Cummings 2005, 2). Although the NFF was short-lived, closing in 2005 due to "insufficient reach" (New Frontiers Foundation 2005a), its favoured forward-looking nostalgia mode would persist in subsequent emotional communities of the British Eurosceptic movement. Before I explore the evolution of these communities, however, I first introduce a rival faction of the 21st Century Eurosceptic movement, one that appeared less concerned with tempering nostalgic display: UKIP.

UKIP and the development of a third strand of Eurosceptic nostalgia

UKIP evolved as a political party that embodied much of the spirit of Thatcher's Bruges speech (Tournier-Sol 2015, 142), and indeed was spawned from the Eurosceptic think tank named for that address, the Bruges Group. The party emerged in the early Nineties from the Anti-Federalist League, set up by academic Alan Sked, one of the Bruges Group's original members (Matthew Barrett 2013).[17] UKIP's campaigning style owed much to the expressive nostalgia mode that Thatcher had advanced at Bruges. The party's early manifestos were adorned with the overtly nostalgic imperative: "We want our country back" (especially United Kingdom Independence Party 2005; see also 2001), which operated alongside a raft of policies targeted at reclaiming a lost British way of life. Here, the national past that was apt for restoration was a place where sterling was the only thinkable currency, the armed services received copious funding, streets were well policed, hospitals were presided over by competent Matrons, children were educated in the essential "3 R's"[18] and the glories of British history, family was the bedrock of respectable society, and national institutions – from the Post Office to the pub – were rightly treasured (United Kingdom Independence Party 2001; 2005 passim). Such policy positions, informed by a nostalgia for the stereotypical conservative institutions of Britishness, provided an indicator of what could be reclaimed upon Britain's disengagement from an EU depicted in the militaristic terms of Thatcher and Maastricht-era Eurosceptics as

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[17] Sked famously departed UKIP in 1997, accusing the party of insufficient influence, hypocritical organisational policies and unpalatable far-right extremism (British Broadcasting Corporation 2011).
[18] The 3 R's are reading, writing and arithmetic (pronounced 'rithmetic).

a creeping continental "superstate" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2001, n.d.), "an autocratic machine over which we have no control" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2005, 4). Although UKIP shared Thatcher's ideals in many respects, however, the party exhibited a distinctive stance on Britain's world role. Where Thatcher had emphasised Britain's transatlantic ties with America, UKIP – much like the 1975 referendum's NRC – proffered the Commonwealth as an alternative avenue for international cooperation.

Although UKIP's early manifestos did make reference to the special relationship with the US, it was to the shared history and institutions of the Commonwealth that the party turned to embroider its proposals for an "EU-free world-trading Britain" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2001, n.d.). By the 2010 general election, references to the US had receded such that UKIP could present itself as the "Party of the Commonwealth" and propose the creation of a Commonwealth Free Trade Area (CFTA) (United Kingdom Independence Party 2010, 10). Here, UKIP's arguments suggested a longing to reinstate a rather sanitised version of imperial and colonial relations, not only to capitalise on "friendly trading and cultural links", but also to remedy how the Commonwealth had been "shamefully betrayed and neglected by previous governments" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2010, 10). Such frank references to Commonwealth "betrayal" were also better aligned with UKIP's increasingly populist tone than Thatcher's Atlanticism, which carried subtle "elite" and "technocratic" connotations (Tournier-Sol 2015, 144). UKIP's embrace of populist flourishes was also tied to its increasing focus on immigration, particularly notable following the EU's enlargement in 2004 to include ten Eastern European countries. Immigration had long featured in its campaign materials, where the party had advocated the implementation of a points system that favoured highly skilled workers and was modelled after the policies of former white settler countries like Australia, Canada and New Zealand (United Kingdom Independence Party 2001, n.d.; 2005, 9). Nevertheless, perceived 'crises' of EU enlargement and terrorism enabled the 'issue' of immigration to become further yoked to UKIP's longstanding nostalgic narratives of Britishness. In its 2010 manifesto, UKIP declared that "Britain has lost control of her borders", claimed that increased immigration since 1997 was "a deliberate attempt [by New Labour] to water down the British identity and buy votes", and vowed to "end the active promotion of the doctrine of multiculturalism" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2010, 5-6).

Most striking, however, was the final section of the document, entitled "Culture and Restoring Britishness" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2010, 13-15). Under this explicitly nostalgic restorative banner, UKIP promised to promote "uniculturalism" and mitigate against "threats to British identity and culture", even whilst it claimed to reject the "ethnic nationalism of extremist parties" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2010, 13). Indeed, the party argued that it would "restore British values", by which it meant: advance a flattering account of British history, "tackle extremist Islam", commemorate Commonwealth ties and prioritise "English" politics (United Kingdom Independence Party 2010, 13-14). Such messaging appeared to be the logical extension to the party's earlier, conservative calls of "We want our country back", this time adding an explicitly racialised dimension to prior nostalgias for the everyday institutions of Britishness. Here, UKIP advanced an explicit foreground nostalgia mode that employed the backward-looking temporality of restorative language to invoke a comforting retreat into racial homogeneity amidst immigration 'crisis'. As such, the party developed a third strand of Eurosceptic nostalgia, which supplemented the extant varieties affiliated with imperial and war memory, to drive British Euroscepticism in an inflammatory anti-immigrant direction.[19] Indeed, the proposals outlined in UKIP's 2010 general election manifesto achieved enough popular support to deliver the party's best domestic electoral performance yet (Audickas and Cracknell 2018, 8). This election also ushered in a new generation of Conservative parliamentarians, who were important in committing David Cameron's Conservative government to the promise of holding a new referendum on Britain's EU membership. I provide a brief overview of these machinations further below and discuss how they contributed to the creation of contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic emotional communities, which remain largely overlooked in the academic literature on elite British Euroscepticism.

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[19] Although the short-lived No Campaign had in 2005 made brief reference to the impact of a proposed EU constitution on British immigration policy (e.g. No Campaign 2005a, 4), I contend that UKIP's sustained, distinctive and increasingly high-profile focus on immigration really developed this third strand of Eurosceptic nostalgia.

Renegotiation and referendum – the Fresh Start Project and Business for Britain

The activities of parliamentary Eurosceptics following the 2010 general election contributed to the creation of further Conservative Eurosceptic campaign groups – each linked to Business for Sterling's Lord Leach (see above) – that would lay the foundations for the 2016 referendum and its official Vote Leave campaign. The 2010 election introduced an ardent new cohort of Conservative Eurosceptic MPs to parliament who, encouraged by the rise of UKIP and the Conservative party's manifesto commitment to a referendum on any further transfer of powers to the EU, began mobilising for a wholesale referendum on Britain's EU membership (Gamble 2012b, 468). The campaign was led in October 2011 in parliament by new Conservative backbencher David Nuttall. Backed by a public petition, Nuttall triggered a debate and parliamentary vote on the issue of a membership referendum (Gamble 2012b, 468). Although the bill failed to progress through parliament, the House of Commons vote provided (what was at the time) the most substantial government defeat on Europe in post-war history, with 81 Conservative MPs defying a three-line government whip to vote in favour of a referendum, and a further 15 abstaining (Gamble 2012b, 468; Shipman 2016, 8). More than half of this group of rebels was comprised of new Conservative MPs from the 2010 intake (Gamble 2012b, 468), three of whom subsequently founded the Eurosceptic pressure group the Fresh Start Project (FSP). In November 2011, the FSP was formed by the new parliamentary rebels George Eustice – a former UKIP candidate who had led the No Euro campaign in 2002 following Cummings' departure (Mount 2017, 12), Chris Heaton-Harris and Andrea Leadsom.

The group's name harked back to Maastricht-era calls for a "fresh start with the future development of the EEC" and the Fresh Start group of parliamentary rebels from that time (see D. Baker, Gamble, and Ludlam 1994, 54; Young 1998, 393). Comprising over a hundred Conservative MPs (Lynch and Whitaker 2018, 34), the FSP was supported by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for European Reform, also co-chaired by Leadsom, and the extra-parliamentary think tank Open Europe, founded in 2005 by Lord Leach (House of Commons 2015). Pushing for a fundamental renegotiation of Britain's EU membership terms followed by a referendum, the FSP is best known for its publication of two reports – the 2012 "Options for Change" Green Paper and 2013 "Manifesto for Change", which each contained

a Foreword by long-term Conservative Eurosceptic and then Foreign Secretary William Hague (Fresh Start Project 2012; 2013; see Shipman 2016, 119). In the context of recent financial and Eurozone 'crises', these reports were notable for their insistence that the "status quo" of Britain's EU membership was neither available nor desirable (Fresh Start Project 2012, 1, 7; 2013, 3). Such an invocation of 'crisis' paved the way for the group to rehabilitate Maastricht-era calls for the implicitly nostalgic "repatriation" to Britain of powers in eleven policy areas from free trade to defence (e.g. Fresh Start Project 2012, 16). As in its use by prior Eurosceptic campaigns of the post-Maastricht era, the language of repatriation echoed the persistent nostalgic theme of war memory, tinged by Powellite concerns over growing immigration.

Indeed, whereas the earlier No Euro campaign had lamented the Euro area's insufficient labour market flexibility and freedom of movement (No Euro 2004e), the FSP aligned with subsequent Eurosceptic narratives, most notably propounded by UKIP, to afford the so-called dangers of uncontrolled immigration dedicated attention. The FSP's Manifesto argued that immigration posed a threat to British "infrastructure and public services", with migrants presented as welfare cheats and criminals (Fresh Start Project 2013, 32). Though couched in largely dry legalistic terms and supported by the neutral aura of statistical evidence, these passages also invoked the emotive signifiers of Britain's island geography and history. Here, the campaign suggested that the "significant influx" of migrants from Eastern Europe in recent years risked overwhelming the nation's limited resources (Fresh Start Project 2013, 33), whilst it later argued more explicitly that "Despite being an island nation" Britain was unfairly responsible for processing a disproportionate number of asylum claims (Fresh Start Project 2013, 34). Such assertions were suggestive of how Britain's island mentality – initially related to the imperial and militarised varieties of nostalgia, noted above – was implicated in the anti-immigration Eurosceptic sentiment developed by UKIP. Yet although the FSP sometimes adopted emotive language, unlike UKIP the expression of conventional backward-looking nostalgia throughout FSP texts was rather muted. Indeed, the image that graced the cover of most of the group's reports, including the two cited here, was reminiscent of prior Conservative Eurosceptic nostalgia modes, which favoured a hybrid representation of past, present and future. With its rolling green hills, glaring sunshine and Union Jack typography, this image called to mind the nostalgic "sunlit uplands" of Churchill's wartime "finest hour"

speech (Churchill 1940), whilst emphasising the visionary possibilities of a fresh British future (see Figure 4 below).

Redacted image.

Cover of the FSP's "Manifesto for Change". Bright sun shining over grassy green hill. FSP logo formed from Union Jack.
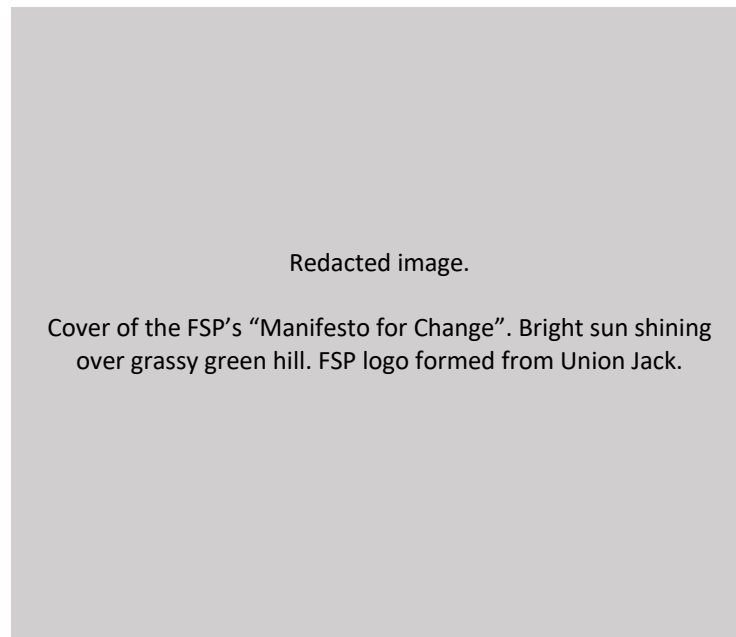
Figure 4: Cover of the Fresh Start Project's "Manifesto for Change"
Source: Fresh Start Project 2013

Around the same time as the Fresh Start Project was mobilising for a membership referendum, Lord Leach encouraged the creation of another organisation that would prepare for such an event (Anonymous 1 & 9, 2018). In 2012 Leach met with Daniel Hannan (former ERG researcher, now a Conservative MEP) and Matthew Elliott (a veteran of conservative and Eurosceptic campaigning from Cash's European Foundation, to the Taxpayers' Alliance and the 2011 referendum on introducing an Alternative Voting system in Britain (NOtoAV)) (Anonymous 9, 2018)(see Companies House n.d.). Under growing pressure from Eurosceptics both inside and outside of parliament, in his 2013 speech at Bloomberg Cameron finally declared his intention to renegotiate Britain's EU membership terms and subsequently hold an "in-out" referendum (Cameron 2013). Following Cameron's announcement, Elliott launched Business for Britain, supported by a small research staff and "council" of business leaders (Business for Britain 2013). The group initially claimed a rather narrow remit of exposing the disproportionate impact of EU regulation on small-medium sized British businesses (Business for Britain 2014a; 2014b), a UKIP policy area that played to Thatcher's imaginary of the "industrious petit-bourgeois shopkeeper" (see Valluvan and Kalra 2019, 2402–3), and reflected Elliott's own fervent Thatcherism (Elliott 2019b). In early 2015,

however, the group made a much more substantial intervention in the debate by advancing a multifaceted rejection of the "status quo" of Britain's EU membership (e.g. Business for Britain 2015a, 29–30, passim). Running to over a thousand pages, the "Change or Go" report – sponsored by the *Telegraph Media Group* – detailed "How Britain would gain influence and prosper outside an unreformed EU" (Business for Britain 2015a, 1; see 2015b). Drawing in part on recent work by the Fresh Start Project (Business for Britain 2015, 192-6), the report made a wide-ranging case for fundamental EU reform and a referendum. Nevertheless, as its title suggested, and as one of its author's later confirmed, the proposed reforms were so radical as to be tantamount to advocating outright withdrawal (Lewis 2019).

The image chosen to grace the cover of this report was, once again, striking (see Figure 5 below). The cover showed an illustration of the British Isles, which highlighted the stereotypical national attributes that would assist an independent Britain. Here, Britain was depicted as the home of Adam Smith and Enlightenment ideas, common law, the Queen, and notable cultural outputs from Shakespeare to football. The veneration of such national institutions was joined by imperial and colonial themes which, whilst prioritising free trade, also exaggerated the spiritual and spatial closeness between Britain and America. Whilst Britain's future relationship with the countries of continental Europe and farther afield was portrayed in primarily business terms, ties to America were depicted as cultural and historical as well as commercial. The top of the map of Britain, for example, was dominated by a statue of liberty with lines extending to America that suggested close links in common law traditions, Enlightenment ideas and values of freedom and justice. The image's prominent portrayal of the prevalence of the English language also served to heighten Britain's similarities with the US in preference to its continental neighbours. Rendered in sepia tones reminiscent of an antique map, the image might support interpretations of a rather explicit nostalgia mode. Nevertheless, the cover's hue also suggested similarities with the pink pages of the *Financial Times* newspaper, a comparison befitting of the group's ostensibly neutral business agenda. As such, whilst the illustration was imbued with imperial and colonial themes, and a fondness for stereotypical portrayals of Britishness, its playful cartoon-like style and inclusion of futuristic imagery, representing "digital", satellite and internet technologies, suggested the operation of a nostalgia mode that could also be read in forward-looking terms. In the next section of the chapter, 2.3, I discuss how BfB's distinctive brand of nostalgia fed into the

creation of the 2016 EU referendum's Vote Leave campaign. First, however, I return to my discussion of UKIP so that I can later explore how the party's more conventional nostalgic traditions spurred the creation of the Brexit referendum's second Leave campaign: Leave.EU.

Redacted image.

Cover of BfB's "Change, or go" report. Black line illustration of British map depicting stereotypical national features. Sepia-pink background.
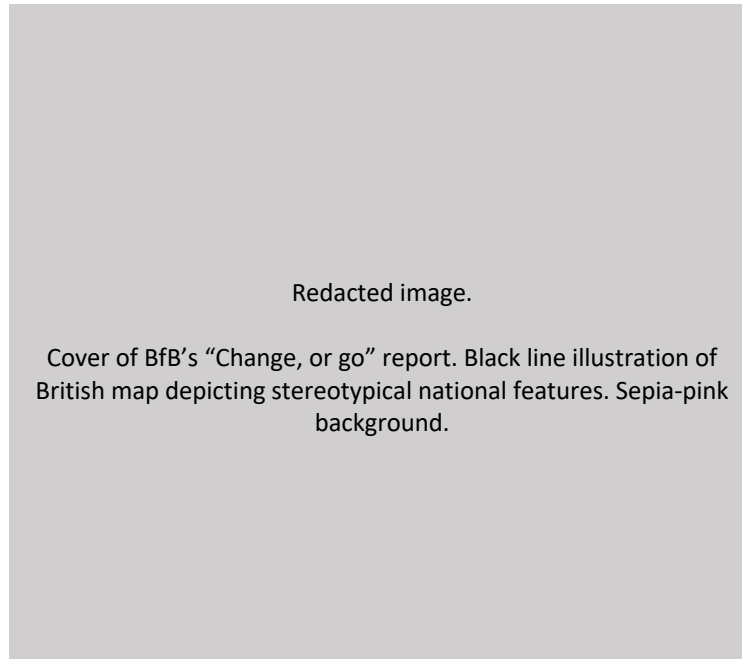
Figure 5: Cover of Business for Britain's "Change, or go" report
Source: Business for Britain 2015

UKIP in the Farage era

UKIP's success at the 2010 general election ushered in Nigel Farage's rise to prominence in British politics. As party leader, Farage made much of UKIP's Thatcherite credentials, writing in 2011 that the Bruges speech had "precisely encapsulated my personal feelings" (Farage 2011, 58 cited in Tournier-Sol 2015, 142). Following Thatcher and Churchill, Farage often also emphasised Britain's island mentality, insisting that:

The fact is we just don't belong in the European Union. Britain is different. Our geography puts us apart. Our history puts us apart. Our institutions produced by that history put us apart. We think differently. We behave differently (Farage 2013 cited in Tournier-Sol 2015, 143).

This deep-rooted nostalgic narrative of Britain's separateness was echoed in aesthetic forms of communication, such as in adverts the party commissioned for the European Parliament elections in 2014. Described at the time by one advertising industry publication as UKIP's "biggest ever" campaign, adverts included an image of the EU flag burning a hole through the heart of a Union Jack, to connote Britain's loss of sovereignty, and an escalator ascending the island boundaries of the white cliffs of Dover to connote mass immigration, each alongside calls to "Take back control of our country" (see Figure 6 below) (Haggerty 2014).[20] Although these images did not employ the explicit aesthetic codes of nostalgic 'pastness', when shown in tandem with the campaign's restorative slogan, they were suggestive of a nostalgic loss and longing with colonial and military inflections. Indeed, the cliffs – dubbed by Farage "the most powerful image of the entire European election campaign" (Farage 2014 cited in Haggerty 2014) – echoed imperial and Second World War representations of Britain's island boundaries as the first line of defence against foreign invasion (cf. Gilroy 2005, 23).

Redacted image.

UKIP European Parliament Election Poster 2014. Photograph of an escalator ascending the white cliffs of Dover accompanied by slogan: "Take back control of our country".
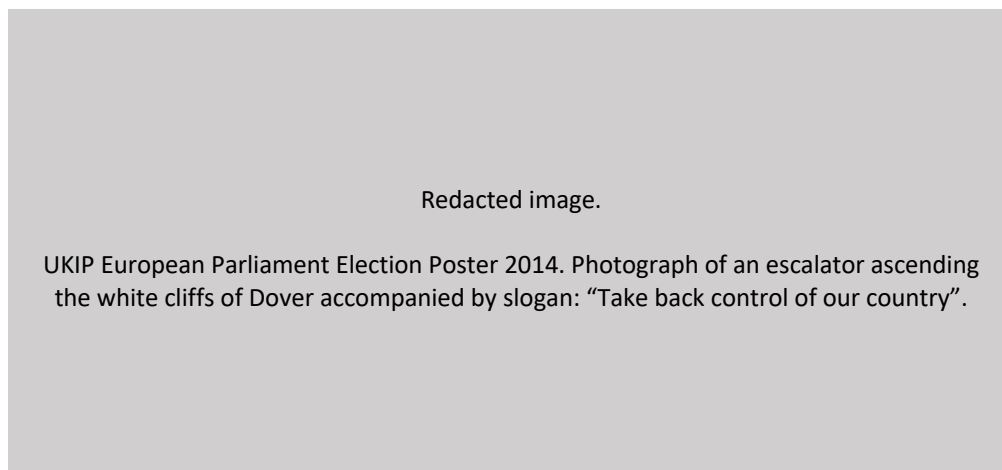
Figure 6: UKIP European Parliament Election Poster 2014
Source: Haggerty 2014

UKIP also operated unequivocally within a linear, "chronological understanding of British history and achievements", commencing with Magna Carta in 1215 (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 3, 61). Such an exceptional understanding of the national past underpinned claims that "we are more than just a star on someone else's flag" (United

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[20] Other images in this series included one that depicted the homelessness of a construction worker; one that juxtaposed the "daily grind" of ordinary people with the luxurious lifestyle of a "Eurocrat"; and one that featured a finger pointing outwards, suggesting that immigrants were unfairly taking British jobs (see Haggerty 2014).

Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 5, 60–61). Indeed, UKIP insisted that Britain was "the envy of the world for our rich history, our art and architecture, our monarchy" and that the achievements of "great Britons" had helped to "transform" or "shape the modern world" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 50, 61). The expansive imperial and colonial connotations of such phrasing were rendered particularly explicit when the party repurposed the slogan of the 1975 referendum's NRC to call for Britain to step "Out of the EU and into the world" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 63). Here, however, UKIP departed from its prior appeals to the promise of Commonwealth cooperation and instead directly invoked "the Anglosphere" – a loose organisation most commonly associated with Britain's former white settler colonies – as a preferable "network of nations that share not merely our language, but our common law, democratic traditions and global trading interests" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 67). Whilst Anglospherist imaginaries possess futuristic connotations (see Chapter Four), UKIP's direct reference to the organisation alongside its historically rooted features appears rather nostalgic. Indeed, UKIP's 2015 general election manifesto perpetuated the party's earlier preference for a rather traditional foreground nostalgia mode, which values the direct representation of loss, longing and backward-looking 'pastness'. Here, UKIP's previous restorative cries of "We want our country back" were echoed in calls to "claim back our heritage from the 'chattering classes' who have denigrated our culture, highlighted our failings" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 61). Indeed, much like in previous years, UKIP's appeals to conserve "British culture" were pitched against an immigration 'crisis' in which the nation's island "shores" were under continued threat from 'foreigners' (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 10-13, 53)

In this context, the party intensified its rhetoric of "control", promising once more to "take back control of our borders" and "give our country the breathing space it desperately needs" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 11). The latter metaphor complemented a specific sense of 'crisis' the party invoked around migrant access to the NHS, with UKIP referring to the health service as "Britain's best-loved institution […] in crisis" and a bastion of Britishness that was "close to breaking point" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 15). In this context, UKIP's calls to "take back control" were suggestive of the nostalgic desire to restore the pre-eminence of the native population. Indeed, the party explicitly promised to "put the 'national' back into our national health service" (United Kingdom Independence

Party 2015, 16). Overtly nostalgic language also featured elsewhere in the manifesto, notably in a section on national heritage that vowed to "protect our green and pleasant land", "save the great British pub" and "keep" British history as the "envy of the world" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 51). Such imaginaries of a threatened Britishness, or perhaps more accurately a threatened Englishness (Wellings 2010, 503), culminated in the manifesto's treatment of the prospect of Brexit. Against the prominent background of a Union Jack, the party made its case for EU withdrawal, combining its prior claims about British culture and achievement with language that painted the EU in dictatorial terms suggestive of the anti-German seams of militarised Eurosceptic nostalgia discussed earlier in the chapter (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 70-71). Indeed, like the NRC in the 1975 referendum and later Thatcher, it was to the 'great' wartime leader Churchill that UKIP explicitly turned, employing his famous quote about Britain being "with Europe, but not of it" to portray Brexit as an urgent matter of national "destiny" (United Kingdom Independence Party 2015, 70-71). Such statements, like the party's wider calls for the public to "Believe in Britain", were supported here by an expressive nostalgia mode, which sought to directly rehabilitate a glorious version of the nation's past. I return to these themes in the next section, where I summarise the different *varieties* and *modes* of nostalgia considered so far in order to show how they contributed to the creation of two rival Eurosceptic emotional communities in 2016's EU referendum.

2.3 The nostalgic Eurosceptic communities of the 2016 Brexit referendum

In this section, I review the development of elite British Euroscepticism according to three thematic *varieties* of nostalgia and two *modes* of nostalgic expression. I begin the section by recapping how the material introduced above points to the evolution of a trio of Eurosceptic nostalgias – one relating to prevailing imaginaries of heroic Britishness, another rooted in memories of the British empire, and a further concerned with preserving Britain's racial integrity – which go on to structure the remaining thesis chapters. Although these persistent nostalgic themes are shared by contemporary Eurosceptics, different campaign groups have emphasised different aspects of them over time. Such differences include divergent reference points within the same overarching nostalgic theme and peculiarities in how nostalgia's

emotive and temporal dimensions are discursively emphasised via a foreground nostalgia mode. I contend that such an uneven evolution of elite British Euroscepticism is accounted for by the emergence of two distinctive sets of Eurosceptic emotional communities, each comprised of a specific group of nostalgic individuals and a peculiar set of feeling rules governing nostalgia's discursive display. On this view, a traditional appreciation of the value of nostalgic expression has cultivated successive emotional communities on the Thatcherite Tory right and UKIP wing of elite British Euroscepticism. Such groups are convened and distinguished by an explicit nostalgia mode that favours the overt representation of loss, longing and 'pastness'. By contrast, a rival set of emotional communities has emerged within the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement and is represented by a nostalgia mode that favours an emotively attenuated and ostensibly forward-looking appearance. As I explore in the remainder of the section, these competing foreground nostalgia modes, and their corresponding background nostalgia moods, have subsequently engendered the rival Eurosceptic campaigns of the 2016 Brexit referendum: the UKIP-aligned Leave.EU and the predominantly Conservative Vote Leave.

Unpacking the nostalgias of the British Eurosceptic movement

In the preceding sections of this chapter, I explored how the discursive traditions of the elite Eurosceptic movement in Britain have evolved in relation to nostalgia. From the mid–late 20th Century, I identified two nostalgic themes – one relating to memories of British empire and another relating to prevailing understandings of Britishness, particularly those with military inflections derived from imaginaries of the nation's heroic roles in the 20th Century world wars. Here, I built on extant work on elite British Euroscepticism to suggest that a perceived 'crisis' in Britain's contemporary international roles, personified by the nation's EU membership, had catalysed such nostalgias, which are rooted in dominant ideas about past glories. Although these nostalgic strands were employed differently over time by successive Eurosceptic campaign groups (see below), the same core themes persisted into the early 21st Century, where they were joined by a third variety of Eurosceptic nostalgia concerned with restoring Britain's racial integrity amidst a 'crisis' of mass immigration. In the subsequent chapters of the thesis, I further explore this trio of Eurosceptic nostalgias, drawing additional details about their historic evolution together with a case study of the 2016 Brexit referendum

Vote Leave campaign, in order to unpack how they interact. I begin this process in the next chapter, Chapter Three, where I discuss how the variety of nostalgia grounded in often-militarised imaginaries of heroic Britishness is deeply enmeshed with a peculiar historiographical practice. In the following chapter, I then discuss how such historiographies underpin the variety of nostalgia that draws on imaginaries of British empire (see Chapter Four). In the final chapter, I explore how the nostalgic threads investigated in Chapters Three & Four both feed the racialised, anti-immigrant iteration of nostalgia (see Chapter Five).

In dividing my chapters this way, I also identify the operation of three distinctive temporalities relating to different varieties of nostalgia, which possess both overlapping and contradictory qualities that I return to in the thesis Conclusion. As I highlighted in Chapter One, temporality is important for our understanding of nostalgia in at least two senses – firstly in terms of how nostalgic Eurosceptic discourses and institutions have evolved over time, and secondly in terms of the significance of temporality to the discursive representation of nostalgia itself (see Chapter One). My overview of the discursive interventions of successive Eurosceptic campaign groups in this chapter has pointed to the uneven development of Britain's nostalgic Eurosceptic traditions in both senses of temporality. Although Eurosceptic campaign groups to some extent share common goals and a common heritage, the evidence presented above points to the differential evolution of two sets of nostalgic emotional communities with peculiar discursive traditions. As noted above, whilst these communities are united by their operation within three persistent nostalgic themes – relating to prevailing understandings of Britishness, memories of British empire, and concerns over the nation's racial integrity – each community has emphasised different aspects of these narratives. To take one example, campaign groups associated with Cummings and the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement leveraged the nostalgic strand inflected with memories of British empire to emphasise Britain's historic links with America, whilst a rival faction of Eurosceptic elites represented by UKIP employed the same variety of nostalgia in its distinctive appeals to the Commonwealth and Anglosphere. Differences in the specific referents of each emotional community's nostalgic traditions are, however, only one aspect of their contrasting evolution. Equally important is the way in which nostalgia has itself been differentially represented according to institutional conventions governing its emotive and temporal dimensions.

On this view, the evidence presented above points to the evolution of two distinctive foreground nostalgia modes, indicative of peculiar conventions governing nostalgia's appropriate display (see Chapter One). The first of these modes approximates the style of the Graingian iteration that I introduced in Chapter One and is traditionally nostalgic in that it manifests characteristic feelings of loss, longing and backward-looking 'pastness'. The second mode is closer in style to the Jamesonian iteration (see Chapter One), and is characterised by a more muted nostalgic tone that downplays feelings of loss and longing, offering a temporal hybrid of past, present and future such that it might be interpreted in primarily forward-looking terms. Each of these foreground nostalgia modes, and their corresponding background nostalgia moods, I suggest, has come to constitute a different set of emotional communities within the British Eurosceptic movement. Here, I view an emotional community as an assemblage of individuals who, to adapt extant scholarship on ideas, are the initial "carriers" of emotions like nostalgia (cf. Schmidt 2008, 306), which are collectivised in shared structures of feeling (background nostalgia moods) through institutional conventions governing nostalgia's discursive display (foreground nostalgia modes) (see Chapter One). Put differently, individual emotions become collective and constitutive of emotional communities through their discursive representation, mediated by feeling rules, which draw on a surrounding meaning context that attributes cultural value to peculiar socially appropriate forms of nostalgic representation (see Chapter One). On this view, whilst background nostalgia moods are sparked by the perception of 'crisis' – which, as above, might refer to broad anxieties about British decline or to more specific threats posed by EU policies – their foreground expression in a nostalgia mode is influenced by the peculiar social value attached to nostalgic display within a particular cultural environment.

The examples explored above suggest that the explicit (Graingian) variant of the nostalgia mode has constituted successive Eurosceptic emotional communities emanating from part of the Thatcherite right of the Conservative Party and UKIP.[21] Whilst there is evidence of the use of this nostalgia mode during the 1975 referendum, it was most strikingly embodied in Thatcher's Bruges speech, the spirit of which filtered through to the Eurosceptic campaigning

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[21] The close association between UKIP and the Tory right has also been well documented, and further evidenced by high-profile Conservative defections to the party in the years preceding the 2016 referendum (see Tournier-Sol 2015, 147; Mount 2017, chap. 1).

of Thatcher's 'children' in the Maastrict era, and later to UKIP. Indeed, as noted above, Farage viewed UKIP as the natural heir to Thatcher's sentiments at Bruges. The direct representation of emotion in this nostalgia mode suggests the presence of feeling rules within UKIP which respond to a broader cultural context that values overt nostalgic display, perhaps due to its comforting properties, or for its connotations of legitimacy and authenticity (see Chapter One). By contrast, the examples above also point to the constitution of another set of successive Eurosceptic emotional communities via a nostalgia mode more concerned with tempering the explicit display of emotion. The presence of this nostalgia mode suggests the cultural cache of appearing emotionally neutral and temporally forward-looking and is best represented by the organisations from the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement associated with Lord Leach and Dominic Cummings. There are, of course, both differences within and similarities between the Eurosceptic emotional communities constituted by these two nostalgia modes, which should be viewed as ideal types that best characterise the historical roots of a community's nostalgic tendencies rather than fixed standards to which all of its subsequent communications conform. In the next subsection, I take up these themes and outline how the fracturing of the British Eurosceptic movement into two primary nostalgic emotional communities persisted into the 2016 Brexit referendum, beginning with a discussion of the origins of the Vote Leave and Leave.EU campaigns.

Introducing the Leave campaigns of the 2016 Brexit referendum

The Conservative Party's victory in the 2015 general election secured the government's commitment to an EU membership renegotiation and referendum by the end of 2017 (Conservative Party 2015, 30). Following this victory, Vote Leave soon emerged to advocate for EU withdrawal, converting the extant structures of Business for Britain (BfB) into a new organisation headed by BfB's Matthew Elliott (as CEO) and veteran Eurosceptic campaigner Dominic Cummings[22] (as Campaign Director) (Anonymous 2, 7 & 8, 2018) (see also Shipman 2016, 39; Mount 2017, 12). The remainder of Vote Leave's senior team was formed disproportionately of those connected to the individuals and organisations described above as the genesis of a contemporary Eurosceptic movement. To Vote Leave, BfB contributed *inter*

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[22] Cummings was already linked to BfB through research he had conducted for the group around the 2014 European Parliament elections (see Cummings 2014a; 2014b).

alia Labour donor and businessman John Mills as initial campaign chair, Oliver Lewis as Research Director, Dr Lee Rotherham as Special Projects Director, and William Norton as Legal Director (Vote Leave 2016t, 19–20; 2016u, 10–11, 14–15). Lewis, Rotherham and Norton had been the primary authors of BfB's extensive Change or Go report (see above), and each had a longstanding connection to the Eurosceptic movement primarily through Cummings (Lewis) or Elliott (Norton & Rotherham).[23] Other Vote Leave senior staff connected to Cummings included Communications Director Paul Stephenson and Outreach Director Alex Hickman (both formerly of Cummings' campaigns against the Euro and the EU constitution), as well as Operations Director Victoria Woodcock and Head of Digital Henry de Zoete (both of whom, like Cummings, had previously worked as advisors to Conservative MP Michael Gove) (Vote Leave 2016an, 8, 6, 19; UK Government n.d.). Those connected to Elliott, meanwhile, included Head of Media Robert Oxley and Co-Development Director John O'Connell (both formerly of Elliott's Taxpayers' Alliance), as well as National Organiser Stephen Parkinson (formerly of Elliott's NOtoAV campaign) (Vote Leave 2016an, 12–13).

Despite attempts to present itself as a cross-party organisation, Vote Leave was deeply connected to the Conservative Party and viewed by some as close in tone to the "Tory establishment" (Anonymous 7, 2018) (see also Wellings 2017, 7). Mills, for example, soon departed to focus on securing the Labour Eurosceptic vote, a move that reflected factional in-fighting within Vote Leave (Shipman 2016, 106–13) and the marginalisation of contemporary Labour Euroscepticism more broadly (see above). Indeed, although Mills was eventually succeeded as campaign Chair by Labour MP Gisela Stuart, whose presence challenged perceptions that Vote Leave was "too Tory dominated" (Anonymous 3, 2018; also Anonymous 12, 2018), Vote Leave's primary representatives were the senior Conservative MPs Boris Johnson and Michael Gove. As one interviewee suggested, "it was really the Boris and Michael Gove show" (Anonymous 7, 2018). Johnson and Gove were reportedly influential in wrangling restless national politicians affiliated with Vote Leave – around 79% of whom belonged to the Conservative Party, with most of the remainder belonging to the Democratic

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[23] Lewis had previously worked with Cummings in the office of Conservative MP and Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, whilst Norton and Rotherham had worked on Elliott's NotoAV campaign. Rotherham was also the former Secretary of CAFE and had held numerous positions as a special advisor to Eurosceptic politicians (Vote Leave 2016an, 10–11, 14–15).

Unionist Party (DUP) (Vote Leave 2016am, 14–16) – who viewed the pair as their "de facto leaders" (Anonymous 9, 2018). A Conservative bias filtered into further aspects of the campaign's structure, with around 80% of Vote Leave's Regional Directors linked to the Conservative Party, and the remainder associated with UKIP or the DUP (Anonymous 3, 2018) (Vote Leave 2016ao). At the grassroots level, around 70% of Vote Leave's activists and 90% of its constituency coordinators had ties to either the Conservative Party or UKIP (Cummings 2017b, 6; Vote Leave 2016am, 10). Although a diversity of political parties was somewhat better represented at the board and committee levels of the campaign (Vote Leave 2016d),[24] interviewees described these panels as "Potemkin structures", a phrase also used by Campaign Director Cummings to suggest that such groups had only the illusion of control over Vote Leave's operations (Anonymous 6 & 9, 2018) (Cummings 2017a). Indeed, interviewees tended to view Cummings – an individual who insists that he is not a member of a political party but who maintains strong ties with the Conservative political sphere (Cummings 2010; British Broadcasting Corporation 2020) – as Vote Leave's central figure (Anonymous 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 & 10, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019) (see Chapter Four).

Vote Leave was not, however, the only Eurosceptic organisation established to contest the 2016 referendum. The other primary campaign group was Leave.EU, founded by businessmen Arron Banks and Richard Tice (Treasury Committee 2016b). Tice was a former director of Business for Sterling (Tice 2019) – the first organisation from the contemporary Eurosceptic genesis connected to Leach and Cummings, discussed above – but Leave.EU was more closely associated with the UKIP wing of the Eurosceptic movement (Anonymous 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 12, 2018) (Wellings 2017, 7). As one Vote Leave interviewee suggested, Leave.EU had an "ideological love" of UKIP leader Nigel Farage (Anonymous 6, 2018). Banks, for example, was a leading UKIP donor who viewed Farage as a "hero and Mr Brexit himself" (Banks 2016).[25]

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[24] Notably, several senior members of the Fresh Start Project (FSP), and its affiliated APPG for European Reform, filtered into Vote Leave's organisational structure (see House of Commons 2013; Vote Leave 2016c; 2016d; 2016ar). Conservative MPs Andrea Leadsom (FSP founding member and APPG Chair) and Priti Patel (APPG Secretary) became members of Vote Leave's weekly-convened Campaign Committee. Conservative MP George Eustice (also an FSP founding member) was part of Vote Leave's "council" of parliamentary supporters, and became the face of some of the campaign's communications due to his ministerial position in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Labour MPs Gisela Stuart and Frank Field (both elected officers of the APPG) respectively became Vote Leave Campaign Chair and part of the weekly Campaign Committee.
[25] Pagination unavailable in digital version of Banks text.

Indeed, even before the votes had been counted, Leave.EU issued an advertisement thanking Farage for his service to the Eurosceptic cause (Leave.EU 2016d). Despite Banks' fondness for him, however, Farage was reportedly keen to maintain his own public profile as the key personality in British Euroscepticism (Anonymous 3, 2018), and also conducted his own campaigning during the referendum, travelling the country on a UKIP battle bus (AFP News Agency 2016). As one interviewee put it, unless Farage "was designated by everybody [on the Leave side] as the front-man, as the number one going to do all the TV debates, he wasn't interested" (Anonymous 3, 2018). Leave.EU and Farage's UKIP did cooperate, however, under the umbrella organisation Grassroots Out (GO), chaired by Conservative MP Peter Bone and funded in large part by Banks (Shipman 2016, 220). It was GO that applied (unsuccessfully) to the Electoral Commission to be designated as the official Leave campaign (Shipman 2016, 220), and it was GO that was responsible for organising popular rallies, which drew a plurality of speakers from Farage to representatives of Labour Leave (the new campaign of former Vote Leave Chair John Mills) (Anonymous 2, 2018). Yet as interviewees advised, GO and Leave.EU were "the same thing basically" (Anonymous 3, 2018), and most preferred to speak of the latter – and its affinities with Farage & UKIP – when asked to reflect on Vote Leave's referendum rivals (Anonymous 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 12, 2018).

Vote Leave and Leave.EU as Eurosceptic emotional communities

As suggested above, the preceding discussion of the individuals that came together to form the 2016 EU referendum's Leave organisations is pertinent because individuals are the initial carriers of emotions, which are collectivised and become constitutive of emotional communities through their representation in discourse. Here, I contend that Vote Leave and Leave.EU represented different emotional communities, each constituted by a distinctive mode of nostalgia that had already fractured the Eurosceptic movement into different factions in the years prior to the Brexit vote. On this view, Leave.EU is best described as an emotional community formed from a traditional Graingian nostalgia mode, which values explicit nostalgic display. This is certainly how interviewees affiliated with Vote Leave tended to view the Leave.EU campaign or its UKIP progenitors, which they described as the most nostalgic quarters of the Eurosceptic movement (e.g. Anonymous 7, 9, 10 & 11, 2018). Although a comprehensive discussion of Leave.EU's campaign materials is beyond the scope

of this thesis (see below), a review of its primary outputs suggests that Leave.EU did favour overt forms of nostalgic expression. One image that graced several iterations of its campaign leaflets and posters provides striking evidence for this interpretation (see Figure 7 below) (e.g. Leave.EU 2016a; 2016b; 2016c). This image employs stereotypical tropes of Britishness and Englishness, such as the Union Jack and the rolling hills of a green and pleasant land. Adopting the former UKIP claim that referendum victory would represent a British "independence day" from a menacing 'Europe', the image is further suggestive of old Eurosceptic imaginaries that contrast a dictatorial and oppressive EU with the libertarian spirit of the British nation. Indeed, on the image's horizon, two possible paths for Britain are juxtaposed – a portentous one associated with a stormy EU, and a rose-tinted one associated with the enticing freedom of Brexit.

Redacted image.

Leave.EU 2016 referendum "Independence Day" poster.
Union Jack hot air balloon above English green fields, sailing into rosy light on the horizon.

Figure 7 Leave.EU Independence Day poster
Source: Leave.EU 2016c

In its portrayal of the rosy glow of a post-Brexit horizon, the image is at its most overtly nostalgic, with the visual of the British hot air balloon sailing into the distance invoking a longing for renewed independence. The image is not, however, without its temporal ambiguities. On this view, the quality of the light might be interpreted both as a sunset, connoting a traditionally nostalgic sense of restoration, completion and fulfilment offered by Brexit (cf. Browning 2019), and as a sunrise, suggesting the new dawn that a Leave victory would bring. Further temporal ambiguities are provided by the reverse of two versions of the

leaflet, where the use of a bright blue sky similar to that depicted in the Fresh Start Project materials reviewed above (see Figure 4), implies forward-looking connotations that complicate the more conventional rose-tinted nostalgia of the cover image (Leave.EU 2016a; 2016b). Despite such nuances, however, I suggest that the striking and immediate nostalgic frame of the cover image, which is a canonical example of Leave.EU's materials, is indicative of the deep-rooted cultural value that the campaign attributed to overt forms of nostalgic expression. Whilst the quality of the light may be polysemic in its temporal connotations, it still produces a classic and explicit nostalgic aesthetic of romanticised longing (cf. Campanella and Dassù 2019, 60). As such, I suggest that the prominent and sustained use of this overt nostalgia mode across Leave.EU's referendum output speaks to the campaign's roots in the UKIP lineage of Eurosceptic emotional communities, described above.

By contrast, Vote Leave interviewees viewed their own messaging as closer in tone to the temporality expressed in the FSP image, emanating from the rival Conservative faction of the Eurosceptic movement. Indeed, Vote Leave interviewees tended to object to interpretations of simple nostalgia in their campaigning, preferring to cast it in future-oriented or "forward-looking" terms (Anonymous 1 & 6, 2018), which were reminiscent of Cummings' writings for the New Frontiers Foundation. As one such source explained:

> I mean the concept of it [Vote Leave] being nostalgic is something of a Remain thing, a Remain concept, one of the arguments was that the UK…Leave, sorry…was sort of casting its mind back to, well it was either the Spitfires over the white cliffs or to heady days when, you know, we would basically be running India. I mean it was in no way like that. It was nostalgic only in the sense that it was looking back prior to…what the situation was prior to 1973. And by dint of time alone, and you can say it was nostalgic, it was nostalgic by necessity, simply in the sense that in order to try and put the UK into a global context, you have to go back in time, but you also have to apply a modern aspect to that. So for instance, we pointed out the […] global trade limits, non-tariff barriers, technical barriers to trade, tariff levels have all moved on since, since the Seventies, since the Sixties, and so…it was also forward-looking as well because…it was about…, it was about creating

something new, it was about recognising there were historic links between the UK and a number of countries and it was about refreshing those links and about creating something which was forward-looking. I mean if you look at Dom Cummings' stuff about IT for instance, about the need for massive investment in new scientific revolution, I mean that's not nostalgic, that's absolutely forward-looking and ambitious and something completely different [...] (Anonymous 1, 2018).

Another interviewee concurred that the campaign was "much more about the future and scientific endeavour" (Anonymous 6, 2018). Indeed, this subject suggested that even when Vote Leave made sparing use of conventionally nostalgic visuals – such as in a social media video entitled "Heroes" (see Chapters 3 & 4) – the content was overwhelmingly based on the futuristic signifiers of science and scientists (Anonymous 6, 2018). This interviewee further cautioned against interpretations of nostalgia on account of the campaign's reformist rather than simply restorative spirit (Anonymous 6, 2018). Further objections to nostalgia pervaded the interview responses of former Vote Leavers. One representative suggested that the referendum was "all about emotion" but downplayed the role of nostalgia (Anonymous 9, 2018). This interviewee conceded that nostalgia may have been a factor for some sections of the voting public (as did Anonymous 3, 2018), but argued that it was not the dominant emotion at stake (Anonymous 9, 2018). Indeed, this interviewee also suggested that had UKIP been designated the official Leave representative in the referendum, its campaign "would have been partly based on nostalgia", and it would not have prevailed on polling day (Anonymous 9, 2018). A further interviewee rejected media interpretations of a nostalgic public vote as "complete nonsense" and argued instead that the Leave side was "not nostalgic" but advanced a "broad based serious argument about having a civilised, democratic country in the future" (Anonymous 10, 2018). Additional subjects were more open to interpretations of nostalgia in Vote Leave but immediately tempered its backward-looking connotations with caveats that invoked the future (Anonymous 3, 2018) or the present (Anonymous 8 & 12, 2018). Whilst one tentatively ventured that Vote Leave offered "a very delicate subliminal message [of nostalgia], perhaps" (Anonymous 4, 2018), many others failed to recognise the nostalgia not only in their campaign's activities but also in their own political thought (e.g. Anonymous 2, 6, 8 & 10, 2018).

Such responses are suggestive of the presence of feeling rules within Vote Leave, which tempered and problematised conventional displays of nostalgia. As such, I argue that, in contrast to the UKIP-aligned Leave.EU, Vote Leave was a Eurosceptic emotional community that emerged from a lineage of Eurosceptic campaign groups whose emotional cultures favoured more muted expressions of nostalgia. I explore these contentions in detail in the following empirical chapters of the thesis, where I draw on further evidence from Vote Leave's referendum communications. I focus on Vote Leave, and not on Leave.EU or on both campaigns simultaneously, in order to provide an in-depth analysis given time, space, and resource constraints. Vote Leave is also a logical candidate for deeper exploration as, unlike Leave.EU/GO, it was designated the official Leave organisation in the 2016 referendum by the Electoral Commission, and its structures continue to exert substantial influence over British political life (see thesis Conclusion). This is not to say, however, that Vote Leave and Leave.EU operated in entirely distinct ways. Although some campaigners believed that it was useful for Leave arguments to be represented by two different groups which spoke to ostensibly different audiences (Anonymous 2 & 11, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019), one also suggested that there was a substantial overlap in the campaigns' major messages in terms of both discursive content and framing (Anonymous 2, 2018). Another interviewee also claimed that Leave.EU was prone to recycling Vote Leave's social media graphics under its own logo (Anonymous 6, 2018). In the subsequent chapters, I find evidence of similarity, particularly in Vote Leave's treatment of the third strand of Eurosceptic nostalgia associated with racialised narratives of immigration 'crisis' (see Chapter Five). Nevertheless, Vote Leave's insistence on its anti-nostalgic and forward-looking credentials speaks to its historic roots as an emotional community in the distinctive nostalgic structures of the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement (see Chapters Three & Four).

Conclusions

I began this chapter in section 2.1 with a brief pre-history of the 1975 referendum – Britain's first vote on European integration and the first major occasion that consolidated diffuse Eurosceptic elites into an overarching public campaign group, or emotional community. Through a discussion of the primary campaign materials of the National Referendum Campaign (NRC), the official Leave representatives in this referendum, I then identified two primary discursive strands of nostalgia. One of these strands related to prevailing understandings of Britishness, rooted in heroic imaginaries of the Second World War, and the other exhibited imperial and colonial inflections linked to memories of the British empire. Building on extant work on elite British Euroscepticism, I argued that declinist interpretations of Britain's mid-20th Century turn towards 'Europe' had sparked such background nostalgia moods – each concerned with Britain's formerly glorious international role – and catalysed the creation of the NRC from disparate Eurosceptic individuals. Although this emotional community sometimes exhibited rather overt discursive displays of the two thematic nostalgic strands, its foreground nostalgia mode was better characterised overall as a tempered form of nostalgic expression, suggestive of the presence of feeling rules modulating how nostalgia could be represented in discourse. Whilst the NRC was the first significant instance of a Eurosceptic emotional community, however, its referendum defeat contributed to Euroscepticism's renewed marginalisation in British politics until Margaret Thatcher's election as Prime Minister. Initially in favour of European integration, Thatcher's Euroscepticism hardened throughout her premiership until it was eventually canonised in her 1988 Bruges speech. This speech exhibited adapted versions of the nostalgic threads propounded by the NRC in the 1975 referendum, with Thatcher most notably favouring a rather overt foreground nostalgia mode, suggestive of the workings of emotional conventions that favour explicit forms of nostalgic expression. Thatcher's Bruges speech was a landmark in Eurosceptic discourse that led to the creation of many new Eurosceptic organisations.

This contemporary Eurosceptic movement, I argue, progressively fractured into two sets of competing emotional communities. In section 2.2, I explored the evolution of these two factions of elite British Euroscepticism in the early 21st Century. Here, I reviewed how one set of emotional communities, comprised primarily of contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic

elites, was best characterised by the tempered version of the nostalgia mode, identified above. I also outlined how a rival emotional community, represented by successive versions of the dedicated Eurosceptic party UKIP, was best characterised by the nostalgia mode's explicit iteration. Whilst the two thematic varieties of nostalgia identified in late 20th Century Eurosceptic discourse persisted into the new Century – albeit with specific campaign groups emphasising different nostalgic referents – the rise of UKIP also developed a third variety of Eurosceptic nostalgia. This variety of nostalgia, concerned with restoring Britain's racial integrity, responded to an alleged immigration 'crisis' emanating from the nation's EU membership. In the final section of the chapter, 2.3, I discussed how these three thematic *varieties* of nostalgia and two nostalgia *modes* went on to structure the Leave side of 2016's Brexit referendum. Here, I argued that the creation of the rival Eurosceptic Vote Leave and Leave.EU campaigns mapped on to the two factions of emotional communities already explored. On this view, Vote Leave was part of the lineage of contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic elites and discourses relating to the tempered mode of nostalgic expression, whilst Leave.EU fell into the UKIP tradition of a more overt mode of nostalgic display. In the remainder of the thesis I provide an in-depth discussion how the three thematic varieties of nostalgia were expressed during the referendum by the official Leave campaign, Vote Leave. I begin this analysis in the next chapter with a discussion of the first variety of nostalgia, based on heroic imaginaries of Britishness.

Chapter Three: Banal Nostalgia and Vote Leave's Whiggish Interpretation of the National Past

In the previous chapter, Chapter Two, I reviewed the historic evolution of elite British Euroscepticism's nostalgic traditions and emotional communities. Through that analysis, I identified three *varieties* of Eurosceptic nostalgia, each corresponding to a distinctive imaginary of British history, and two *modes* of nostalgic expression, each corresponding to a distinctive Eurosceptic emotional community, governed by peculiar feeling rules delimiting nostalgia's discursive display. In this chapter, I further unpack the first variety of nostalgia introduced in the preceding analysis – that relating to heroic understandings of Britishness and British 'greatness', often rooted in war memory. In doing so, I also begin to explore the 2016 Brexit referendum Vote Leave campaign's preference for an emotionally and temporally tempered foreground nostalgia mode. I therefore commence the chapter in section 3.1 by naming the first of the three *varieties* of nostalgia investigated in the thesis, banal nostalgia. *Banal* is a useful label, I argue, because it suggests that this form of emotion arises as a function of habit or routine. Whilst in Chapter One I highlighted the importance of habit for the persistence or structural power of emotions in general, in this chapter I further unpack the peculiar relationship between habit and nostalgia. This approach leads to an analysis that is attuned to the role of habit both in terms of the content and practice of nostalgic narratives of British history in general, and also in terms of how such narratives were specifically framed by Vote Leave campaigners according to the persistent cultural conventions of their Eurosceptic emotional community.

In section 3.1, I therefore begin by examining extant treatments of banal nostalgia in the academic literature. This literature suggests that habitual narratives of the national past are dominated by imaginaries of Britain's heroic contributions in the two 20th Century world wars. I argue, however, that the prominence of such content in everyday understandings of British history merely reflects the prevalence of a broader historiographical practice, which favours a much longer narrative of continuous national achievement. Such narratives are rooted in the practice of a Whiggish historiography – so named for its origins in the preferences of 17th Century Whig historians – which mirrors banal nostalgia's desire to cultivate a coherent and flattering national identity linking Britain's past, present and future. Such Whiggish

historiographical tendencies, I argue, permeated the outlook of key Vote Leave personnel, and thus point to the circulation of a background banal nostalgia mood within the campaign. In section 3.2, I start to explore how such a nostalgia mood was expressed in Vote Leave's public communications via a subtle foreground banal nostalgia mode. Here, I demonstrate how banal nostalgia's relationship with a Whiggish understanding of British history informed the campaign's cultivation of narratives of continuous national 'greatness' in both its verbal and aesthetic interventions, which provided a reassuring salve for the tacit uncertainties of Brexit.

Whilst banal nostalgia's desire for temporal continuity can perform a stabilising function that minimises perceptions of 'crisis', however, I suggest that in situations where 'crisis' is clearly invoked, the same desire for continuity acquires a paradoxical revolutionary appeal. In the final section of the chapter, 3.3, I investigate this contention using examples from Vote Leave's treatment of British heroes. Narratives of national heroes are central to Whig historiographies, with one particular strain of Whig thinking canonising the revolutionary achievements of the nation's "forward-looking men" (Zook 2002, 214–15). Similar themes infused Vote Leave's own treatment of national heroes, particularly in the context of its invocation of an NHS 'crisis', where the campaign drew parallels between the imperative of Brexit, the historic heroism of the health service's visionary founders and the futuristic potential of post-Brexit scientific advance. In this context, banal nostalgia's preference for temporal continuity departed from themes of stability to deliver a temporally complex discursive mode that depicted Brexit as a revolutionary mechanism through which Britain could reconnect with, and reinvigorate, its former radical and reformist spirit. Whilst such a mode both entailed and obscured an exclusionary politics of gender and race, I contend that it holds a persistent cultural appeal in the Vote Leave lineage of Eurosceptic emotional communities for the virtuous connotations of its ostensibly forward-looking and progressive appearance.

3.1 Banal nostalgia and Whig historiography

In this section, I explore how banal nostalgia – the first of three varieties of Eurosceptic nostalgia I identified in the previous chapter – is enmeshed with Whiggish historiographical practices. I begin the section by unpacking what I mean by a *banal* form of nostalgia, highlighting how banal is a signifier of habit and routine. By exploring extant, albeit fleeting, treatments of banal nostalgia, I suggest that this nostalgic form arises out of repeated exposure to prevailing narratives of a glorious national past, which act as everyday vectors of comfort and inspiration in times of 'crisis'. According to the Eurosceptic traditions I surveyed in Chapter Two, as well as to extant references to banal nostalgia in the broader academic literature, the content of such narratives is dominated by imaginaries of Britain's heroic role in the 20th Century world wars. This is perhaps unsurprising as such imaginaries have saturated popular culture representations of national history and identity in Britain from the mid-20th Century to the years immediately preceding the Brexit referendum. Nevertheless, I argue that such representations are merely the culmination of a broader historiographical practice, which draws on a much longer timeframe of perceived national heroism and 'greatness' to generate a celebratory narrative of continuous national identity through time. In the second subsection I discuss how such narratives are grounded in Whiggish historiographical practices, so named for their origins in 17th Century Whig accounts of the Glorious Revolution. Whiggish histories gather together disparate highlights from the national past into an "exceptional and exemplary" narrative of heroic British achievement across time (Kenny 2014, 13; Zook 2002; Watson 2020). Such narratives both draw on and reproduce banal nostalgia's preference for a coherent and flattering longitudinal identity in times of 'crisis', cultivating a distinctive, continuous temporality that connects the nation's past and future. I conclude the section by exploring how a similarly Whiggish understanding of British history characterised the outlook of key Vote Leave personnel, indicating the circulation of a background banal nostalgia mood within the campaign.

Banal nostalgia and affective familiarisation with the national past

The primary strand of Eurosceptic nostalgia that I traced in the preceding chapter drew on stereotypical notions of Britishness, particularly those rooted in war memory, to generate

narratives of essential difference between Britain and the EU. In this chapter, I develop the concept of banal nostalgia to describe such narratives and show how they are underpinned by a distinctive, continuous temporality, linking the national past, present, and future. The idea of banality has previously been expressed only briefly in relation to nostalgia (see Boym 2001, 338–39). Michael Kenny, for example, has fleetingly used the term "banal" to capture a "genteel, or even habitual" form of nostalgia that is "invoked in different ways by different kinds of political narrative and project, particularly in the context of attempts to control the meanings associated with the veneration of national traditions" (Kenny 2017, 263). On this view, national events, institutions and icons, such as "the Battle of Britain, the NHS, the monarchy or Winston Churchill" are cited in "everyday" political discourse to call upon "those broadly conservative, comforting and familiar kinds of affect which much nostalgic practice evokes" (Kenny 2017, 263). Joanna Tidy has also made casual reference to the idea of banality to show how "vintage" military nostalgias premised on the moral virtuousness of Britain's role in the 20th Century world wars have seeped into the "banal everyday spaces of civilian life" through the marketing of food products attached to military charities (Tidy 2015, 228). What these treatments of banal forms of nostalgia share is a focus on everyday, habitual and routine emotional practices, which I suggest is useful in unpacking how certain ideas about, and practices of, British history have persisted in the discursive traditions of Britain's Eurosceptic elite.[26] In their relationship with habit and routine, such banal practices overlap with Michael Billig's theorisation of "banal nationalism" (Billig 1995). Whilst nationalism remains an important feature of Eurosceptic discourse, however, I prefer the term banal *nostalgia* as it encompasses a broader range of habitual nationalistic expression than Billig's work allows and directs our attention towards the emotional dimensions of such discourses.[27]

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[26] Here and throughout this chapter I view "everyday" and "banal" as synonymous. Some scholars have objected to the elision of these terms on the grounds that "banal" does not account for the bottom-up reproduction of national narratives that "everyday" implies (Antonsich and Skey 2017, 4–8). A thorough investigation of such grassroots processes is, however, beyond the scope of my research, and with this caveat I continue to use "everyday" and "banal" interchangeably.

[27] Billig's thesis of banal nationalism focuses on verbal and visual forms of nationalistic expression that are equivalent to a rather sedate and unassuming "unwaved flag" hanging in the everyday spaces of civilian life (Billig 1995, 8). By contrast, I suggest that banal nostalgia can be conveyed in either sedate or more expressive ways, which are no less habitual but are akin instead to "hot" or "ecstatic" methods of representing the nation, where flags are waved vigorously (see Billig 1995, 43–50; Skey 2006, 151–52). Billig is also rather silent on the emotional dimensions of banal nationalism, except to hint at the everyday affective connotations of the homeland (e.g. Billig 1995, 108). By contrast, my preference for the term banal nostalgia makes emotion central to the analysis of nationalist discourse.

A focus on banal emotional practices builds on the discussion of nostalgia and Eurosceptic emotional communities that I introduced in Chapter One. In that chapter, I argued that the exploration of emotions like nostalgia complicates assumptions of simple intent or instrumentality in Eurosceptic discourse. On this view, the background emotional experience or mood of nostalgia is often not adequately recognised by the nostalgic subject. Furthermore, the foreground discursive expression of nostalgia via a nostalgia mode can possess sticky, structural properties, which cause peculiar representations of it to persist through time (see Chapter Two). Here, I suggest that the term banal nostalgia allows us to further specify such structural properties by connecting them more fully with notions of habit. Extant treatments of the term suggest that banal forms of nostalgia draw on a habitual fondness for a specific set of British icons and institutions. For both Kenny and Tidy, such reference points call predominantly upon emotive understandings of national identity rooted in war memory, which suggest an "affective investment" in (Solomon 2014) or "affective familiarization" with core markers of the national past (L. Campbell 2019). The latter concept resonates particularly with my treatment of banal nostalgia as it speaks specifically to "the representation of the past in the present through rhetoric, symbols, monuments, memorials, and comparisons, all of which are assumed to have in them an ingrained, 'ritualized' or 'habitual' effect, created out of repeated iterations" (L. Campbell 2019, 115). Put differently, flattering narratives about the national past are so emotionally appealing as vectors of comfort and inspiration (cf. Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2017, 5), that their key features are reproduced as a matter of habit or routine (Subotic and Steele 2018, 392; L. Campbell 2019, 115) – particularly, as I demonstrate below, in times of 'crisis'.

The preceding discussion of banal nostalgia, plus the prior chapter's exploration of Britain's Eurosceptic traditions, suggest that an affective familiarisation with heroic notions of the national past has translated routine understandings of British history into similarly routine, nostalgic narratives of British Euroscepticism. Representations of the past in British cultural outputs are, I suggest, one important means through which such processes of affective familiarisation occur. Indeed, extant work has highlighted the role of popular culture products, such as 1950s British war films in cementing imaginaries of national heroism (Croft 2012, 134–41), often projected through the "self-sacrificing, authoritative, and decisive" military-masculine individual (Webster 2005, 8). Others have noted the proliferation of similar

heroic narratives in cultural artefacts created in the years immediately preceding the referendum, evidenced by the publication of Boris Johnson's Churchill biography (2014), the release of period films and television series such as *Downton Abbey* (2010), *Home Fires* (2015), and *Dad's Army* (2016) (Campanella and Dassù 2019, 73; Manners 2018, 1224), and the growing popularity of the military wives choirs (Cree 2020). Further scholarship has highlighted a revival in kitsch second world war memorabilia in the financial 'crisis' context that preceded the referendum, with galvanising mottos of Blitz spirit, such as the directive to "Keep Calm and Carry On" amidst the horrors of war, now adorning everyday household items (Tidy 2015, 224; Hatherley 2017, 12–22). The habitual repetition of heroic, militarised tropes within such cultural outputs has thus contributed to prevailing impressions of a national identity premised on qualities of "morality", "exceptionalism", and "phlegm", derived from Britain's 20th Century wartime experiences (Croft 2012, 131).[28] Whilst these 20th Century imaginaries are an important source of habitual understandings of the national past, however, I contend below that they are merely the culmination of a much longer narrative of British heroism and 'greatness', emanating from broader Whiggish historiographical practices. Understanding such practices, I suggest below, further illuminates the workings of banal forms of nostalgia in elite British Euroscepticism.

Whig history and nostalgic autobiographical national narratives

Extant work on elite British Euroscepticism has suggested that the prominence of militarised themes in Eurosceptic discourse is a function not just of memories of the 20th Century world wars but of a broader Whiggish historiographical tradition of national heroism and 'greatness' (Spiering 2015, 54; Campanella and Dassù 2019, 57; Wellings 2019, 8). In this subsection I further explore the tenets of Whig history and connect them to the preceding discussion of affective familiarisation to further illuminate the workings of banal nostalgia. Whiggish interpretations of national history originated in the late 17th Century when the first Whig historians codified the victory of their contemporaries in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 (Zook 2002). This radical uprising, the Whigs argued, dispatched the oppressive "absolutist"

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[28] Morality refers to "moral certainty in the use of force" against evil and tyranny, exceptionalism refers to Britain's perceived uniqueness, and phlegm refers to a stoic attitude perhaps best expressed as "putting up with things, and getting on with it, without ever giving up" (Croft 2012, 131–39).

Catholic monarch, the Stuart King James II, and returned England to a distinguished tradition of political liberty stretching back to the ancient past (Zook 2002, 213). Presenting the Glorious Revolution as a moment of temporal reconnection with a "lineal progression towards ever increasingly rational, constitutional government" (Zook 2002, 213), the early Whigs sparked successive historiographies that formed the foundations of an "exceptional and exemplary" understanding of Britishness (Kenny 2014, 13; Watson 2020). Such accounts typically emphasise values of freedom and tolerance, emanating from a liberal constitutionalist tradition thought to be endemic to the "'civilizing', non-nationalistic" English people (Kenny 2014, 13). Yet such accounts also generate a persistently militant and nationalistic narrative which, whilst conveniently overlooking the Norman conquest, charts successive British victories against a European enemy, culminating in the second world war (Spiering 2015, 54; Wellings 2019, 8). The maintenance of such apparently contradictory positions necessitates an understanding of the national past held together by the depiction of British heroes and continental foes, and the advancement of a thoroughly "self-congratulatory history" of continuous British achievement (Zook 2002, 213; Watson 2020, 280)

The desire for continuity at the heart of Whiggish interpretations of history is what makes them essentially nostalgic. As I introduced in Chapter One, nostalgia is an emotion that seeks to smooth over the disruption of perceived 'crisis' through an imaginative journey to an idealised past. At an individual level, this process is deeply connected to notions of identity, with the nostalgic subject seeking to maintain "autobiographic continuity" in times of 'crisis' via the construction of narratives that provide a coherent sense of personal identity across time (F. Davis 1979, chap. 2; also see Browning 2019, 224). The ability to construct a successful autobiographic narrative is premised on the minimisation of unfavourable interpretations of the past, and the selection of subjective memories that flatter the subject's sense of identity, a practice we might colloquially understand as applying a rose-tinted lens (F. Davis 1979, chap. 2). IR scholars have already shown that similar searches for autobiographic continuity amidst uncertainty and 'crisis' are exhibited in the attempts of political communities, such as states, to secure a stable sense of national identity over time (e.g. Kinnvall 2004; Steele 2008; also see F. Davis 1979, chap. 5). Here, I argue that similar processes are responsible for the prevalence of Whiggish narratives of the national past within the discursive traditions of

Eurosceptic emotional communities. For British Eurosceptics, I suggest, glorious narratives of Whig history respond to the perceived threat that continued membership of the EU poses to deep-rooted notions of national identity. On this view, successive 'crises' of EU integration spark background nostalgia moods, which assemble the historic hallmarks of a coherent and flattering sense of Britishness, expressed via a foreground nostalgia mode as a Whiggish narrative of national heroism and 'greatness', imbued with comforting and inspiring themes that legitimise EU withdrawal.

As above, I dub this variety of nostalgia *banal* for its habitual and routine properties, which I suggest are a function of a broader affective familiarisation with Whiggish national narratives in British culture, which extend beyond the exigencies of Euroscepticism alone. In this sense, I argue that Eurosceptic elites are already "primed" for nostalgia of this kind both by the broader national cultural environment (cf. Cree 2020, 228–30), and by their relationship with the persistent discursive traditions and emotional communities of elite British Euroscepticism, introduced in the previous chapter. Indeed, a deeper investigation of Whiggish historiography sheds further light on how divergent moods and modes of banal nostalgia have come to constitute distinctive emotional communities of Eurosceptic political elites. As Melinda Zook has noted, whilst the earliest 17th Century Whigs viewed themselves as conservers of an ancient libertarian political tradition, their 18th Century heirs viewed such forebears as "British patriots, forward-looking men not satisfied to simply conserve the old but also herald the new" (Zook 2002, 214–15). This typology of Whiggishness is, I argue, suggestive of the operation of two distinctive banal nostalgia moods and modes relevant to elite British Euroscepticism. The first of these is more conventionally nostalgic in its backward-looking and restorative desires, whilst the second finds value in the reformist spirit of prior generations such that it can cast itself in ostensibly forward-looking terms. As I explore throughout this chapter, it is this latter modality of nostalgia which has constituted Vote Leave as a Eurosceptic emotional community rooted in a lineage of prior campaign groups in the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement. This nostalgia mode is so attractive to such Eurosceptic elites, I contend below, for its dual stabilising (comforting) and revolutionary (inspiring) connotations (cf. Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2017, 5). In order to examine these claims further, I first explore the circulation of a mood of banal nostalgia, founded on a Whiggish understanding of history, within Vote Leave.

The circulation of a mood of banal nostalgia within Vote Leave

The political thought of Vote Leave's primary message-carriers – MPs Boris Johnson and Michael Gove – is indicative of the campaign's Whiggish credentials. Gove has previously been described as a "Whig historian of a wilfully extreme nature" due to his plans, generated during a spell as Education Secretary in the Cameron government, to reform the school history curriculum into a vehicle for teaching a linear continuity of heroic national achievement (Watson 2020, 271). As I explore further in the next chapter, Gove's close adviser at this time – Vote Leave Campaign Director Dominic Cummings – has exhibited similarly Whiggish tendencies throughout his career in political consultancy (see Chapter Four). Vote Leave's other primary political representative, Boris Johnson, also favours a Whiggish historiographical lens. His flattering biography of Churchill's heroism was viewed by some scholars as a rather "artless" attempt to cultivate favourable similarities between the men (Johnson 2014; see R. J. Evans 2014; Kenny and Pearce 2018, 54), and he is now satirised for his regular appeals to a fictitious exceptional and exemplary Britishness, cast in persistently Churchillian terms (e.g. Hyde 2020). Churchill's own preference for the writings of 19th Century Whig historian Thomas Babington Macaulay is indicative of the multi-layered Whiggish nature of Johnson's Churchillian inclinations (Roberts 2018, 44). Indeed, the contemporary historian who has most recently documented Churchill's Whiggishness – Andrew Roberts – provides an additional link between Vote Leave and the teachings of Whig history. As a member of Vote Leave affiliate Historians for Britain (HfB), for example, Roberts contributed his own subtly Whiggish proclivities to two of the group's self-published collections of essays (Historians for Britain 2015, 29–33; 2016, 29–33).[29]

Overall, these collections – which also carried an endorsement from public Historian David Starkey and contributions from Vote Leave senior staffers Oliver Lewis and Lee Rotherham – advanced a Whiggish narrative of Britain's unique and exemplary history, also tendered prior to the referendum in a (hotly contested) *History Today* article by HfB Chair David Abulafia (Abulafia 2015; Kenny and Pearce 2018, 155). It was to the interventions of HfB that some

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[29] In its application to be designated the official Leave campaign by the Electoral Commission, Vote Leave described HfB as one of its "strategic partners" and a group that it was cooperating very closely with (Vote Leave 2016am, 19–20).

interviewees appealed to suggest that ideas about British history were but a peripheral feature of the Vote Leave campaign (Anonymous 6 & 8, 2018). Other interviewees claimed that historical example serviced only narrow "academic questions" about parliamentary sovereignty (Anonymous 10, 2018), or was reduced only to mean the very recent past of Eurosceptic campaigning and not history "dating back to the 17th Century or anything" (Anonymous 12, 2018). Further interview subjects directly rejected the idea that narratives inspired by Britain's wartime history were a pervasive feature of Vote Leave's messages (Anonymous 10, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019). Indeed, as I recounted in the previous chapter, one interviewee was adamant that the campaign was not about "casting its mind back to […] the Spitfires over the white cliffs or to heady days when […] we would basically be running India" (Anonymous 1, 2018). As I explore further below and in subsequent chapters, however, such claims simply cannot be supported by an examination of further interview data and documentary evidence. Many interviewees, for example, exhibited a distinctively Whiggish, militarised personal appreciation of a continuous and glorious national past separating Britain from 'Europe'. Describing national identity, several subjects invoked Britain's victory in two world wars (Anonymous 3 & 6, 2018) as well as a longer historic success in having never been "defeated" (Anonymous 2, 2018), "invaded" (Anonymous 6, 2018), or "conquered" (Anonymous 7, 2018).

One subject even argued that in Britain's history "nothing good has come from Europe" in that "all our most recent conflicts and difficulties have been with Europe" (Anonymous 7, 2018). Further interviewees pointed to additional highlights of classic Whig narratives. Some suggested that notions of Britain's "thousand years of history" as an independent nation (Anonymous 2, 2018) and attendant milestones, such as the Reformation (Anonymous 6, 2018), Magna Carta and the Glorious Revolution (Anonymous 10, 2018), though not predominant in Vote Leave's campaigning, contributed to the broader intellectual endeavour of British Euroscepticism. Others referred to Britain or England in Whiggish libertarian terms as a "nation of individuals" or an "island race" (Anonymous 8, 2018) with a national "spirit of civil independence" (Anonymous 7, 2018). Similar themes were discernible in descriptions of the British as a people "fed up of being pushed around" (Anonymous 8, 2018), who "don't like being told what to do" (Anonymous, 7, 2018), who were "not going to take no for an answer, not going to be bossed around by people who we haven't elected" (Anonymous 2,

2018), or otherwise be "dictated to by Europe" (Anonymous 3, 2018). Taken together, these interview responses, and the political thought of prominent Vote Leave campaigners discussed above, suggest a desire to maintain continuity with a national identity depicted in the exceptional, victorious and libertarian hallmarks of a Whiggish interpretation of British history. As this historiographical practice both draws on and reproduces the banal variety of nostalgia I introduced above, I further contend that such evidence is indicative of the circulation of a background banal nostalgia mood within Vote Leave. In the next section, I begin to unpack how such nostalgic themes played out in Vote Leave's public communications, and what their foreground expression in a peculiar nostalgia mode suggests about the presence of feeling rules delimiting the discursive display of emotion.

3.2 Banal nostalgia and Vote Leave's Whiggish narratives of national 'greatness'

In this section, I begin to explore how a background banal nostalgia mood, enmeshed with a Whiggish historiography of continuous British 'greatness', was expressed in Vote Leave's public communications via a foreground banal nostalgia mode. I begin the section by discussing how the liberal thread of Whiggish narratives of continuous national achievement, introduced above, featured in Vote Leave's campaign materials. Core Vote Leave representatives, such as MPs Gove and Johnson, appeared keen to cite Britain's liberal credentials in exemplary inventories of the nation's historic, democratic and diplomatic accomplishments. Although such interventions avoided traditional displays of nostalgic loss, longing and 'pastness', the very practice of generating a continuous and flattering narrative of historically-rooted national identity implied the presence of a banal nostalgia mood, subtly expressed in an emotionally and temporally tempered banal nostalgia mode. In the second subsection, I investigate these contentions further, exploring how Vote Leave's preference for Whiggish historiography animated its aesthetics of British 'greatness', which aligned with a nationalist thread of Whig thinking. Despite the contrary claims of many Vote Leave interviewees, here the campaign advanced a visual rendering of a continuous national identity by employing nostalgic emblems of the nation, such as the Union Jack, alongside visual metaphors for the future, such as the use of sunlight. Once more, such interventions rejected conventional displays of nostalgia in preference of an emotionally and temporally

muted tone that nonetheless remained suggestive of banal nostalgia's preference for continuity. Such connotations were amplified further still in more direct versions of the same nostalgic images, which used the present tense to insist that Britain "is" a great nation, and the future tense to argue that an independent Britain would "thrive" outside the EU. In the final subsection, I explore these interventions further in order to provide an opening for dissecting banal nostalgia's multi-layered relationship with its catalysing conditions of 'crisis' and change.

Whiggish-liberal inventories of the national past

In the previous section, I discussed how Whig narratives of British history can exhibit both seemingly liberal and more traditionally nationalistic qualities. On the campaign trail, Vote Leave's primary political representatives, Conservative MPs Gove and Johnson, appeared keen to highlight the liberal threads of such narratives, casting British history and identity in lofty and progressive terms. These tendencies reflected the Whiggish-liberal tradition of aligning the nation with core values of "justice, benevolence, and equality" and radical or reformist projects, such as the abolition of slavery (Zook 2002, 226–28; Kenny 2014, 13). They also reflected the persistence of what Chris Gifford has dubbed "Elite Eurosceptic Britishness", a correlated form of national identity evident in Thatcher's Bruges speech and beyond (see Chapter Two), which is "paradoxical, open and proud of its European credentials, but antithetical to the continent's narrow nationalism and supra-nationalism" (Gifford 2015, 364). Johnson, for example, was at pains to align the "Leave Camp" with "the tradition of the liberal cosmopolitan European enlightenment – not just of Locke and Wilkes, but of Rousseau and Voltaire" (Johnson 2016c). Similarly, Gove suggested that Britain had famously been "an upholder and defender of liberal democratic values", which were "very far from being a British possession alone" and belonged instead to a "shared humanist" tradition exemplified by a notable number of European intellectuals and public figures, such as Karl Popper and Alexis de Tocqueville (Vote Leave 2016bx).[30] Such statements fed into a broader trend in

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[30] In this tradition, Gove also cited Ludwig Erhard, Theodore Herzl, David Ben-Gurion, Raymond Aron, Hernando de Soto and Aung San Suu Kyi. Though one Vote Leave interviewee also appealed to being "human" over being European (Anonymous 6, 2018), Gove's list of laudable humans is remarkably Eurocentric.

which Vote Leave repeatedly referred to "our friends in Europe" (Vote Leave 2015h; 2016cg; cf. Johnson 2016a) and "friendly cooperation" with European countries (e.g. Vote Leave 2015c; 2015f), whilst in one case claiming to "love Europe" but not the EU (Vote Leave 2016q, 11).

Despite professing such continental affinities, however, it was the British nation state that campaign representatives like Gove emphasised as "vessels for our values" (Vote Leave 2016bx), including key hallmarks of a "Whiggish-liberal lineage" (Kenny 2014, 13), such as:

> A belief in parliamentary democracy, in the accountability of the powerful to the people, in the settling of laws, taxes and rules by elected representatives, in the independence and objectivity of the judiciary, and in vigorous free speech and open debate [...] (Vote Leave 2016bx).

This list of national principles succeeded a prior, similarly Whiggish, inventory which Gove used to recount Britain's role in "suppressing the slave trade, [...] supporting liberal nationalist movements against static autocratic European empires, [and defending] the rights of small nations and the principle of self-determination" (Vote Leave 2016bx). Such inventories of national achievement are indicative of Whiggish historiographical tendencies not only due to their flattering content, but also because the very practice of distilling such achievements into an exemplary list highlights "the highly particularistic and exceptionalist manner in which English culture and nationhood is often conceived" (Kenny 2014, 9). As a specific iteration of a broader narrative form of discourse (see Chapter One), list-making also mirrors the workings of the banal variety of nostalgia I explored in the first section of this chapter. Here, the narration of an exceptional and exemplary Whiggish national identity via inventories of the nation's core qualities and achievements chimes with evidence from studies of individual experiences of nostalgia, which have documented how the emotion is implicated in the construction of coherent and comforting inventories of a person's identity and achievements during unsettling times (F. Davis 1979, 69). Translated to the level of collective nostalgia for the national past, as I explore further below, the expression of banal forms of nostalgia in familiar inventories of national achievement suggests the presence of an underlying, disruptive sense of 'crisis' catalysing the creation of such narratives. Such a sense of 'crisis',

however, was not always clearly displayed in Vote Leave's communications. In many such materials, as I discuss further below, the campaign avoided the direct representation of nostalgic loss and longing corresponding to the perception of present-day 'crisis'.

Instead, campaigners favoured the portrayal of a continuous national identity, such as in Gove's insistence that his list of Whiggish-liberal British values "have characterised this country for centuries" (Vote Leave 2016bx). Although such statements avoided the representation of nostalgic loss and longing, however, the very desire to cultivate a continuous and flattering national identity through time implies the workings of a distinctive background experiential mood and foreground discursive mode of banal nostalgia. Observers of British culture (Gilroy 2005, chap. 3) and Euroscepticism (Wellings 2016, 369; Manners 2018, 1223–24) have already hinted at the existence of this variety of nostalgia, noting that a "pathology of greatness" informs much national discourse. Whilst this pathology has previously been linked to "melancholy" emotional experience (e.g. Gilroy 2005, chap. 3), I prefer the term nostalgia as it opens space for exploring the multiplicity of ways in which background nostalgic feelings of melancholy and loss can appear in, or be erased by, foreground mechanisms of discourse (see Chapter One). In the remainder of this section, I therefore expand on how Whiggish narratives of continuous 'greatness' were conveyed by Vote Leave via a tempered foreground banal nostalgia mode, and what such representations suggest about the operation of banal forms of nostalgia. As I discuss below, the campaign's inventories of the familiar resources of the national past did not only reference the core features of an 'open' and liberal strand of Whiggish historiography. Throughout the referendum, Vote Leave also cultivated a decidedly oppositional narrative which called on more defensive, militarised and nationalistic themes of Whig history to depict the EU as a threat to Britain's continued 'greatness'. As I discuss later, in section 3.3, this narrative sometimes invoked striking imaginaries of British heroes premised on the experiences and aftermath of the country's participation in the 20th Century world wars. Before I explore such specific iterations, however, I first turn to how Vote Leave perpetuated a narrative of national 'greatness' rendered in broader terms.

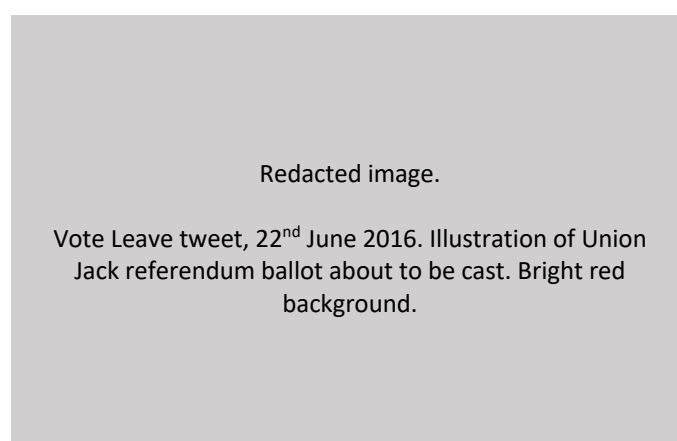### Whiggish-nationalist aesthetics of national 'greatness'

As I explore further below, Vote Leave's aesthetic output on social media towards the end of the referendum was particularly suggestive of the presence of a Whiggish-nationalist narrative of 'greatness' and its corresponding banal variety of nostalgia. Nevertheless, interviewees tended to reject claims that Vote Leave was either nationalist or nostalgic, often suggesting that the campaign avoided the use of evocative imagery, such as the Union Jack. As one Vote Leave interviewee offered, "all the stuff that Euroscepticism's been doing for years like wrapping itself in a flag and good old Blighty and things like that, you know, that polled extremely badly" (Anonymous 9, 2018). Another interviewee suggested that whilst UKIP had played heavily on such emblems of national identity in recent years, for Vote Leave "there weren't union flags flying from every market [campaign] stall" (Anonymous 4, 2018). As I highlighted in the preceding chapter, a further subject argued that the rival Leave.EU campaign was "much more Union Jack ties, jackets, we wanted to look what we were […] not nostalgic, it's a broad based serious argument about having a civilised, democratic country in the future" (Anonymous 10, 2018; similar expressed by Anonymous 11, 2018). Completing the theme of nationalist apparel, another respondent added that "we didn't have 'Make Britain Great Again' caps or anything like that" (Anonymous 3, 2018). A final interviewee concurred that for much of the referendum, Vote Leave "instinctively" eschewed the use of the Union Jack due to its unfavourable association with the overtly "nationalist" politics of UKIP's Nigel Farage (Anonymous 6, 2018). Nevertheless, this subject also reported that the emblem did start to appear in the campaign's communications late on in the referendum as focus groups showed it "cut-through" with the public (Anonymous 6, 2018). This interviewee was, however, also careful to reframe the flag's use by Vote Leave as "patriotic" rather than nationalist (Anonymous 6, 2018).

A review of Vote Leave's public social media output on Facebook and Twitter supports the claim that the campaign's use of the Union Jack was most prominent and frequent in the referendum's closing stages.[31] With little time to go until polling, Vote Leave issued images

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[31] Interviewees reported the relative importance of Facebook over Twitter for the campaign, as Facebook was "where we reached people" (Anonymous 9, 2018) and Twitter merely represented the
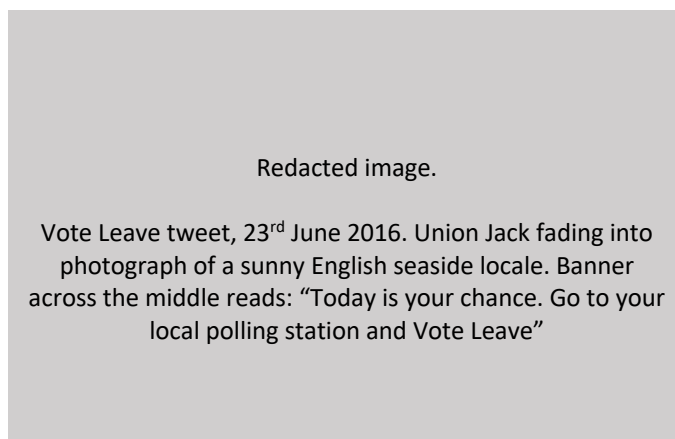
such as Figure 8, which depicts the Union Jack as a referendum ballot about to be cast (Vote Leave 2016ci; see e.g. Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 90–95 for further iterations), and Figure 9, which shows the national flag fading into a rural seaside locale (Vote Leave 2016ck). Further iterations of the latter image included the flag fading into photographs of a quaint cobbled town (e.g. Vote Leave 2016cl), London's "City" financial district (e.g. Vote Leave 2016cm), or the London Eye (e.g. Vote Leave 2016cj), producing a visual inventory of national attributes that recalled Gove's propensity for list-making, described above. Here, such images served a "metonymic" function through which the nation was reduced to its stereotypical, historically-rooted markers of flag and place (Billig 1995, 102; R. A. Saunders 2017, chap. 1). The merging of the flag into the geographic locations at the heart of each image, for example, was suggestive of the centrality of each setting to national identity. The seaside and rolling hills called to mind the nation's island boundaries and the poetic appeal of England's rural "south country" which, as a nostalgic metonym for a genteel Englishness itself, has often crept into Whiggish accounts of the 'national' past (Kenny 2014, 62) (see Chapter Five). Similar associations of nostalgic Englishness were conveyed in the image of the quaint town, whilst the photographs of London – especially the City – invoked the global reach of the post-imperial financial metropolis. The prominent image of the flag in both sets of images was itself suggestive of its prevailing popular association (predominantly amongst the English) with nostalgic facets of national 'greatness' such as the monarchy, the British Empire, British armed forces and world war sacrifices (Gardiner and Thompson 2012).

Redacted image.

Vote Leave tweet, 22nd June 2016. Illustration of Union Jack referendum ballot about to be cast. Bright red background.

Figure 8: Vote Leave's Union Jack referendum ballot
Source: Vote Leave 2016ci

"Westminster bubble" (Anonymous 12, 2018). Nevertheless, I find that Vote Leave used the same images across its social media platforms and so examples from both outlets appear in the thesis.

Redacted image.

Vote Leave tweet, 23rd June 2016. Union Jack fading into photograph of a sunny English seaside locale. Banner across the middle reads: "Today is your chance. Go to your local polling station and Vote Leave"

Figure 9: Vote Leave's Union Jack and English seaside imagery
Source: Vote Leave 2016ck

The images shown in Figures 8 and 9 provide further examples of Vote Leave's tempered foreground banal nostalgia mode, which suggests the presence of feeling rules that limit nostalgia's direct discursive expression. Each example minimises the interpretation of backward-looking loss, longing or 'pastness' by appearing more oriented towards the present and future. Figure 8, for example, is reminiscent of the flat graphics that characterise a Jamesonian hybrid of temporalities collapsed into the retro imagery of a "perpetual present" (see Chapter One). The faded and watery quality of the Union Jack's transition into each location in Figure 9, meanwhile, might be interpreted as a more conventional indicator of nostalgia in the manner of Grainge's contemplative monochrome mode of nostalgic 'pastness' (see Chapter One). Nevertheless, I suggest that such conventionally nostalgic connotations are immediately tempered in these images by the visual use of bright sunlight, a common metaphor for the future (Daddow 2019, 14), previously invoked by Eurosceptic pressure groups such as the Fresh Start Project (see Chapter Two).[32] Yet despite such a present-centred or forward-looking appearance, the images remain subtly suggestive of the workings of a background banal nostalgia mood due to their attempt to project a Whiggish continuity of national essence across time. In the case of Figure 9 in particular, the image's aesthetic transition from the nostalgic nationalist connotations of the Union Jack into a radiant rural English idyll is subtly suggestive of a desire to "transcend time" and project a linear continuity of 'greatness' from Churchill's celebrated post-war "sunlit uplands" to the

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[32] An exception to this tempering is one iteration of the image where the flag fades into the London Eye, which opts for the rosy glow of a sunset (Vote Leave 2016cj). I only find one instance of this image (in Vote Leave's organic Facebook content) where the sunset evokes an accompanying message about polls closing and the end of the referendum.

promise of a post-Brexit future (cf. Browning 2008, 57; Campanella and Dassù 2019, 70–78).[33] In the next subsection I provide further evidence of how such images became attached to nostalgic narratives of continuous national 'greatness' within Vote Leave's communications, and what such evidence suggests about banal nostalgia's relationship with 'crisis'.

Nostalgic narratives of national 'greatness' and the invocation of 'crisis'

In Vote Leave's monetised social media advertising,[34] images such as those shown above in Figure 9, became fixed to narratives of continuous national 'greatness'. Here, Figure 9 acquired a banner which directly stated that "Britain is a great nation, we will thrive outside the EU" (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 66–68)(see Figure 10 below).[35] Whereas the visuals discussed above implied the continuity of national 'greatness', here that narrative was rendered explicit through the image's anchoring text and its use of the present tense to insist that Britain "is" a great nation. Similar unambiguous examples of continuous 'greatness' also permeated the referendum speeches of Gove and Johnson, including each of their initial statements of support for Vote Leave. Whilst Gove cited Britain's possession of the "greatest soft power and global influence of any state" (Gove 2016a), Johnson declared that: "This is a truly great country that is now going places at extraordinary speed" (Johnson 2016a). In later interventions, Gove's propensity for the nostalgic Whiggish inventory of national achievements was also on display as he followed his assertion that "Britain is a great country" with claims of the nation's position as "the world's fifth largest economy with the world's best armed forces, best health service and best broadcaster. We are first in the world for soft power thanks to our language, culture and creativity" (Gove 2016b; cf. 2016c). The present-tense insistence that "Britain is a great country" continued in letters co-authored by Gove, Johnson and Gisela Stuart, released towards the end of the referendum (Vote Leave 2016bl; 2016cg). The day before polling, for example, the authors argued that not only "is"

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[33] Indeed, elsewhere during the referendum, Johnson invoked an independent Britain's "sunlit meadows beyond" to convey similar connotations of linear continuity (Johnson 2016c).

[34] These advertisements are the covert so-called 'dark ads' released by Facebook during a post-referendum investigation into Vote Leave by the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Committee (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019a; 2019b; 2019c).

[35] Other monetised versions of this image include a similar banner attached to photographs of a stereotypical English town and the City of London (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 66–68).

Britain a great country but that: "We will be even greater if we take back control of our own democracy" (Vote Leave 2016cg). Such interventions provide further evidence of Vote Leave's invocation of the present and future to indicate – in this case, alongside a direct reference to the past via the invitation to take "back" control (see Chapter Five) – the temporal continuity of national 'greatness'.

Redacted image.

Vote Leave social media advertising image. Union Jack fading into photograph of a sunny English seaside locale. Banner across the middle reads: "Britain is a great nation. We will thrive outside the EU"
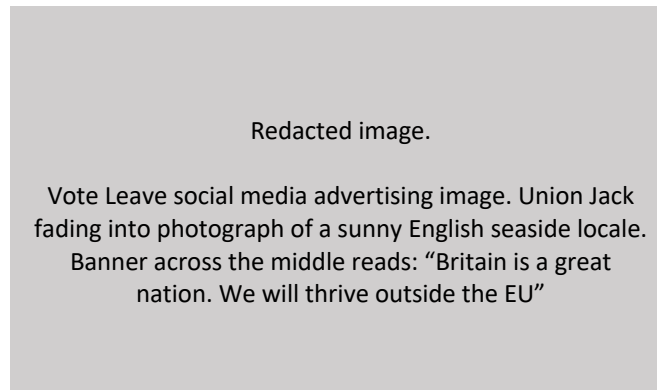
Figure 10: Vote Leave Union Jack with banner of British 'greatness'
Source: Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 67

Crucially, such assertions of national continuity and its corresponding connotations of comforting stability, were often accompanied by contrasting depictions of a tumultuous EU. Johnson, for example, cited the Eurozone and migration 'crises' to refer to the EU as a "force for instability and alienation" and pronounced that "it is not we who have changed. It is the EU that has changed out of all recognition" (Johnson 2016c; cf. 2016a). Related sentiments were echoed by one interviewee who argued that "we've got a very coherent history, we haven't been defeated in wars for a very long period of time, and [there is a] sort of continuity and stability about the UK, which is absent in lots of other places in Europe" (Anonymous 2, 2018). A similar juxtaposition of essential identities was produced particularly starkly in Vote Leave's visual output, such as in the leaflet centrefold shown below in Figure 11 (Vote Leave 2016i)[36]. The left side of this leaflet denotes the European migration 'crisis' through racialised imagery of migrants breaking through razor wire at a border and a map advising that entire populations of potential EU accession countries, neighbouring 'troubled' Syria and Iraq, could

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[36] This leaflet, titled "Not sure which way to vote on 23rd June?" also presented a man standing at a crossroads on its front cover and an "EU myth buster" on its reverse. A version of the leaflet's centrefold, shown above in Figure 11, also appeared on Vote Leave's website in a page titled "Why Vote Leave" (Vote Leave 2016r). Another version of the leaflet supplanted the visual centrefold shown in Figure 11 with bullet-pointed "facts" on UK-EU relations (Vote Leave 2016j).

imminently move to Britain (see also Chapter Five). This half of the leaflet also illustrates economic 'crisis' through a graph of soaring EU costs, a newspaper headline illuminating bureaucratic excess and imagery of a Euro coin cracking apart (see also Chapter Four). In contrast to such turbulence, the right side of the leaflet hints at the continuity of British identity through metonymic carriers of nostalgic national 'greatness' such as the Union Jack, the island defences of the white cliffs of Dover, the NHS, and the old navy-blue enrobed passport. Such images once more minimised the overt representation of nostalgic loss, longing and 'pastness', whilst remaining suggestive of the workings of banal nostalgia in their insinuation of a continuous autobiographic national narrative.

Redacted image.

Centrefold of Vote Leave leaflet depicting EU 'crisis' on the left hand side and British continuity on the right hand side.

Figure 11: Centrefold of Vote Leave leaflet "Not sure which way to vote on 23rd June?"
Source: Vote Leave 2016i

The evidence presented throughout this section points to a multi-layered relationship between banal nostalgia and 'crisis' in the Vote Leave campaign. As noted above, banal nostalgia seeks continuity amidst perceived 'crisis', generating a comforting sense of a coherent and stable identity through time via narrative practices that can disguise the very existence of disruption. On this view, Vote Leave's expression of banal nostalgia in emotionally and temporally tempered foreground nostalgia modes effectively masked the conventionally nostalgic "pain of loss" associated with present-day 'crisis' (cf. Boym 2001,

134

339) (see Chapter One). Nevertheless, although this approach precluded immediate interpretations of 'crisis', as I suggested above, the very cultivation of continuous autobiographical national narratives speaks to an underlying 'crisis' catalyst. Given the appearance of the above social media images in the closing stages of the referendum, it may be that such a sense of 'crisis' emanated from the uncertainties that a Brexit victory would bring. There is some evidence to support this interpretation as, whilst Vote Leave sought the most fundamental change to Britain's international relations in recent memory, it was also keen to downplay Brexit's unpredictable nature (Anonymous 11, 2018), using subtly nostalgic narratives of continued 'greatness' as reassurance that an independent Britain would "thrive" (as above). Indeed, Gove even suggested that "there will be no turbulence or trauma on Independence Day", citing Remain campaign Chair Stuart Rose, who had previously – and somewhat embarrassingly for Remain – stated that a Leave victory would result in no immediate change (Gove 2016c).[37] Such claims of stability, however, appeared at odds with Vote Leave's basic advocacy of disruptive EU withdrawal. In this sense, the campaign's nostalgic narratives of continued national 'greatness' also responded to the invocation of threatening 'crisis' emanating from the EU (as above), providing legitimacy for its broader – and more overtly nostalgic – calls to "Take Back Control" (see Chapter Five). In such contexts, as I explore further in the next section, banal nostalgia was imbued with revolutionary, as well as stabilising, connotations.

3.3 National heroes and the nostalgic revolutionary imagination

In this section, I explore how banal nostalgia's preference for temporal continuity overlaps with revolutionary themes. I begin the section by discussing Vote Leave's treatment of revolutionary British heroes, which suffused the campaign's communications in verbal references to venerated historic leaders, and in visual materials that generated a continuous, Whiggish narrative of heroic national achievement. Such visual interventions employed an emotionally and temporally complicated foreground banal nostalgia mode, which interspersed conventionally nostalgic sepia aesthetics of classic imperial and military figures

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[37] Indeed, Rose's statement was quoted by Vote Leave in most email communications it sent to potential supporters (Vote Leave, passim).

with less common exemplars of national heroism in the form of notable scientists. Vote Leave's chosen heroes drew parallels between historic revolutionary achievements and the Brexit project, with the prominent inclusion of scientists conferring particularly innovative and forward-looking connotations. In this sense, the campaign's British heroes nostalgically mirrored the "forward-looking men" favoured in certain strains of Whig historiography (Zook 2002, 215), and drew further analogies with Brexiteers themselves. Similar themes permeated additional campaign communications, which drew on habitual imaginaries of the experiences and aftermath of the 20th Century world wars to discuss the threat that Britain's continued EU membership posed to the NHS. Here, traditionally nostalgic imagery of the health service's origin story in the aftermath of the Second World War enhanced the portrayal of a contemporary institution in 'crisis'. Nevertheless, interpretations of conventional nostalgia were complicated once more by the adoption of a banal nostalgia mode that married a direct sense of nostalgic loss, longing and 'pastness' amidst 'crisis' with imaginaries of futuristic reform. Whereas in the previous section banal nostalgia's preference for temporal continuity was implicated in masking 'crisis' and providing a soothing sense of stability, here the desire for continuity overlaps with a disruptive revolutionary temporality that utilises 'crisis' to advocate for change via a rehabilitation of the innovative and reformist spirit of the past. Here, Brexit is positioned as a radical and revolutionary act through which Britain's increasingly progressive and forward-looking Whiggish trajectory can be reinvigorated. I conclude the section by exploring the appeal that such narratives hold for Vote Leave Eurosceptics and highlighting the exclusionary politics that they entail and obscure.

Vote Leave's British heroes

As I suggested above in section 3.1, the creation of an oppositional narrative of British heroes and continental foes is what unites the seemingly contradictory liberal and nationalist-militarist threads of Whig historiographies. Such references to national heroes were a notable feature of Vote Leave's campaign communications (cf. Finlayson 2018; Wellings 2019, chap. 6), which often called on the markers of banal nostalgia that Kenny identified in his original use of the term – those events, icons and institutions that embody the experiences and aftermath of the 20th Century world wars (see above). As outlined in the first section of this

chapter, British culture is still saturated with vestiges of this era, and particularly with images of the military-masculine hero (see e.g. Basham 2016), which summon nostalgic associations of "service, bravery, […] national virtue, and […] stiff-upper-lipped Spitfire pilots drinking tea in the face of adversity" (Tidy 2015, 227). During the referendum, similar themes were intimated in Johnson's invocation of cherished wartime hero, former Prime Minister Winston Churchill, once voted the "greatest Briton of all time" (BBC 2002). Imploring, "What was he [Churchill] fighting for, in the Second World War?", Johnson implied a temporal analogy between Brexit and an earlier wartime era characterised by European "dictatorship" and heroic British leadership (Johnson 2016b). Elsewhere, Johnson broadened the scope of this oppositional narrative, such as in his opening statement in support of Vote Leave where he insisted that "We have spent 500 years trying to stop continental European powers uniting against us" (Johnson 2016a). In this statement, however, it was to Churchill that Johnson returned to support his advocacy of Leave, arguing for a relationship with the EU "on the lines originally proposed by Winston Churchill: interested, associated, but not absorbed; with Europe – but not comprised" (Johnson 2016a).

Further campaign communications positioned a vote for Brexit as an act of national heroism that would pay dividends both for Britain and the EU. Such statements again implied analogies between Brexit and shared national understandings of Britain's role in earlier conflicts with Europe. Gove, for example, spoke of Brexit as "the democratic liberation of a whole continent", elaborating that "If we vote to leave we will have – in the words of a former British Prime Minister – saved our country by our exertions and Europe by our example" (Gove 2016c).[38] Similar sentiments were expressed in an interview Johnson gave to *The Telegraph*, where he claimed that EU withdrawal would make Britons the "heroes of Europe" (Campanella and Dassù 2019, 77; Wellings 2019, 120). Themes of exemplary and benevolent heroism were also echoed in further campaign materials that highlighted Europe's need to be led by British "example" (Vote Leave 2015o; 2016cn), and that painted Brexit as a beneficial opportunity for European reform (Gove 2016c; 2016d; Vote Leave 2016bp). As I discuss further in the next chapter (see Chapter Four), in the context of the Eurozone 'crisis' such statements sometimes acquired more explicit anti-German connotations, echoing and

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[38] British Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger first uttered a similar refrain in 1805 in the context of the Napoleonic Wars (see e.g. Pitt 2016).
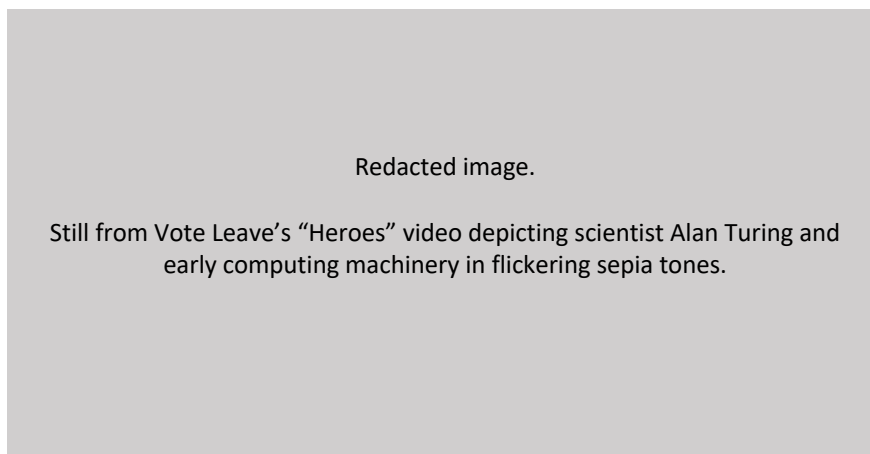
adapting the discursive traditions of prior emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics, who appeared more comfortable with overt displays of nostalgia than Vote Leave usually was (see Chapter Two). Yet although Vote Leave largely avoided explicit representations of nostalgic loss, longing and 'pastness', such as in the social media graphics discussed above, the campaign's visual treatment of national heroes did exhibit some of these hallmarks. Closer inspection of such aesthetics, however, problematises the initial impression of conventional nostalgic display and suggests the operation of a more temporally complex mode of banal nostalgia in Vote Leave's foreground discourses.

Vote Leave's aesthetics of British heroes first appeared in a video released in December 2015 via its social media and email channels (Vote Leave 2015p; 2015o). Titled "Heroes", the video narrated an illustrious history of national endeavour within a striking nostalgic aesthetic of flickering sepia graphics which, accompanied by an earnest soundtrack, instantly conveyed the legitimising sense of pastness and archival authenticity that Grainge cited in his explicit version of the nostalgia mode (see Chapter One). Indeed, it was this video that one interviewee tentatively conceded as an anomalous example of the campaign's nostalgic display, albeit one complicated by an "overwhelming" focus on science and scientists (Anonymous 6, 2018) (see Chapter Two). Describing its subjects as "British heroes [that] changed Britain and the world for the better", the video indeed interspersed a disproportionate number of scientists, such as Isaac Newton, Florence Nightingale, Charles Darwin, James Maxwell and Alan Turing, with traditional imperial and military heroes, such as Winston Churchill, Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington.[39] Exhibiting a recurring campaign propensity for listing the nation's exemplary attributes in a narrative of continuous 'greatness', the video extended its themes of imperial and military heroism by invoking historic British victories in battles against Napoleon, Nazism and invasion, which recalled the Whiggish interview testimony of Vote Leave campaigners discussed above (see section 3.1). Themes of heroic scientific achievement, meanwhile, were accompanied by emblems of

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[39] An additional inclusion in the video was the suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst. Whilst women have traditionally been used in national narratives to depict a nation's past (McClintock 1993) (see Chapter Five), suffragettes have sometimes been incorporated to support claims of national modernity and progress (Radcliffe 1996). The latter modality appears to have informed Vote Leave's *Heroes* video, where it contributed to the campaign's forward-looking and revolutionary narrative. Despite Pankhurst's inclusion, however, the video remains dominated by exclusionary visions of military-masculine heroism, which I discuss further below.

scholarly and technical genius, such as complex mathematical equations and computing devices (see Figure 12 below). The many narrative parallels that the video made – between maverick individuals and national identity (cf. Grainge 2002, 110–14); historic battles and the vote for Brexit; traditional exemplars of heroism and visionary scientific leadership – was suggestive of a nostalgia mode which possessed a distinctive hybrid temporality. Indeed, as I explore further below, the video drew on a thread of Whig history, also favoured by Vote Leave in further materials, which celebrated the enlightened and progressive heroism of "forward-looking men" (Zook 2002, 215).

Redacted image.

Still from Vote Leave's "Heroes" video depicting scientist Alan Turing and early computing machinery in flickering sepia tones.

Figure 12: Still from Vote Leave's "Heroes" video
Source: Vote Leave 2015p

Heroic national narratives and banal nostalgia's revolutionary connotations

As I recounted in the first section of this chapter, 18th Century proponents of a Whiggish interpretation of British history cultivated a narrative of the original 17th Century Whigs as "British patriots, forward-looking men not satisfied to simply conserve the old but also to herald the new" (Zook 2002, 214–15). A similar spirit pervaded Vote Leave's communications, where the campaign drew analogies between the progressive projects of historic national heroes and the imperative of Brexit. In addition to the *Heroes* video discussed above, such themes were a notable feature of the campaign's treatment of the NHS, which provided a further link to the experiences and aftermath of the Second World War. The NHS is widely understood in Britain as "the rewarding culmination of the (simplistic) narrative of national sacrifice and austerity during the so-called 'People's War'" (C. Baker 2015, 415), which provides "a feel-good fantasy of the nation as solidaristic and equal, a liberal fantasy of equality" (Hunter 2017, 162). As Shona Hunter elaborates, "The NHS which is so valued is the

'original' one, seen to 'come forth' from a specifically British identity understood through characteristics of decency, goodness and compassion" (Hunter 2017, 163). Such themes were conveyed during the referendum when campaigners cited the health service as "one of the most loved, respected and valuable British institutions I know" (Gove 2016e), and praised its "core values – of solidarity, fairness and inclusivity – [that] need to be protected and defended" (Vote Leave 2016bo). Similar themes were also conveyed in a video released on Vote Leave's social media channels on 25th April 2016, which also formed part of the campaign's referendum broadcasts, appearing on primetime television in the weeks and days before polling (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bd; 2016bi; 2016cb).

Like the *Heroes* video discussed above, these interventions also bore elements of a classic Graingian nostalgia mode of backward-looking loss, longing and pastness. This was the case in the video's use of vintage photographs of the health service's post-second world war godfathers – Labour politicians Clement Attlee and Aneurin Bevan, and Conservative Churchill, each rendered from hundreds of tiny NHS emblems – and sepia images of the early NHS fading into the institution's logo (see Figure 13 below). Employing a similarly earnest soundtrack to that used in the *Heroes* video, the narrator here intoned that, "At the end of the war, Britain created the NHS. It protected us throughout our lives. But, it's in danger, you can help it".[40] Such an explicit rendering of NHS 'crisis', attributed throughout the video to Britain's EU membership, was reminiscent of the sense of threatening 'crisis' emanating from the EU that the materials discussed at the end of the previous section also conveyed (see section 3.2). Nevertheless, although the direct invocation of NHS 'crisis' was accompanied by rather explicit nostalgic imagery of the early health service, interpretations of traditional nostalgia were complicated by the conspicuous inclusion of much further imagery that carried forward-looking connotations. Such imagery depicted the futuristic promise of medical science via graphics of modern hospitals and scientists working in state-of-the-art labs, and optimistic visuals of a brighter post-Brexit patient experience (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bd;

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[40] Such a sense of NHS 'crisis' was further conveyed in the video's exhortation to "Help save the NHS on June 23" and aesthetics of a heart monitor 'flat-lining'. A similar visual trope also appeared in several of the campaign's leaflets (Vote Leave 2016h; 2016p) and monetised social media adverts (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 4–8). In versions where the NHS logo was included, its blue background also leant Vote Leave's red and white colour palette subtle Union Jack connotations.

2016bi; 2016cb). Indeed, the NHS was often co-located in Vote Leave's broader communications with futuristic appeals to science and technology. Whilst Gove called for institutional "reform" such that the health service could "harvest all the gains possible from huge technological breakthroughs" (Gove 2016e), the NHS was also regularly embraced within a trio of national "priorities" that included "schools" (or "education") and "science research" (e.g. Vote Leave 2015b; 2015g; 2015h; 2015i; 2016u; 2016w; 2016x).

Redacted image.

Still from Vote Leave's "Help save the NHS" video depicting the NHS logo fading into vintage photographs of the institution's founders: politicians Attlee, Bevan and Churchill.

Figure 13: Still from Vote Leave's "Help save the NHS on June 23" video
Source: Vote Leave 2016bd

Such examples again point to Vote Leave's use of an emotionally and temporally tempered – or at least complicated – foreground discursive mode of banal nostalgia, allied to a Whiggish understanding of British history. Such examples also imply, I argue, the circulation of a peculiar background banal nostalgia mood within the campaign, linked to a specific thread of Whig thinking. As I have highlighted throughout this section, the campaign drew on Whig history's nationalist-militarist thread through the depiction of Churchill, calls to save, protect and defend treasured NHS institutions, and the suggestion that the Brexit referendum was the latest in an historic succession of battles with 'Europe'. Yet such themes intersected with a more liberal strand of Whig thinking, introduced in earlier sections of this chapter, which cast Brexit as the next step in an increasingly enlightened trajectory of national progress and reform. On this view, Vote Leave's approach to British heroes implied parallels between Brexiteers and the forward-looking men favoured by 18th Century Whig historians. Here, references to the NHS founders and Labour MPs Attlee and Bevan in the examples quoted above, in addition to the scientists invoked in Vote Leave's initial *Heroes* video, appear significant as they afforded the campaign's post-Brexit national priorities a progressive,

radical and revolutionary aura. Such interventions, I suggest, positioned the vote for Brexit as an inspiring opening through which the radical, reformist and forward-looking spirit of the national past might be recovered. Indeed, in his initial statement of support for Vote Leave, Gove hinted at such themes himself when he stated that:

> The ability to choose who governs us, and the freedom to change laws we
> do not like, were secured for us in the past by *radicals and liberals* who took
> power from unaccountable elites and placed it in the hands of the people
> (Gove 2016a, emphasis added).

The interplay between past and future in the foreground banal nostalgia mode that Vote Leave employed in the examples considered above was therefore suggestive of the operation of a background banal nostalgia mood rooted in a nostalgic "revolutionary imagination", characterised by "paradoxical" discourses which prescribe "a leap into the future that [is] also a step into the past" (Bonnett 2010, 28). As I explore further in the next chapter, banal nostalgia's preference for temporal continuity between past and future here overlaps with a related, but distinctive, branching temporal pattern that invokes a clearer sense of 'crisis' and disruption. On this view, EU membership represented a declinist rupture in a British national identity previously characterised by forward-looking progressivism and 'greatness', and Brexit provided an opportunity to reinvigorate such a distinguished lineage. Indeed, similar temporal inclinations were exhibited in the historiographies of 18th Century Whig historians that Vote Leave appeared to favour, who viewed the 1688 Glorious Revolution of their 17th Century predecessors as:

> [A] definitive turning point in British history, when the nation was rescued
> from the caprices of an arbitrary monarch pursuing an absolutist style of
> governance and placed back on its lineal progression towards an ever
> increasingly rational, constitutional government (Zook 2002, 213).

As I unpack further at the start of the next chapter, a similar temporality permeates the political thought of Vote Leave Campaign Director Dominic Cummings, whose forward-looking admiration for revolutionary scientific and technological progress has long been

underwritten by specifically imperial and colonial forms of nostalgia, situated within the broader Whiggish interpretation of the national past considered above. To close this chapter, however, I now consider the appeal that Vote Leave's ostensibly forward-looking and revolutionary brand of banal nostalgia holds for certain elite British Eurosceptics, and the exclusionary politics that it entails and obscures.

The cultural appeal and exclusionary politics of banal nostalgia

The Whiggish-liberal interpretations of the national past considered above, which advance a progressive narrative of "reform, liberty, and democracy", carry a persistent cultural appeal for Vote Leave Eurosceptics, I suggest, because their ostensibly forward-looking themes are synonymous with positivity, virtuousness, and a commendable sense of social justice (Robinson 2012, 19–21, 34). By contrast, more conventionally conservative or restorative approaches to the national past bear many of the pejorative connotations of traditional and backward-looking interpretations of nostalgia, rooted in the emotion's unfortunate origins as a medical disease (Robinson 2012, 19–21; Kenny 2017, 258–61) (see Chapter One). As Kenny has noted, such broad cultural understandings, which value modernity and a forward-looking temporal gaze, and denigrate backward-looking 'pastness', can result in "anti-nostalgic" forms of nostalgia (Kenny 2017, 258–61). "Anti-nostalgic" nostalgia describes the tendency of national discourses presented as futuristic, modern or progressive to remain underwritten by nostalgic understandings of the nation's historically-rooted experiences and identity (Kenny 2017, 258–61). On this view, Kenny argues, the "modernizing" spirit of Tony Blair's Labour government was supported by analogies with the revolutionary atmosphere of the post-war Attlee era (Kenny 2017, 260). As I explore further in the following chapter, an ostensibly forward-looking anti-nostalgic nostalgia enables its subjects to draw subtly on the affective appeal of the national past, whilst rejecting any disparaging association with conventional forms of nostalgia, which tends instead to be pejoratively attributed to political adversaries (Kenny 2017, 261). Indeed, such an understanding and practice of nostalgia appears to have pervaded Vote Leave, and constituted it as an emotional community from prior, similarly inclined, iterations of the British Eurosceptic movement (see Chapter Two). Recall, for example, interviewees' claims about Vote Leave's future-oriented and forward-looking

credentials, leveraged in contrast with the campaign's referendum opponents (see Chapter Two).

Such evidence, taken together with longitudinal examples of the emotional communities that preceded Vote Leave (see Chapter Two), suggests that the anti-nostalgic and forward-looking connotations of the campaign's mode of banal nostalgia were institutionalised within the emotional structures and feeling rules of prior Eurosceptic campaign groups. As noted in Chapter Two, organisations previously founded by Vote Leave's CEO Matthew Elliott and Campaign Director Dominic Cummings exhibited similarly forward-looking sensibilities, which suggests that deep-rooted feeling rules structured Vote Leave's tempered or temporally complex displays of nostalgia. Indeed, there are particularly striking parallels between Vote Leave's anti-nostalgic nostalgic treatment of the futuristic promise of science and technology, and Cummings' work for the New Frontiers Foundation in the early 21st Century, which I explore further in the next chapter. The persistence of a peculiar foreground nostalgia mode in the discursive traditions of Vote Leave's precursor organisations, in addition to the substantial overlap in personnel between these groups (see Chapter Two), also chimes with the habitual features of banal nostalgia, discussed above in section 3.1. On this view, although habit does not strictly determine emotional experiences or discourse, it does structure the field of available options for members of a particular emotional community via cultural scripts, which imply the social desirability of perpetuating 'the way we do things around here' (cf. Hopf 2010 cited in Campbell 2019, 120) (see Chapter One). Nevertheless, as Billig has observed elsewhere, banal or habitual repetition is not synonymous with a benign politics (Billig 1995, 6–7); an insight which calls to mind banal nostalgia's capacity to minimise unfavourable interpretations of past actions and events in order to generate a flattering, linear narrative of personal or collective identity (see above).

Such sanitising tendencies have already been observed in classic Whig historiographies of the national past, where virtuous accounts of revolution were "always bloodless" (Zook 2002, 219). It is therefore important to ask what such glowing and rose-tinted historical accounts leave out. Here, I depart from any necessary commitment to the purposive or instrumental use of the past, which has characterised many scholarly treatments of a "present-centred" Whig history (Zook 2002, 215; Robinson 2012, 2; Watson 2020, 272, 278–79), in order to

return to banal nostalgia's relationship with habit. On this view:

> Whether certain elements [of the national past] are forgotten intentionally or left out subconsciously because they complicate the story is not as important as understanding simply that they were left out and that complicity, and in turn understanding, is shared by all (L. Campbell 2019, 123).

Considering what is meant by the "national" past is therefore a good place to start in unpacking the exclusionary politics of banal nostalgia, and its allied practice of Whig historiography. Kenny has noted the emotional appeal of a routine national frame in British political discourse, which is "so securely embedded in the vernaculars and practices of daily life" as it offers "visionary elements, forms of consolation, and redemptive narratives that would once have been located within the ideologies and traditions of party politics" (Kenny 2014, 25). Despite such a positive and unifying appeal, however, "the nation" can also act as an ambiguous and exclusionary signifier, which implies "A socially, politically, culturally and ethnically homogeneous nation of Britons with a similarly homogeneous story to tell about itself" (Watson 2020, 272). Such invalid assumptions about national homogeneity have revealed themselves, for example, in previous plans – spearheaded by Vote Leave's Michael Gove during his tenure as Education Secretary – to reform Britain's school history curriculum into a vehicle for teaching a Whiggish chronology of 'national' achievement (Watson 2020, 282–87). As Gove's proposals suggested a particular desire to sanitise and commemorate the accomplishments of imperial heroes, they neglected to speak to the diversity of people and experiences that they claimed to represent under a "national" umbrella (Watson 2020, 282–87). On this view, Vote Leave's own treatment of British heroes in the aesthetic output discussed above displays a correspondingly disproportionate regard for white, male, 'visionary' subjectivities, often connected with Britain's imperial and military past. I explore this theme further in the next chapter, where I unpack the campaign's nostalgic preference for such forward-looking men.

Conclusions

I began this chapter by unpacking the first of three *varieties* of Eurosceptic nostalgia introduced in the previous chapter, where I reviewed the historic evolution of elite British Euroscepticism's nostalgic traditions and emotional communities (see Chapter Two). In that chapter, I identified the persistence of a nostalgic discursive strand related to imaginaries of heroic Britishness and British 'greatness', particularly those rooted in war memory. In the present chapter (Chapter Three), I named this variety *banal* nostalgia. In section 3.1, I explored extant treatments of this form of nostalgia, showing how banal signifies habitual or routine narratives of a glorious national past. Much of the content of such narratives, which are repeated in the received wisdom of everyday national discourse and cultural outputs, has become dominated by the most recent success story in British history: the nation's contributions in the two 20th Century world wars. The prominence of this historic period in such narratives, however, merely reflects the culmination of a broader historiographical practice, which favours the creation of a continuous narrative of national achievement through time. The practice of such a Whiggish historiography – so named for its origins in the preferences of 17th Century Whig historians – both draws on and reproduces banal nostalgia's desire to cultivate a consistent and flattering sense of national identity linking Britain's past, present and future. As such, banal refers to habit in terms of both the content and practice of nostalgic national history. Such Whiggish historiographical proclivities, I argued, permeated the outlook of key Vote Leave personnel, and pointed to the circulation of a background banal nostalgia mood within the campaign. In section 3.2, I began to discuss how such a nostalgia mood was expressed in Vote Leave's public communications via a foreground banal nostalgia mode. Here, I explored how both liberal and nationalist threads of Whig historiography filtered into the campaign's materials, subtly suggesting a nostalgic desire to cultivate a continuous narrative of national 'greatness'.

Similar themes were conveyed in Vote Leave's aesthetic output, where nostalgic emblems of Britishness sometimes appeared alongside direct assertions that Britain "is" a "great" nation, and it would "thrive" outside the EU. In this context, I suggested that banal nostalgia's desire for temporal continuity – evident here in the simultaneous invocation of discursive signifiers of the nation's past, present and future – subtly provided a comforting and stabilising salve

that masked an underlying sense of 'crisis' generated by the uncertainties of Brexit. Nevertheless, I also highlighted how when 'crisis' is more overtly invoked – usually in the form of some threat emanating from Britain's EU membership – Eurosceptic narratives of banal nostalgia acquire revolutionary rather than stabilising connotations. In the final section of the chapter, 3.3, I explored this contention further through a discussion of Vote Leave's portrayal of British heroes. Narratives of national heroes are central to Whig historiographies, with one particular strain of Whig thought deifying the revolutionary achievements of the nation's forward-looking men. Here, I showed how a similar regard infused Vote Leave's own treatment of national heroes, particularly in the context of its invocation of an NHS 'crisis', where the campaign drew parallels between the imperative of Brexit, the historic heroism of the health service's visionary founders and the futuristic heroism of medical scientists. In this context, banal nostalgia's preference for temporal continuity was expressed via a temporally complicated discursive mode that positioned Brexit as a revolutionary act through which the past's former radical and reformist spirit could be reclaimed and reinvigorated. Whilst this nostalgia mode was embedded in an exclusionary politics of gender and race, I argued that it has held a persistent cultural appeal in the Vote Leave lineage of Eurosceptic emotional communities because it enabled campaigners to maintain an historically rooted but ostensibly forward-looking image and reject the pejorative connotations of backward-looking nostalgia. I take up these themes again in the next chapter, where I explore how they intersect with Vote Leave's nostalgias for Britain's imperial and colonial past.

Chapter Four: The Imperial and Colonial Nostalgias of Vote Leave's "Forward-Looking" Approach

In the previous chapter, Chapter Three, I explored Vote Leave's relationship with a nostalgic temporality that favours continuity of identity over time. As I discussed there, when faced with 'crisis', this kind of *banal* nostalgia seeks comfort and inspiration in habitual narratives of national 'greatness' that project past glories into future promises, generating either stabilising or revolutionary connotations. Such Whiggish narratives, I argued, can therefore be presented in forward-looking and progressive, rather than conventionally nostalgic terms. Nevertheless, the very construction of such linear narratives, and their preference for the visionary heroism of canonical figures of the national past, aligns them directly with emotional experiences of nostalgia. In this chapter, I interrogate these insights further by exploring how this nostalgic revolutionary imagination expresses a subtle longing for a "past perfect" future. As noted in the last chapter, this nostalgic temporality also craves a linear alignment of national identity across time, however where the stabilising iteration of banal nostalgia can minimise interpretations of present 'crisis', its revolutionary counterpart typically posits that such a rupture has occurred and seeks to return to a prior trajectory. As I explore in this chapter, this broad revolutionary temporality lends itself particularly well to more specific, imperial and colonial varieties of nostalgia, associated with the loss of, and longing for, the British empire. On this view, EU membership has disrupted the branching possibilities of Britain's futuristic imperial and colonial paths and Brexit therefore provides the opportunity to reinvigorate their lost potentials.

Whilst the presence of a similar temporality has already been noted in extant research on the imperial and colonial inflections of British Eurosceptic discourse, a forward-looking veneer has hitherto been taken as evidence of nostalgia's absence. In contrast, I argue that Eurosceptic discourses that embody the branching temporality of the past perfect post-Brexit future represent a tempered foreground discursive mode of nostalgia, allied to a distinctive background nostalgia mood and set of feeling rules governing emotional display. Identifying how nostalgia can operate in unconventional temporal registers is important as it contributes to our understanding of how prevailing ideas about British empire persist in the discursive traditions and emotional communities of elite British Euroscepticism. With this in mind, I

therefore begin the chapter in section 4.1 by exploring how temporally complicated moods and modes of imperial and colonial nostalgia have long characterised the political thought of Vote Leave's central figure - Campaign Director, Dominic Cummings. Whilst interviewees conferred on Cummings the forward-looking traits of the campaign's favoured strain of Whiggish heroism, highlighted in the previous chapter, I discuss how Cummings' personal admiration for the post-Brexit possibilities of scientific and technological endeavour was underpinned by deep-rooted background imperial and colonial nostalgia moods. Here, imperial nostalgia refers to a longing to rehabilitate Britain's former global status and colonial nostalgia expresses a desire to reconnect with the country's former colonies, particularly those deemed to possess similarly advanced cultures. Such nostalgia moods, I argue, draw on a past perfect future temporality to posit Brexit as the means through which an increasingly 'progressive', but as yet unfulfilled, imperial and colonial destiny might be achieved.

In the second section, 4.2, I further unpack how this distinctive nostalgic temporality characterised Vote Leave's public communications in emotionally tempered imperial and colonial nostalgia modes. Although the campaign's materials typically eschewed the overt representation of traditional nostalgic longing for the British empire, such themes were subtly conveyed via muted narratives of a post-Brexit Global Britain, which connected Cummings' nostalgia moods to a broader Anglospherist tradition in elite British Euroscepticism. Here, I show how seemingly forward-looking imaginaries of Britain's post-Brexit global prospects, which enabled the campaign to tarnish the failing EU with the pejorative connotations of backwardness, expressed a subtle desire to reinvigorate an historic vision of modernity. On this view, Vote Leave's campaign materials exhibited vestiges of late Victorian ideas about technology's capacity to dissolve geographic distance and cultivate a transnational network of like-minded colonial partners. In the chapter's final section, 4.3, I use a case study of Vote Leave's proposals for an Australian-style points-based immigration system to further explore how nostalgic Anglospherist proclivities informed the campaign's advocacy of Brexit. The proposed scheme cultivated a progressive, inclusive and scientific appearance compatible with and, in fact, essential for the realisation of a modern Global Britain. Yet such a forward-looking veneer simply provides further evidence of how emotionally tempered and temporally complicated imperial and colonial nostalgia modes characterised the campaign's public communications. As such, I demonstrate how Vote Leave's proposed immigration

policy subtly expressed a nostalgic, racialised desire to facilitate a hierarchical Anglosphere underscored by civilisational imaginaries to which Cummings' own political thought appears well-attuned.

4.1 Imperial and colonial nostalgias and the post-Brexit promise of science and technology

In this section I explore the political thought of Vote Leave Campaign Director Dominic Cummings, particularly his longstanding admiration for scientific and technological possibility. Such themes suffused the campaign's referendum messages and informed interviewees' claims about Vote Leave's forward-looking direction. Yet Cummings himself positioned proposals for futuristic post-Brexit advancement as a solution to Britain's faded imperial status. Indeed, although Vote Leave typically eschewed the overt representation of nostalgic loss and longing for the British empire, its ostensibly futuristic communications about the global promise of scientific endeavour betrayed vestiges of a nostalgic desire to reclaim and refresh the "hegemonic 'advantages'" of British imperialism (Lorcin 2013, 103). Further inspection of Cummings' political thought reveals how his 'scientific' outlook was also underwritten by a colonially inflected preference for the superior institutions of Anglo-America. Here, Cummings' alleged appreciation for scientific epistemologies led him to claim that shared institutions such as the common law were inherently scientific in their operation, and thus culturally advanced. As such, Brexit presented an opportunity to reinvigorate such institutions and – implicitly at least – reconnect Britain with a familiar colonial partner. The imperial and colonial undercurrents of the ostensibly forward-looking approach of Cummings and Vote Leave therefore point to the operation of a distinctive nostalgic temporality. The section concludes by discussing how the combination of past and future in these discourses suggests a branching understanding of an increasingly enlightened, Whiggish national trajectory disrupted by EU membership. On this view, Vote Leave's ostensibly avant-garde treatment of science and technology was underscored by imperial and colonial nostalgias for a post-Brexit future imagined via a past perfect history.

The imperial vestiges of Dominic Cummings' 'scientific' outlook

In the previous chapter, I explored how the nostalgic image of the forward-looking man informed Vote Leave's campaign communications and conceptualisation of itself. As I noted there, such a discourse of visionary heroes values the radical and revolutionary spirit of historic British leaders, situated within a broader Whiggish historiographical tradition of continuous national achievement and progress. Employing a temporally complex foreground nostalgia mode, ostensibly forward-looking narratives enabled Vote Leave campaigners to reject the pejorative associations of conventional nostalgic display, whilst generating favourable parallels between themselves and venerated radical outsiders from the national past. Indeed, Vote Leave's Campaign Director Dominic Cummings occupied a similarly venerated position within the organisation's mythology, with many interviewees identifying him as the campaign's central figure (see Chapter Two). Specifically, campaigners invoked Cummings' extant reputation as a "driving character" (Anonymous 1, 2018) and described a personality that needed to be in control (Anonymous 8, 2018). Further interviewees characterised Cummings as someone who was able to provide indispensable strategic insights (Anonymous 10, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019) but who was "totally dismissive of anyone that had a different opinion" (Anonymous 7, 2018; similar expressed by Anonymous 2, 2018). Interviewees also spoke of Cummings as someone who was "very effective in his way", "very bright" (Anonymous 2, 2018), "very, very intelligent" (Anonymous 7, 2018) and "very brilliant" if "a bit eccentric" (Anonymous 11, 2018). As another interviewee offered:

> Dom understood better than anybody the psychology of the British
> public on this issue [the EU] because he'd been working on it for
> years, he'd done focus groups for decades on it, polling for
> decades…so Dom understood the message that resonated
> (Anonymous 9, 2018).

By contrast, interviewees tended to characterise Vote Leave's other leader – CEO Matthew Elliott, also a longstanding member of the Eurosceptic movement (see Chapter Two) – as a marginal figure in the campaign (Anonymous 6, 9 & 11, 2018). Specifically, whilst some credited Elliott with founding the organisation and continuing to keep board members briefed

about campaign operations (Anonymous 2 & 8, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019), others described his major responsibilities as being confined to fundraising or networking (Anonymous 9 & 10, 2018). As one interviewee put it, Elliott "basically just ended up agreeing with what we told him" and attempts at fundraising were largely unsuccessful until late in the referendum (Anonymous 9, 2018). Such evidence paints a striking picture of the distinctions Vote Leave campaigners drew between their two leaders, with Cummings' status as something of a maverick figure further augmented by admiration for his faith in the promise of science and technology, both as a tool for political campaigning and as a mechanism for large-scale national reform (see Chapter Two). As such, Vote Leave interviewees cited Cummings' futuristic 'scientific' outlook as evidence of the campaign's anti-nostalgic credentials (Anonymous 1 & 6, 2018). Further campaigners praised Cummings' successful leadership of a data-driven (Anonymous 1, 2 & 9, 2018) and "evidence-based" campaign (Anonymous 12, 2018), which notoriously recruited several physicists tasked with developing canvassing software and analysing voter data to direct campaign communications (Cummings 2016). Following Cummings, Vote Leave also publicly highlighted "science research" within a trio of post-Brexit national priorities (see Chapter Three), with loosely-defined proposals for scientific and technological advancement becoming a notable part of the campaign's broader message (Vote Leave 2016ae; 2016ba; Gove 2016c; 2016e). In this section I delve deeper into such statements as an opening for exploring the political thought of Dominic Cummings – Vote Leave's central figure. Doing so enables me to illuminate the campaign's relationship with further Eurosceptic nostalgias rooted in imperial and colonial imaginaries of the national past.

As noted above, themes of science and technology were primarily expressed by Vote Leave as part of an "alternative national policy" for a post-Brexit future in which the country would be able to invest substantially more in its "national priorities" than it could within the confines of the EU (Vote Leave 2016ae, 33). On this view, the EU was "anti-science", had unjustly fired its Chief Scientific Adviser, and was draining funds from its research programmes to finance Eurozone bailouts (Vote Leave 2016ba; 2016ae, 12). Outside of the failing and corrupt EU institutions, Vote Leave argued, Britain would be better equipped to cope with pressing global challenges and reap the rewards of engaging with technological developments such as "the mobile internet, 'the internet of things', genetic engineering and robotics" (Vote Leave

2016ba; 2016ae, 4; Gove 2016c). Such framing reflected Cummings' self-proclaimed "particular interest in science" (e.g. Treasury Committee 2016a, 9) and built specifically on his work as co-founder of the New Frontiers Foundation (NFF), where he also invoked the need for a similar "alternative national strategy" through which Britain could tackle "21st Century challenges" (see Chapter Two). Like Cummings' approach at the NFF, however, Vote Leave's ostensibly avant-garde treatment of the post-Brexit promise of science and technology, was underwritten by vestiges of Britain's imperial and colonial history. Imperial themes were present in campaign communications that referred to Britain as a current or future "world leader" in "crucial fields" (Vote Leave 2016ba), including biosciences and "technology of all kinds" (Johnson 2016a). Imperially inflected imaginaries of global connection also informed Vote Leave's claims that "Science is global" and necessitated a domestic "funding system and regulatory structure that allows [Britain] to be as nimble as possible globally" in order to engage in research "all over the world" (Vote Leave 2016ba).

Such statements were suggestive of the presence of feeling rules tempering the overt expression of nostalgic loss and longing for the British empire, in favour of a futuristic appearance. Yet themes of imperial nostalgia remained discernible in this muted foreground nostalgia mode. Understood as a longing for "the hegemonic 'advantages' of imperialism" rather than a desire to rehabilitate empire *per se* (Lorcin 2013, 98, 103), imperial forms of nostalgia in Britain are already somewhat attenuated in that they typically eschew direct reference to "empire", preferring euphemistic "global" and commercial terms which obscure the violence of imperial history (El-Enany 2020, 177). As such, Vote Leave's references to the global register of scientific endeavour merely hinted at Britain's historic hegemonic position, whilst a seemingly forward-looking 'scientific' gaze complicated traditional interpretations of nostalgia further still. Yet further investigation of the roots of Vote Leave's particular approach to science and technology, in the political thought of Campaign Director Cummings, provides evidence for the circulation of a persistent background imperial nostalgia mood. On his personal website and in press interviews, for example, Cummings revealed his concern for these subjects to be motivated in part by former US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's infamous mid-20th Century remark about Britain's lack of a post-imperial role (Cummings 2014d; The Economist 2016). In Cummings' own words, leaving the EU presented an opportunity for Britain to address this question and redefine its "influence" through scientific

innovation that would "change the world" (Cummings 2014d; The Economist 2016). Such statements suggested that Cummings maintained a certain personal nostalgic wistfulness for Britain's lost world role, and the hegemonic advantages that accompanied it. Indeed, as I explore further below, this evidence also tallies with Cummings' earlier work at the NFF, where he mourned the contemporary loss of British inventiveness and heralded a new Elizabethan era of technological possibility and global reconnection (see Chapter Two).

Scientific epistemologies and a mood of colonial nostalgia

As discussed in Chapter Two, at the NFF Cummings argued that contemporary Britain had "lost its way" when it came to scientific and technological advancement (Cummings 2005). Here, Cummings sought to return the country to an "independent global role based on technological exploration" through investment and the recovery of the innovative spirit of Britain's (Elizabethan) imperial and military past (see Chapter Two). During the referendum, similar themes were expressed in Vote Leave's *Heroes* video, produced for the campaign by an "old Cummings associate" (Anonymous 6, 2018). As discussed in the last chapter, this video generated a narrative equivalence between imperial, military and scientific heroes who "changed the world for the better" (see Chapter Three). In addition to representing a banal nostalgia premised on a continuous autobiographical national narrative, the video's use of imperial themes also suggested that nostalgic legacies of the British empire were an important touchstone within the broader Whiggish understanding of national achievement and progress. The video's prominent inclusion of scientists alongside imperial figures and language, for example, implied that scientific and technological expertise were crucial in maintaining Britain's lineage of imperial 'greatness'. As I explore further in this section, Cummings' own professed affinity with scientific forms of expertise reveals further undercurrents of nostalgia for Britain's imperial and colonial past. Despite the persuasive narrative style utilised in Vote Leave's *Heroes* video, Cummings himself claimed to be sceptical of conclusions based on "stories" (Cummings 2017a) in favour of rigorous scientific experimentation and quantification (Cummings 2018). As noted above, such a 'scientific' mindset apparently infused Vote Leave's operations, where interviewees pointed to the data-driven and evidence-based nature of the campaign.

Equating trust with scientific empiricism (Davies 2018a, 25), Cummings' preference for scientific expertise also broadly chimed with a neoliberal view of the state, which recruits calculative (market) practices to the measurement and "rationalization" of government activity (Davies 2018b, 276–77). Indeed, Cummings had long advocated for the reorientation of British public life towards such 'scientific' practices and forms of evidence (Cummings 2013). [41] Having called for reforms to the education system that would prioritise science as a national imperative (Cummings 2013), Cummings had also been known to advocate for the transplantation of 'scientific' epistemologies into institutions such as the civil service (Cummings 2014c). On this view, extant governance structures, in addition to their neglect for the societal importance of science, were also mired by an insufficient appreciation of the value of a 'scientific' way of operating. [42] As such, during the referendum the institutions of both Whitehall and the EU were deemed incapable of the "rapid experimentation and adaptation" (Vote Leave, 3rd January 2016) that disruptive "technological and economic forces" demanded (Vote Leave 2016ba; 2016ae). As Cummings expanded, contemporary governance structures lacked the capacity for "error correction" (Cummings 2017a; 2018; Treasury Committee 2016a, 22–23). By being "extremely centralised and hierarchical" (Cummings 2017a), the institutions of the EU and contemporary Britain were thus considered unequipped to process information, solve problems (Cummings 2017a) and "learn from things fast" (Treasury Committee 2016a, 22). For Cummings and Vote Leave this partly explained why the EU was "broken", "slow" and in 'crisis', and why Britain was struggling to keep pace both with technological advances and new security challenges (Vote Leave 2016t; 2016ba) – dual concerns that once again reflected Cummings' prior work at the NFF (see Chapter Two).

Yet despite being couched in terms of scientific objectivity, in interventions that took place beyond Vote Leave's official communications, Cummings once more revealed his outlook to

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[41] Indeed, although Vote Leave argued that the British people had "had enough of experts" (see e.g. Browning 2019 232-6), the evidence presented in this section suggests that leading campaigners were themselves keen to accommodate scientific forms of expertise. This evidence supports the contention that Brexiteers are not squarely anti-expert, but rather seek to cultivate "alternative" sources of expertise that confer (a superficial) legitimacy on their arguments (e.g. Rosamond 2020, 12–16).

[42] Indeed, Cummings' own preference for a small group of trusted senior staffers in Vote Leave also corresponded with scientific research on the "disruptive" nature of small teams (Cummings 2019; 2017b).

be underwritten by nostalgic themes. On his personal website and in evidence before the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee, Cummings spoke of the intrinsic superiority of the "evolved institutions" (Cummings 2017a) of the "Anglo-American political system and its common law" (Cummings 2017c; cf. Treasury Committee 2016a, 22–23). Common law, as Menno Spiering has outlined, occupies a special position within Whiggish narratives of British history as an emblem of national qualities of reason, flexibility and common sense (see Spiering 2015, 55–58). Cummings exhibited a similar perspective when, quoting the physicist David Deutsch, he argued that unlike the EU, and despite the failings of contemporary British institutions, a capacity for evidence-based flexibility and "error correction" was inherent to Britain's "more advanced political culture" (Cummings 2017a; see Boswell 2019). Indeed, while the ability to adapt to new evidence had been "one of the greatest strengths of the Anglo-American system over 200 years" (Treasury Committee 2016a, 22–23), the EU institutions were wilfully opposed to such a principle (Cummings 2017a). In summary, whereas historic institutions such as the English common law constantly updated like a healthy immune system or market prices, more recent structures like those of the EU allowed "more and more resources [to be] devoted to reinforcing failure" (Cummings 2014c; 2017a). As such, Cummings argued that by leaving the EU and reforming Whitehall according to historically rooted 'scientific' principles, Britain would once more be able to "do what we used to do which is be a model of good governance for countries around the world" (The Economist 2016).

By Cummings' own admission such specific points played little role in the referendum debate (Cummings 2017a). They merit attention, however, because they are indicative of how deep-rooted background nostalgia moods informed Cummings', and hence Vote Leave's, broader outlook. Cummings' longstanding desire to rehabilitate Britain's world role, as expressed in his work at the NFF, in Vote Leave's *Heroes* video and in the other campaign communications discussed above, reflected the persistence of a mood of imperial nostalgia concerned, however subtly, with recapturing the hegemonic advantages of imperialism. Cummings' wistfulness for the shared institutions of Anglo-America and Britain's civilising mission of spreading prudent governance around the world, meanwhile, implied the operation of a related but distinctive type of nostalgia. Here, colonial nostalgia, which draws on early diagnoses of nostalgia as a form of homesickness (see Chapter One), is a more suitable

descriptor for Cummings' sentiments (Lorcin 2013, 98, 103). Referring to "the occluded memory of the exactions inflicted on the colonized people, the belief in benevolent modernity, and the relative bonhomie of the colonial lifestyle" (Lorcin 2013, 104), this type of nostalgia implies a longing to maintain an expansive colonial 'home' characterised by institutional and racial harmony. Whilst Cummings has previously distanced himself from the "romantic pursuit of 'the special relationship'" between Britain and the US (Cummings 2014d), his fondness for Anglo-America nevertheless suggested the presence of a background colonial nostalgia mood, which emphasised a sanitised version of the countries' historic ties. I return to these themes later in the chapter in a deeper discussion of Vote Leave's relationship with a post-imperial collective of countries known as the Anglosphere. Firstly, however, I explore what the Cummings-Vote Leave treatment of science and technology can tell us about the relationship between imperial and colonial nostalgias and the future.

Imperial and colonial nostalgias and the past perfect post-Brexit future

The evidence presented above suggests a complex relationship between imperial and colonial nostalgias and the future, which requires further conceptual unpacking. At the end of the previous chapter, I discussed how banal forms of nostalgia can correspond to a revolutionary imagination, which attempts to reinvigorate the forward-looking spirit of the past as part of a desire to reconnect with a linear continuity of national achievement (see Chapter Three). A similar mindset can be attributed to the operation of imperial and colonial forms of nostalgia, which exhibit a Whiggish desire to place the country back onto a trajectory of continuous national progress and 'greatness' (cf. Zook 2002, 213). Whereas banal nostalgia's preference for continuity can sometimes be implicated in masking the pain of loss and papering over the cracks in such narratives of 'greatness' (see Chapter Three), however, imperial and colonial forms of nostalgia typically acknowledge that a rupture in national life has occurred and express a desire for a continuous trajectory to be restored and revitalised. Themes of continuity and rupture are evident in Cummings' statements, discussed above, where he advocated to return Britain to its former imperial and colonial position. Here, Cummings revealed a preoccupation with what Britain may have been and might still become, by choosing a path different from that offered by European integration (see also Browning 2019, 234). A similar temporality characterised by branching paths has long pervaded Cummings'

political thought, where he has previously adopted the "language of evolutionary biology" to speak of "a national rediscovery of future orientation and a solution to the dead-end of the EU" as part of a "moment of punctured equilibrium change" (Cummings 2005, 2). Following the 2016 referendum, Cummings also positioned Vote Leave's victory as one of many possible "branching histories", suggesting more broadly that such a perspective precludes the imposition of simplistic but "psychologically appealing" linear "stories" on highly complex and contingent historic outcomes (Cummings 2017a).

Theorists interested in the relationship between nostalgia and the future have also posited a similarly branching temporality. Svetlana Boym, for example, coined the term "off-modern" to describe nostalgia's concern with exploring the past's "missed opportunities and roads not taken" (Boym 2011; see also Boym 2007, 9).[43] On this view, an off-modern temporality rejects the strict opposition of past and future in favour of a "sideways" evolutionary path intent on mining the past's lost possibilities (Boym 2007, 9; 2011). Here, nostalgia exceeds the admiration of "modernization as it was" – although, as in the previous chapter, such a regard can still be part of the appeal – to focus on realising the lapsed potentials of the past's "what if" moments (Boym 2011). Put differently, nostalgia's key referent within a branching off-modern understanding of historical time is "the past the way it could have been. It is the past perfect that one strives to realize in the future" (Boym 2001, 351; see also Bradbury 2012; Clewell 2013, 3; Hutton 2016, 141–42). The extent to which such a conceptualisation of nostalgia challenges linear understandings of historical progress, however, remains highly questionable (cf. Hutton 2016, 130). On closer inspection, an off-modern nostalgia rooted in "regret over lost opportunities in the past" reflects a view of temporality that is less authentically "sideways" than it is founded on the putative existence of many possible, conventionally linear, alternative histories (cf. Hutton 2016, 130). Much like the banal form of nostalgia described in the previous chapter, therefore, imperial and colonial varieties of nostalgia also operate through a desire to maintain – or perhaps more accurately, reconnect with – a linear continuity of historically rooted national identity. As such, unlike Cummings suggested, a branching approach to history is deeply enmeshed with, rather than challenging

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[43] Sometimes Boym also refers to this form of nostalgia as "reflective", however I seek to distance myself from this particular term due to the problematic connotations of irony and critical consciousness that she attributes to it (Boym 2001). For more on nostalgia and irony see Chapter One.

to, a desire for psychologically compelling linear stories.

From the evidence outlined so far, we can infer that, for Cummings, the Brexit referendum presented an opportunity for the nostalgic rediscovery of the branching possibilities precluded by Britain's EU membership. As noted, such alternatives were frequently articulated in an imperial and colonial register, particularly through references to Britain's lost global calling and preference for the institutional similarities of Anglo-America. Cummings' nostalgias were not simply about mourning the past 'as it was', however, but rather about "reinvigorating" a national trajectory that had been disrupted by the country's EU membership (Hutton 2016, 141–43). This past perfect view of the post-Brexit future was leant a further forward-looking quality through close relationship with Cummings' views on science and technology. On this view, as I explore further in the next section, the "futurist speculations" (Hutton 2016, 143) of Britain's pre-EU imperial and colonial past could only be unleashed and upgraded upon EU withdrawal. As highlighted above, the futuristic veneer of scientific and technological possibility enabled Vote Leave interviewees to reject interpretations of conventional nostalgia, with its pejorative connotations. For such campaigners, Cummings and his acolytes were the forward-looking men of a Whiggish understanding of history, which posited the nation's natural path as one of ever-increasing enlightenment and progress (see Chapter Three). Such responses, coupled with Vote Leave's public expression of ostensibly futuristic imperial and colonial themes, provide further evidence for the circulation of peculiar moods of imperial and colonial nostalgia within the campaign. Like in the previous chapter, the public expression of these background nostalgia moods via foreground nostalgia modes appeared to be disciplined by deep-rooted culturally constructed feeling rules, where a hybrid, past perfect future temporality was deemed more socially appropriate than nostalgia's traditional backward-looking gaze. In the next section, I further unpack how such themes came to fruition in Vote Leave's deployment of the Anglospherist Eurosceptic tradition we now know as Global Britain.

4.2 Global Britain, the Eurosceptic Anglosphere and the past perfect post-Brexit future

In this section I further unpack how the themes of science and technology, introduced above, fed into Vote Leave's broader proposals for a Global Britain. Following the Brexit referendum, the term Global Britain has come to represent a formal policy programme that describes Britain's opportunities for worldwide free trade, scientific advancement and political cooperation beyond the EU. Far from novel, the scheme is rooted in late Victorian imaginaries of a Greater Britain, which have morphed into contemporary proposals for a Eurosceptic Anglosphere, imagined as a transnational network with a core comprising Britain's former white settler colonies. I begin the section by reviewing this evolution in order to establish the nostalgic appeal of an Anglospherist Global Britain as a forward-looking Eurosceptic alternative to Britain's EU membership. Although some Vote Leave interviewees suggested that the campaign shied away from promoting a Global Britain, other responses implied the circulation of a background imperial nostalgia mood where references to reinvigorating Britain's global path replicated the branching temporal pattern of the past perfect post-Brexit future, described above. On this view, Britain's EU membership was the primary barrier to realising the futuristic potential of an historic, but disrupted, global trajectory. Similar themes were conveyed in the campaign's public messages via an imperial nostalgia mode where Global Britain's core subjects of free trade and scientific innovation were leveraged as combined markers of a post-Brexit Britain's renewed temporal superiority over an outmoded and failing EU. Yet although such interventions enabled the campaign to maintain a futuristic veneer, its forward-looking approach was suffused with additional, subtle references to Britain's imperial and colonial past. The section therefore concludes with a discussion of further empire nostalgias implicitly conveyed in Vote Leave's tempered foreground nostalgia modes, which reproduced the optimistic emotional register of British imperialism and invoked colonial ties via muted references to competing imaginaries of the Anglosphere.

From Greater Britain to Global Britain – the nostalgic appeal of the Eurosceptic Anglosphere

Scholars investigating the imperial and colonial vestiges of elite British Eurosceptic discourse have already identified the presence of a similar temporal understanding to that exhibited in the political thought of Dominic Cummings, discussed above. Noting that such discourses

have tended to view Britain's EU membership as "the ultimate institutional expression of British and English decline" (Wellings 2010, 489), Wellings has also observed that the hard Eurosceptic project of EU withdrawal positions this turn towards 'Europe' as "a mere interregnum in [Britain's] global trajectory" (Wellings 2016, 369). On this view, EU membership bifurcates periods characterised by British hegemony, with the historic resources of the imperial and colonial past acting as a natural template for a post-Brexit future (Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2016; 2017). For Wellings, the temporal interplay of past and future in such discourses indicates that interpretations of "simple nostalgia" should be rejected (Wellings 2017, 5). Indeed, the marginalisation of nostalgia is a notable feature of many similar studies exploring the imperial and colonial legacies embodied in elite British Euroscepticism. Much of this work overlooks the role of nostalgia (Kenny and Pearce 2018; D. Bell and Vucetic 2019), or cites it only as a fleeting descriptor of discursive tone or content (Daddow 2015, 78–79; Murray-Evans 2018, 199, 204). Some recent contributions offer a more substantive engagement with empire nostalgias but do so in ways that betray problematic assumptions about the workings of political emotions.

One recent volume, for example, views such nostalgia as a necessarily strategic "emotional weapon" (Campanella and Dassù 2019, chap. 2), thus bypassing its complexity as an individual and collective emotional experience (see Chapter One). Another recent contribution views imperial nostalgia as a suspiciously wide-ranging and tendentious term, and offers imperial amnesia (that is, forgetting rather than longing) as a better descriptor of the sentiments involved in the Brexit referendum (R. Saunders 2020, 1140–43). This account, however, reveals an inadequate conceptual grasp of the close relationship between nostalgia and amnesia, which generates silences in historical narratives (see Chapter Three & below), and of how imperial nostalgia becomes a more specific term when placed in dialogue with its colonial counterpart (see above). When combined with the previous section's evidence on the relationship between imperial and colonial nostalgias and the past perfect post-Brexit future, such deficiencies and oversights appear to have left a significant lacuna in the literature. As I discuss throughout the remainder of this chapter, an appreciation of how nostalgia can operate in emotionally and temporally complex moods and modes enhances our understanding of the persistence and resonance of both imperial and colonial themes in the emotional communities and discursive traditions of elite British Euroscepticism. Below, I

investigate how these nostalgic forms can be discerned in Vote Leave's treatment of the discursive tradition of British Euroscepticism we now know as Global Britain. Before doing so, however, it is first necessary to review the origins of this discourse in order to identify its core contemporary hallmarks.

Formalised by the successive post-referendum British governments of Conservative Prime Ministers Theresa May and Boris Johnson, discursive appeals to a post-Brexit Global Britain are typically characterised by four pillars that engage themes of free trade (with one pillar representing Europe and another the world); science, research and innovation; and foreign policy and security (Daddow 2019, 10–11). Whilst the expansive appeal of a Global Britain has resurfaced in the political environment surrounding the Brexit referendum, however, it has deep roots in late Victorian imaginaries of a Greater Britain. Preoccupied with dimming hegemonic power, advancing international competition, and a changing popular appetite for empire, Britain's late Victorian political elite mooted various schemes that were inherently nostalgic in their desire to preserve a version of the country's now-fading imperial and colonial presence (D. Bell 2007, 1–5). Of these, plans for a Greater Britain prevailed, envisioned in highly racialised terms by its most influential proponent, the historian J.R. Seeley, as a unity of "blood, language, religion and laws, but dispersed over a boundless space" (Kenny and Pearce 2018, 12).[44] Designed to propagate and secure the Anglo-Saxon 'way of life' throughout the world (D. Bell 2007, 2; Kenny and Pearce 2018, 18), the imagination of a Greater Britain was enabled by innovations in transport and communications technologies that "abolished distance" and created neighbours from previously dispersed locales (Deudney 2001, 191, 196). Thanks to such innovations, enhanced trading relations were also an important part of the scheme, with Greater Britain also conceived in global, commercial terms by Seeley as a "world Venice, with the sea for streets" (Kenny and Pearce 2018, 12). Though a Victorian Greater Britain never formally materialised (D. Bell 2007; Deudney 2001), its spirit persisted in imaginaries of the Anglosphere – a network of "English-

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[44] A competing scheme, dubbed a Greater Synthesis, shared many of the features that Seeley described but differed from proposals for a Greater Britain by advocating not for the pre-eminence of the British nation-state abroad, but for greater formal inter-state integration, particularly between Britain and America (see Deudney 2001). Though vestiges of a "Greater Synthesis" can be discerned in appeals to Anglo-America, however, Greater Britain's respect for the nation-state has proved more enticing to Britain's Eurosceptic elite (see e.g. Wellings 2016, 370).

speaking peoples" that has become the dominant organising framework for Britain's post-Brexit future (Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Kenny and Pearce 2018, 132–50).

Like Greater Britain, the Anglosphere project is motivated by imperial and colonial themes of global connection, characterised by institutional and racial coherence and fostered by a belief in the ability of technology to dissolve geographic distance. Although variegated models of Anglospherist cooperation exist, a persistently racialised hierarchy typically positions Britain, alongside its former white settler colonies in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and (sometimes) America, at the network's "core" (Browning and Tonra 2010; Wellings and Baxendale 2015; A. E. Davis 2019; D. Bell and Vucetic 2019).[45] Thanks to their shared heritage, institutions and sensibilities, Anglospherists consider such countries to be primed to cooperate on the contemporary international stage, especially in matters of economics and security. Such characteristics have proved attractive to elite British Eurosceptics, particularly in articulating an alternative to a villainised version of EU political economy. On this view, the EU is modelled on a protectionist and over-regulated political economy that is anathema to Britain's "historical free trade vocation" (Siles-Brügge 2019, 422). By contrast, the political economy of the Anglosphere is characterised by more favourable neoliberal and "hyper-global" principles, which discursively elevate the 'free' market above state institutions, whilst preserving the national (parliamentary) sovereignty required to cultivate and enforce state policies of low taxation, deregulation and free trade (D. Baker, Gamble, and Seawright 2002; Davies 2018b; Siles-Brügge 2019, 426). As such, imaginaries of an Anglospherist renewal of Britain's imperial and colonial relations allow Eurosceptics to project the country's historically rooted "national business model" as a free-trading "world island" into a post-Brexit future (Gamble 2003; Kenny and Pearce 2018, chaps 6, 7; Siles-Brügge 2019, 422, 426).

Whilst proposals for a Eurosceptic Anglosphere have been interpreted in largely instrumental terms (Kenny and Pearce 2018, chap. 6), however, their nostalgic undercurrents cannot be ignored. The affective appeal of "post-geography" imaginaries of Anglospherist political economy has been observed elsewhere (Siles-Brügge 2019), and even explicitly dubbed

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[45] The US occupies a contested position in the Anglosphere, with some Anglospherists viewing the country as central to an iteration of the collective known as Anglo-America (see below) and others viewing it as something of a competing political community (D. Bell and Vucetic 2019, 5).

"political economy nostalgia" by some analysts (Adler-Nissen, Galpin, and Rosamond 2017, 13). Yet the specific relationship between such imaginaries, imperial and colonial forms of nostalgia, and the past perfect post-Brexit future, identified above, has scarcely been explored. As noted in the previous section of this chapter, imperial nostalgia refers to a longing for the trappings of Britain's former hegemonic position, whilst colonial nostalgia is considered a form of homesickness occasioned by the loss of the colonial "lifestyle" (Lorcin 2013, 98, 103). As I explore further below, both varieties of nostalgia are pertinent to Eurosceptic Anglospherist schemes, where post-Brexit cooperation with Britain's former colonies is a mechanism for recovering a global position and reconnecting with an expansive yet homely 'family'. Although such schemes imply classic nostalgic connotations of loss and longing, an accompanying futuristic and forward-looking façade often disguises their nostalgic credentials. The futuristic themes of scientific and technological possibility, introduced above, have always been central to Anglospherist imaginaries from late Victorian proposals for a Greater Britain to contemporary plans for a Global Britain (D. Bell and Vucetic 2019, 5, 9). Indeed, the term "Anglosphere" is itself a neologism coined in the techno-utopian imagination of literary science fiction (Vucetic 2011b, 47). In the hands of Vote Leave, such futuristic connotations were amplified further still, owing much to the background nostalgia moods present in the political thought of Campaign Director Cummings and a broader Anglospherist tradition in elite British Euroscepticism. As I discuss in the next subsection, the resulting foreground imperial and colonial nostalgia modes suggested that EU withdrawal would enable Britain to reinvigorate the branching path of global, futuristic possibility lost to membership of a failing and backward EU.

Global Britain versus EU failure

As noted above and in previous chapters, Vote Leave interviewees were often resistant to interpretations of nostalgia, preferring to present their campaign as forward-looking. Similar perspectives tended to colour campaigners' reflections about Vote Leave's association with more specific, imperial themes. Some interviewees were keen to distance themselves from the Eurosceptic Anglospherist discourse we now know as Global Britain (Anonymous 6, 11 & 12, 2018). Such respondents suggested that Vote Leave did not promote the discourse's primary pillar of global free trade as one of its central messages as it failed to resonate with

the voting public, being "too detached from people, too technical" (Anonymous 6, 2018), too "clever" or "counter-intuitive" (Anonymous 11, 2018) or perhaps serving as a reminder of the uneven benefits of globalisation (Anonymous 11 & 12, 2018). Other interviewees recognised the campaign's appeals to Britain's "historic links [with] a number of countries" (Anonymous 1, 2018), or more specifically to post-Brexit trade with the "Commonwealth" (Anonymous 3, 4 & 5, 2018) or the "new world" (Anonymous 9, 2018). Nevertheless, the majority stressed that they did not advocate a return to British empire or British imperial and colonial power (Anonymous 1, 3, 4 & 5, 2018). Indeed, as recounted in detail in Chapter Two, one interviewee argued that calls for "refreshing" Britain's historic international relations operated alongside a desire to create something "new", "modern" and "forward-looking" (Anonymous 1, 2018). This interviewee insisted that whilst attempts to return Britain to a "global context" were "nostalgic by necessity" – in that they required a return to a pre-EU Britain – Vote Leave also advocated applying a "modern aspect to that", seeking to reform mid-Century trade barriers and cultivate "massive investment in new scientific revolution" (Anonymous 1, 2018).

Though such interview responses superficially bolstered Vote Leave's anti-nostalgic credentials (see Chapter Three), they implied the operation of a background mood of imperial nostalgia that replicated the branching temporal pattern of the past perfect post-Brexit future discernible in the political thought of Dominic Cummings, described above. On this view, Britain's EU membership was the major barrier to realising the progressive potential of an historic, but disrupted, global trajectory. Similar themes were expressed publicly during the referendum by Vote Leave representatives. Despite the contrary claims of some interview subjects noted above, Vote Leave cited – in both versions of a leaflet described by campaigners as their most popular and useful piece of canvassing literature (Anonymous 3, 4 & 11, 2018) – an independent Britain's freedom to trade "with the whole world" as the fourth of five central motivations for withdrawing from the EU (Vote Leave 2016a; 2016b).[46] Similar themes were rehearsed in Vote Leave's digital output, including website bulletins and email newsletters to supporters, particularly in the campaign's infancy. Here Vote Leave purported
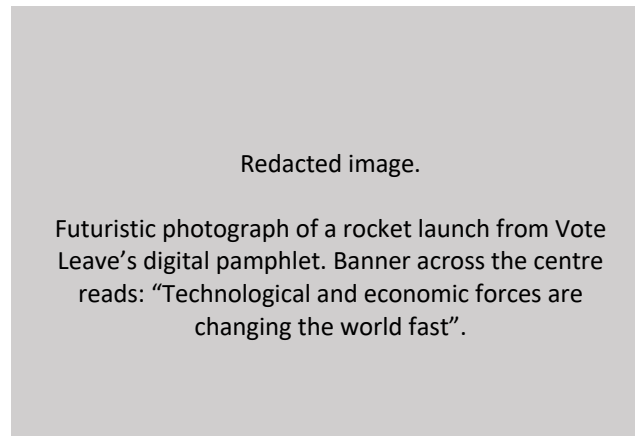
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[46] The other reasons this leaflet details for EU withdrawal were Britain's ability to control its money and priorities, to control its laws, to build a fairer immigration system and to remain safe. The primary differences in the two versions of the leaflets are in the images used – with one version prioritising the display of the NHS logo and replacing a photograph of a shipping container with a logo stating "Europe yes, EU no" (see Vote Leave 2016b).

to be "positive about the future of our country and the growth we could secure by taking back our place on the global stage" (Vote Leave 2015d). In addition to appealing to post-Brexit Britain's ability to strike trade deals (Vote Leave 2015j; 2016v) this approach highlighted the importance of "regain[-ing] our seat on global trade bodies" (Vote Leave 2015d; 2015e; 2015m; 2015n). Indeed, participating as an independent nation in global (economic) governance structures was deemed essential for enabling Britain to "influence" (Vote Leave 2015m), "play a leading role" (Vote Leave 2015d) and "shap[e] standards and regulations across the globe" (Vote Leave 2015e). Later in the referendum, however, the classically nostalgic restorative language of the campaign's early statements, was complicated by a more concerted futuristic tone.

As outlined in the first section of this chapter, this was the case in the campaign's references to the post-Brexit promise of science and technology, also a core pillar of the Global Britain discourse. Here, following Cummings' longstanding campaigning on the issues, scientific and technological innovations were both the agent and outcome of a global post-Brexit future (see above). Given Cummings' admiration for the technological network of the Elizabethan era outlined earlier, and the history of a Victorian Greater Britain and contemporary Anglosphere described above, these statements implicitly echoed a persistent imperial regard for the capacity of new innovations to dissolve geographic distance. Nevertheless, techno-utopian reference points enabled Vote Leave to superficially claim an independent Britain's temporal superiority over an outmoded EU (cf. Campanella and Dassù 2019, 53). As such, traditional Eurosceptic themes of British decline occasioned by EU membership were enhanced by the threatening potential of contemporary European 'crisis'. Indeed, interviewees suggested that the surrounding context of the Eurozone and migration crises, which were often given prominent billing in the British media both preceding and during the 2015-2016 referendum period, enhanced the campaign's ability to point to failing EU institutions (Anonymous 5, 6 & 9, 2018). In one digital pamphlet Vote Leave interspersed futuristic representations of a launching rocket, a nuclear reactor, digital currency, and network connectivity with visuals of EU 'crisis' indicated by boats of migrants and anti-austerity protests held before Greece's ancient, crumbling buildings (Vote Leave 2016ae) (see Figures 14 & 15 below for examples). In the context of contemporary 'crisis' Vote Leave's primary representatives also referred disparagingly to the EU's mid-Century origins (Johnson

2016c), and dubbed it "an analogue union in a digital age" (Gove 2016a). Indeed, the specific invocation of crisis-driven "failure" became a striking feature of Gove's campaigning (Gove 2016a; 2016c; 2016d), and was a recurrent theme across Vote Leave's wider activities, including its digital output and participation in televised debates.

Redacted image.

Futuristic photograph of a rocket launch from Vote Leave's digital pamphlet. Banner across the centre reads: "Technological and economic forces are changing the world fast".

Figure 14: Example of futuristic imagery in Vote Leave digital pamphlet
Source: Vote Leave 2016ae

Redacted image.

Photograph from Vote Leave's digital pamphlet of an anti-austerity demonstration in front of the Parthenon in Greece. Banner across the centre reads: "What institutions does Europe need?".

Figure 15: Example of EU 'crisis' in Vote Leave digital pamphlet
Source: Vote Leave 2016ae

Such themes also drew on a broader Whiggish opposition of enlightened British heroes and continental foes (see Chapter Three). Throughout the referendum, it was common for Vote Leave to cast the EU as an imperial or military oppressor, underlining the "supremacy" (e.g. Vote Leave 2015a; 2016w; 2016ai) and "politically-driven empire" of EU law (Johnson 2016c), as well as the organisation's "outdated absolutist ideology" (Johnson 2016c) and self-confessed imperial "dimension" (Gove 2016c; Vote Leave 2016af). The campaign also emphasised the violent consequences of the EU's 'crisis' responses, particularly the impact of centrally-imposed austerity on high (youth) unemployment in the European South (Anonymous 4, 9, 12, 2018)(Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 36–37, 96),

which had led to public "suffering" and "despair" (Johnson 2016a; 2016c) (similar expressed by Anonymous 1, 5, 6, 2018). Connotations of dictatorial control were further advanced in thinly-veiled references to Germany's "ugly" role in the implementation of austerity (Gove 2016a) (similar expressed by Anonymous 6, 2018). Such undercurrents also informed Vote Leave's interpretation of the impact of post-'crisis' EU policy on Britain's future membership terms. Drawing on conclusions previously drawn by the Fresh Start Project (see Chapter Two), campaigners cited potentially exclusionary plans for deepening Eurozone integration, codified in the European Commission's "Five Presidents' Report", to support claims that the "status quo" of Britain's EU membership was no longer available (Johnson 2016a; 2016c; Gove 2016b; 2016c; 2016e; Vote Leave 2016ae; Leadsom 2016b). Here, the EU's policy reforms were often presented in classically Whiggish terms as a threat to Britain's venerated democratic traditions (Johnson 2016b; 2016c; Leadsom 2016b). As such, Johnson summarised the EU's threatening character in his closing remarks during a final BBC debate, where he designated the campaign's desired referendum victory a British "Independence Day" (Johnson 2016e). As I explore further below, however, for all of Vote Leave's "forward-looking" and anti-imperial protestations, its claims of temporal superiority were underwritten by nostalgic imperial and colonial themes connected to the traditions of Anglospherist Euroscepticism.

Vote Leave's empire nostalgias and Anglospherist imaginaries

The ability to achieve the kind of futuristic escape from the EU that Vote Leave campaigners proposed was underwritten by further references to Britain's historic imperial and colonial endeavours (Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2017, 5). Johnson's suggestion that Britain's future trading capacity was guaranteed by its experience running "the biggest empire the world has ever seen" (Johnson 2016a) was a memorable though rather isolated incidence of the British empire's direct invocation in the referendum. Otherwise, as noted above, Vote Leave's desire to reclaim a global register for Britain's post-Brexit trading future hinted at imperial imaginaries of the country's former position as the hub of a technologically-connected network. A similarly indirect manner also characterised the campaign's use of the language of national belief. As part of Vote Leave's "Project Hope" (e.g. Johnson 2016d), campaigners regularly cautioned against the folly of "doing" or "talking Britain down" (Vote

Leave 2015d; 2016y; 2016ai; 2016bg) and "woefully underestimating this country and what it can do" (Johnson 2016e). By making the "positive" (Anonymous 3, 4 & 6, 2018) and "optimistic" (Gove 2016a; 2016c) case for Brexit, Vote Leave could define itself against the Remain side's "Project Fear",[47] and further its progressive and forward-looking façade. The "upbeat" tone of the language, however, implied an imagined national spirit of gumption and independence – also reproduced in interviewees' thoughts about national identity recounted in the previous chapter – permeating dominant understandings of Britain's historic imperial adventures (cf. Kenny and Pearce 2018, 53; R. Saunders 2019), as well as later periods of wartime trauma (see Chapter Three). Such language therefore hinted at the historic resources on which post-Brexit Britain might draw, whilst accompanying Vote Leave's forward-looking insistence that the referendum was a horizon of national possibility where the country's "best days [would] lie ahead" (Gove 2016c; Leadsom 2016a).

References to Britain's colonial past via Anglospherist appeals were similarly implicit. As Wellings has noted, during the referendum the Anglosphere was a "love that dare not speak its name" (Wellings 2017, 1–2). Indeed, its traditional Eurosceptic viability as a post-Brexit collaborative network with some degree of formality was superseded by campaigners' weaker admiration for the modern policy "models" of core Anglospherist countries, such as a "Canada-style" free trade agreement and an "Australian-style" immigration system (Wellings 2017, 2–3). Similarly-diluted Anglospherist references appeared in Vote Leave's appeals to the core countries of America, Canada, Australia and/or New Zealand as convincing trading partners (Johnson 2016c), exemplars of economic advancement (Gove 2016c; Johnson 2016c), paragons of "democratic self-government" (Gove 2016a; 2016c) and guardians of international security (Gove 2016c). The familial kith and kin arguments that Anglospherists have typically advanced to describe the shared heritage, institutions and sensibilities of Britain's former white settler colonies, meanwhile, were reserved not for the Anglosphere core but for the Commonwealth – an ostensibly more diverse and inclusive post-imperial collective. As I explore further in the next section of this chapter, Vote Leave also positioned its Australian-style immigration proposals as a system that would purposely favour Commonwealth citizens (Gove 2016c; Johnson 2016c). The campaign further underlined

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[47] The Remain side's "Project Fear" was viewed by Vote Leave interviewees as extreme, implausible and desperate (Anonymous 5, 6, 10, 2018 & Anonymous 13, 2019).

Britain's Commonwealth "ties" of "culture", "family", "history", "language" and "law" at a reception it hosted in honour of "Commonwealth Day" (Vote Leave 2016ac; 2016ag), highlighted the desire of local British leaders with Commonwealth heritage to "rediscover Britain's global vocation" (Vote Leave 2016ac; 2016ad), and presented the Commonwealth as a vast untapped market of "2.2 billion customers" (Leadsom 2016a). As I discuss further below, however, despite the inclusive veneer of Vote Leave's appeals to the Commonwealth, many of its proposals were contingent on the Anglospherist pre-eminence of shared 'civilised' institutions, such as the English language.

The evidence presented throughout this section points to a distinctive brand of imperial and colonial nostalgia operating within Vote Leave. The campaign's treatment of imperial themes of Britain's global trading hegemony and colonial links with the Anglosphere or Commonwealth typically eschewed a classically nostalgic representation of loss and longing in favour of a more muted and ostensibly forward-looking gaze. Whilst such messaging connected Vote Leave with the broader discursive traditions of the Eurosceptic Anglosphere, the campaign departed from the strength of emotional representation adopted by Anglospherists such as UKIP (see Chapter Two). Vote Leave sometimes tended towards themes classically associated with UKIP in its mobilisation of the language of national "belief", its advocacy of a British "Independence Day", and its appeals to the Commonwealth (see Chapter Two). Nevertheless, unlike UKIP it typically shied away from direct references to "the Anglosphere" or to Commonwealth "betrayal",[48] and amplified the 'scientific' connotations of a Global Britain. Here, the campaign's invocation of a techno-utopian post-Brexit future bore similarities with the work of prior Eurosceptic organisations within the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement. As noted above, Vote Leave's messages about the post-Brexit possibilities of science and technology owed much to Cummings' prior work with the NFF. In its ostensibly forward-looking vision for Britain, and contrasting portrayals of a doomed EU, Vote Leave also echoed precursor organisations, such as Business for Britain and the Fresh Start Project, with whom it also shared personnel (see Chapter Two). Such similarities suggest the persistence of a tempered, temporally complicated background mood

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[48] Indeed, whilst Johnson had also previously mobilised the language of Commonwealth betrayal during his tenure as London's Conservative mayor (see Namusoke 2016, 469), his statements for Vote Leave were rather more muted.

and foreground mode of imperial and colonial nostalgia within such Eurosceptic emotional communities. Indeed, Vote Leave's apparent focus on science, modernity and progress suggested the presence of feeling rules, which limited the representation of backward-looking imperial and colonial loss and longing, whilst remaining underwritten by these same nostalgic themes. In the next section I further unpack these contentions through a closer inspection of Vote Leave's Anglospherist points-based immigration system.

4.3 Empire nostalgias and the racial undercurrents of the 'progressive' Eurosceptic Anglosphere

In this section, I explore how Vote Leave's proposals for an Australian-style points-based immigration system formed an important part of its plans for a forward-looking and 'progressive' Global Britain, subtly underwritten by the racialised exclusions of imperial and colonial nostalgia. I begin the section by reviewing how Vote Leave presented its favoured points system as a scientific method of immigration control through which it could privilege the post-Brexit access of Commonwealth family members and highly qualified professionals from around the world. Whilst the former category spoke directly to historic links with Britain's diverse former colonies, the latter pointed to the human resources through which a futuristic post-Brexit Britain could be achieved. By purporting to reject the overtly racialised terms of the immigration debate, both proposals enhanced the modern connotations of a 'progressive' Whiggish national narrative. Closer inspection of the scheme, however, reveals its grounding in the past perfect future temporality of the imperial and colonial nostalgia modes described above. In the second subsection I therefore unpack how evidence from the operation of extant points systems in core Anglosphere countries suggests that they are underpinned by historic racial hierarchies that favour the circulation of culturally advanced citizens of the Anglosphere's white-majority nations. In the final subsection, I then discuss how such hierarchies can be discerned in Vote Leave's adoption of English language ability as a centrepiece of its plans for a Global Britain. Whilst such proposals maintained a forward-looking veneer via an imperial nostalgia mode focussed on the benefits of the English language for global commerce, further evidence suggests that such a preference for English is underscored by racialised, colonial understandings of the language as a civilisational

marker. I therefore conclude the section by reviewing how an underlying mood of colonial nostalgia ties Vote Leave's immigration proposals to leading imaginaries of a sanitised but persistently hierarchical Anglosphere network, and back to the nostalgic politics of Campaign Director Cummings, introduced above.

Global Britain and Vote Leave's points-based immigration system

As I explore further in the next chapter, immigration became a substantial part of Vote Leave's communications, and therefore merits sustained attention in this thesis. In this section, I unpack how part of Vote Leave's presentation of that 'issue' – the campaign's proposals for a points-based immigration system – relates to the imperial and colonial forms of nostalgia described above. Vote Leave's proposed post-Brexit immigration system advanced a scientific method through which prospective entrants to Britain would be scored and screened according to their skills, qualifications, education and language ability (e.g. Vote Leave 2016ch). Although the UK had already operated a similar points system since 2008 (Donald 2016), Vote Leave's underlying premise was that its efficacy in controlling immigration had been curtailed by the free movement policies of EU membership (e.g. Cummings 2014a; Vote Leave 2016ac). Nevertheless, during the referendum the campaign tended to present its proposed system as something novel to the UK (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bm; 2016cc). Described regularly as a "fairer", "more humane" and "non-discriminatory" system (Anonymous 7 & 10, 2018) (e.g. Gove 2016c; Johnson 2016d; Vote Leave 2016bm; 2016bx; 2016cg), Vote Leave proffered the policy as an example of its progressive and modern credentials. This image of the campaign rested in part on a post-racial veneer (cf. Lentin and Titley 2011, chap. 2), with Vote Leave promising that a post-Brexit British government would ease the immigration process for family members of Britons with Commonwealth heritage (e.g. Gove 2016c; Stuart 2016; Vote Leave 2016ac). Indeed, Vote Leave targeted Muslim and British Asian communities with leaflets bearing this very message (Namusoke 2016, 467). Interviewees also suggested that campaign plans to "re-engage with the Commonwealth […] went down very well with the British ethnic communities" (Anonymous 5, 2018), and that promises to reform the immigration system offered an overdue corrective to the unfair exclusion of "people whose family had fought for the country, had a long history [with Britain]" (Anonymous 10, 2018).

Similarly-martial themes occasionally appeared in Vote Leave's public messages, where its Whiggish narrative of national heroes was briefly expanded to refer to Commonwealth "descendants of the men who volunteered to fight for Britain in two world wars", but had later been disadvantaged by an immigration system where they "must stand aside in favour of people with no connection to the United Kingdom" (Vote Leave 2016ac; 2016ad). One Vote Leave supporter expressed the current privileging of EU over Commonwealth migrants in particularly striking terms, stating: "Why would you treat your neighbours better than your family?" (Vote Leave 2016ac). The offer of enhanced immigration opportunities for those with extant ties to Britain was, however, only part of the 'progressive' appeal of Vote Leave's proposed immigration system. The policy was also advanced as a meritocratic and scientific tool for securing the "brightest and best" migrants from across the world (e.g. Vote Leave 2016ag; 2016bc). Although reference to the "most in need" was sometimes also added to this formulation (e.g. Vote Leave 2016aa; 2016ac), the campaign's priority appeared to be attracting "the top doctors and scientists who would enhance the operation of the NHS or the technicians and innovators who could power growth" (Gove 2016c). Similar connotations were conveyed visually through the use of a doctor as the face of Vote Leave's appeals to "Build a fairer, safer immigration system" in both iterations of its most popular piece of canvassing literature (see Figure 16 below)(Vote Leave 2016a; 2016b).[49] This image of a black, female doctor leant the proposals an additional post-racial and equitable appearance. As Stuart Tannock has reflected with respect to Canada's implementation of a similar points-based scheme, overtures to the "best and brightest" migrants possess the aura of "an enlightened, progressive, and open-armed social policy" (Tannock 2011, 1335). Nevertheless, as I explore throughout the remainder of this section, Vote Leave's immigration proposals drew on exclusionary imperial and colonial nostalgias in significant ways.

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[49] As noted above, interviewees advised that this leaflet, dubbed "5 Reasons Why", was its most useful and popular piece of canvassing literature.

Redacted image.

Extract from Vote Leave's "5 Reasons Why" leaflet using a photograph of a black female doctor to illustrate the campaign's promise to "Build a fairer, safer immigration system".

Figure 16: Third reason to vote for Brexit from Vote Leave's "5 Reasons Why" leaflet
Source: Vote Leave 2016a

Vote Leave's proposals for a points-based immigration system utilised the same modes of imperial and colonial nostalgia described in the first two sections of this chapter. Part of the campaign's plans for a more global Britain, the scheme was expressed via foreground nostalgia modes, which maintained a forward-looking and progressive veneer whilst remaining underwritten by nostalgic themes of loss and longing for Britain's imperial and colonial past. As noted above, the proposed system was pitched by key campaigners, such as Gove, as an important means through which the scientific and technological advances of a post-Brexit future could be realised. By positioning Britain as the hub of a global network of talent and innovation – a post-racial home for the "brightest and best" migrants – this nostalgia mode eschewed the direct representation of nostalgic loss, longing and 'pastness', whilst hinting at opportunities for reinvigorating the country's former imperial trajectory. Promises to make the post-Brexit immigration system more accessible to Commonwealth members with British family ties likewise provided an inclusive veneer for a more traditional sense of colonial nostalgia founded on a desire to reconnect with the familiar global 'home' of Britain's former colonies (cf. Ong 2006, chap. 3). On this view, the homely familial language Vote Leave sometimes used to describe the Commonwealth (see above) is a further indicator of how a nostalgic view of Britain's past transcended contemporary constraints of geographic proximity with the EU. Such imperial and colonial nostalgia modes perpetuated the past perfect future temporality described above, which operated within a broader Whiggish historiography to suggest that an independent Britain could re-join its natural path of increasing enlightenment and progress, beyond the confines of EU membership. Further inspection of the points-based immigration system's links with the politics of the

Anglosphere, however, complicates such sanitised interpretations, and reveals how exclusionary structures of imperial and colonial history translate and transmit into ostensibly forward-looking and progressive projects.

The exclusionary imperial and colonial politics of Anglospherist immigration policies

Vote Leave's references to the Commonwealth were not the only link between its proposed immigration system and Britain's imperial and colonial past. Though many countries have adopted similarly selective immigration systems (Tannock 2011, 1331), the campaign deployed the Anglospherist moniker "Australian" to describe its preferred iteration (e.g. Vote Leave 2016ch; Gove 2016c). As noted above, such reference points were part of a striking pattern in which Britain's former white settler colonies were put forward as post-Brexit policy models. As emblems of modernity and progress juxtaposed with a backward and failing EU, the core Anglosphere countries were important vessels of the past perfect post-Brexit future, which Vote Leave campaigners sought to reinstate. Extant work has, however, questioned the modern and progressive credentials of such policy models, and linked them in particular to exclusionary themes of race rooted in the historic operation of empire. Though some have objected to automatic interpretations of the Australian policy label as a "code for friendly white Anglo-Saxon people who speak English" (see Wellings 2017, 6), further exploration of the relationship between the Anglosphere, immigration and race suggests that such concerns are well-founded. As I highlighted above, and as Srjdan Vucetic has explored in detail elsewhere, the Anglosphere and its antecedents have their origins in a racialised identity, which has historically positioned Britain's former white settler colonies at the network's core (see Vucetic 2011a, chap. 1). In contemporary proposals for formalising the Anglosphere, similarly racialised views continue to play an important role, especially with respect to immigration. Anglospherists have, for example, advocated visa-free travel between a reduced core of the white settler CANZUK countries (Canada, Australia, New Zealand the UK) (D. Bell and Vucetic 2019, 3), whilst Vote Leave figurehead Johnson has previously called for a still narrower common travel area between Australia and Britain (Wellings 2017, 5).

Indeed, the extant cooperation of countries from the hypothetical Anglosphere core on matters of immigration and security has created a loose transnational Anglosphere network

even in the absence of such formal policies (Legrand 2015, 981–83). Viewing one another as possessing "trusted status", such countries already facilitate reciprocal migration by deploying border technologies to expedite the circulation of their citizens within an informal Anglosphere network (Legrand 2015, 981, 987). Although Vote Leave's proposals for an Australian-style immigration system fell short of explicitly advocating either a formal or informal Anglosphere travel area, studies of the extant points-based policy models of the network's core imply their partiality for Anglosphere citizens. On this view, historic intersectional power structures are baked into 'scientific' points systems such that they privilege those who have benefitted from unequal access to education and skills development, and who consequently possess the requisite "cultural capital" deemed to make them compatible with the prospective host's existing populations (Tannock 2011, 1336–37). As such, they typically discriminate against poorer, primarily "non-white" countries (Tannock 2011, 1336), with evidence from Canada and Australia suggesting that the refugees and family members, which Vote Leave positioned so prominently in its own proposals (see above), struggle to gain entry due to their perceived riskiness (Walsh 2011, 872–75). Indeed, part of the appeal of the Australian system for policy-makers has been its mobilisation of seemingly modern and scientific neoliberal technologies, which purport to objectively quantify "immigrant quality" according to a risk assessment of the likely payoffs to their entry into the prospective host nation (Tannock 2011, 1330; Walsh 2011, 872–75). The use of such technologies to routinely exclude racialised 'others', however, challenges the modern, "enlightened, progressive, and open-armed" veneer of such systems (Tannock 2011, 1335), and indeed harks back to the 'scientific' means used to define race during empire (e.g. Saini 2019). On this view, contemporary ideas about race based on culture supplement the older elision of race and biology, typically interpreted through skin-colour (see also Chapter Five) (Gilroy 2005, 41; Lentin and Titley 2011, chap. 2).

As such, extant points-based immigration systems, including the one operated in the UK since 2008, have expedited the entry of "Tier 1" entrepreneurs, high net-worth individuals, and those judged to have "exceptional talent" and skills (Donald 2016), particularly those with the perceived ability to cultivate appropriate forms of risk thought to foster economic growth (Walsh 2011, 870–71). Whilst such policies purportedly shun racial and national discrimination, the evidence suggests that, for example, Indian migrants are only welcomed

to the extent that they are "wealthy, educated [and] business-like" (A. E. Davis 2019, 151) and able to generate new opportunities for trade between their 'home' and host countries (Walsh 2011, 871–72). These caveats call to mind iterations of the Anglosphere which sometimes include Commonwealth countries like India within a cosmetically and commercially more inclusive network imaginary. Although superficially more diverse than the classic Anglosphere described above, such schemes remain hierarchically organised around a putative core of former white settler colonial states, surrounded by concentric circles of diminishing cultural and institutional similarity (Browning and Tonra 2010, 169–70; A. E. Davis 2019). Importantly for Eurosceptics, such similarities act as markers of modernity and progress with implicit ties to Britain's imperial and colonial past. Victorian imperialists regularly spoke of the British empire's "civilising mission", allied to a rather Whiggish narrative of bringing "light to the dark corners of the earth" (D. Bell 2007, 12; see also Gopal 2019, 4). Indeed, a typical framing in this period juxtaposed the "primitive, childlike, savage, irrational and sometimes effeminate [colonized] against British civilization and modernity" (Webster 2005, 4) in a discourse of "civilizational infantilism" (Mehta 1990, 443; see also Watson 2020, 273). On this view, hierarchical visions of the Anglosphere remain suffused with historic civilisational connotations. In the next subsection, I explore these contentions further by discussing how civilisational markers like the English language are enduring objects of imperial and colonial nostalgia for the past perfect post-Brexit future.

The English language and the racialised undercurrents of the past perfect post-Brexit future

As noted above, Vote Leave highlighted "language skills" as one of the primary entry criteria of its points-based immigration system. Further campaign communications made more specific reference to English language ability as an indicator of a migrant's dependability and competence. Here, Vote Leave cited the dangers of admitting workers with inadequate English language skills, particularly doctors (Vote Leave 2016bb), and those seeking other "relevant" though unspecified jobs (Vote Leave 2016bm). English was also invoked more broadly on the campaign trail as the "international language of business" (Leadsom 2016a; Vote Leave 2016v; 2016z; 2016ai), as well as an emblem of "soft power" (Gove 2016b) and kinship (Johnson 2016c). Johnson, for example, implicitly praised the superior bonds of a shared English language when he argued that: "There is no trust [in the EU], partly for the

obvious reason that people often fail to understand each other's languages" (Johnson 2016c). As suggested above, the English language is central to the very origins of the Anglosphere as a network of English-speaking peoples, and it continues to inform superficially more inclusive contemporary iterations of the imaginary. Versions of the Anglosphere that extend beyond the white settler core to Britain's 'non-white' former colonies use the prevalence of English as the prime marker governing a country's position within the hierarchy of concentric circles introduced above (Browning and Tonra 2010, 169). This is the case in the Anglosphere prominently touted by American businessman JC Bennett, which posits an Anglo-American core comprised of just Britain and the US (Browning and Tonra 2010, 169). This core is surrounded first by the remaining white settler countries of the classic Anglosphere plus Ireland, the Anglophone Caribbean, and then further circles of countries from several continents fanning out according to their decreasing institutionalisation of the English language (Browning and Tonra 2010, 169).

Bennett explicitly positions his version of the Anglosphere as a "Network Civilisation" of "nations sharing language, customs, history, legal systems, religions, and other significant values – most specifically trust characteristics" (Bennett 2004, 41 cited in Browning & Tonra 2010, 169). Importantly for Eurosceptics, this imaginary connects the historic civilisational appeal of shared institutions like the English language with the ability to achieve and extend the ostensibly modern project of post-Brexit neoliberal hyper-globalisation. Here, the English language acts as a marker of rationality and common sense (A. E. Davis 2019, 41), synonymous with an advanced, forward-looking, and entrepreneurial savvy. Bennett's favoured Anglosphere model adds a further layer to these modern connotations, viewing English as central to the development and success of contemporary communications technologies such as the internet, which in their capacity to dissolve geographic distance are in turn fundamental to the very existence and operation of his contemporary Anglosphere network (Browning and Tonra 2010, 167–68; Kenny and Pearce 2018, 128–29). Such features have made Anglosphere imaginaries a futuristic and credible alternative to EU integration for British Eurosceptics, as discussed above (Kenny and Pearce 2018, 131). Yet like in Bennett's version of the Anglosphere, Vote Leave's preference for English language competence within its appeals to an Australian-style immigration system and circuits of techno-utopian global commerce could never be truly futuristic. On this view, the campaign's references to such

shared institutions were always underwritten by nostalgias for Britain's imperial and colonial past. Indeed, whilst Vote Leave's proposed immigration system professed to be post-racial according to classic understandings of race based on skin-colour, its advocacy of English language ability alongside other markers of 'civilised' advancement replicated the cultural exclusions of Bennett's similarly diverse but persistently hierarchical Anglospherist proposals. As such, Vote Leave's points-based immigration policy provides further evidence for the imperial and colonial nostalgias embodied in its desired past perfect post-Brexit future.

On this view, Brexit would provide the opportunity both to reinstate the "lifestyle" and "belief in benevolent modernity" of the colonial past (Lorcin 2013, 104) and reconnect with the most advanced subjects of Britain's former colonies in an effort to reinvigorate its former global status. Such a sanitised view of British empire could only ever be nostalgic in its construction of flattering narratives that obscure the violent realities of imperial and colonial history (see also Chapter Three) (Rosaldo 1989, 109–10). Yet vestiges of this unsavoury past remain in Anglospherist hierarchies that subtly reproduce the civilisational infantilism common to depictions of Victorian imperialism, described above. The Anglosphere core is, for example, formed of those deemed to have successfully acquired the maturity and modernity of the British coloniser, whilst its periphery and exterior have yet to make such progress. Whilst this core can comprise various combinations of countries, as described throughout this chapter, it is striking that Bennett's preference for Anglo-America is mirrored by Vote Leave's campaign director, Dominic Cummings (see section 4.1). Indeed, the similarities in their Anglospherist politics do not end there. Cummings' desire to place post-Brexit Britain back at the heart of a global network of science and technology, his civilisational belief in Britain as an exemplar of good governance, and his faith in the inherent scientism and rationality of the English common law all resonate with Bennett's vision of a contemporary Anglosphere with Britain and America at the centre. Atlanticist proclivities have long been central to Eurosceptic campaigning, notably in the prior emotional communities associated with Vote Leave leaders Cummings and Elliott (see Chapter Two), and were even highlighted as a core feature of Britishness by one Vote Leave interviewee (Anonymous 1, 2018). Another interview subject argued that Britain would naturally secure a post-Brexit trade deal with the US because "we speak the same language after all" (Anonymous 11, 2018). Whilst specific Atlanticist themes were not given prominence in the campaign's foreground nostalgia modes, however, a deep-

rooted background colonial nostalgia mood for the racial and institutional coherence of Anglo-America appears to have underscored the outlook of its top campaigners.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have explored how Vote Leave's forward-looking approach to the possibilities of a post-Brexit Global Britain represented temporally complicated imperial and colonial nostalgia moods and modes. I began the chapter in section 4.1 by using the political thought of Campaign Director Dominic Cummings as an opening for unpacking the imperial and colonial roots of his campaign's faith in the promise of scientific and technological innovation. Here, I showed how Cummings' own enthusiasm for such avant-garde subjects was underscored by an imperial nostalgia mood that betrayed a longing for Britain's former global status and a colonial nostalgia mood that expressed a desire to reconnect with the nation's culturally advanced former colonies, particularly America. Such evidence, I argued, pointed to the operation of a distinctive branching nostalgic temporality – the past perfect future – which positioned Brexit as an opportunity to breathe new life into an expansive and 'modern' imperial and colonial destiny that remained unfulfilled within the confines of the EU. In the next section, 4.2, I provided further evidence of how this distinctive nostalgic temporality characterised Vote Leave's public communications in emotionally tempered imperial and colonial nostalgia modes. I began the section by demonstrating how nostalgic imaginaries of the past perfect post-Brexit future linked Vote Leave's forward-looking plans for a Global Britain to a broader Anglospherist tradition in elite British Euroscepticism which, despite its futuristic appearance, remained rooted in nostalgia for the possibilities of the imperial and colonial past. I then showed how Vote Leave employed such futuristic connotations to present Britain's post-Brexit opportunities for expansive economic and political cooperation in temporally superior terms to a backward and 'crisis'-riven EU with imperial ambitions of its own. Although these narratives largely eschewed the classic representation of nostalgic loss and longing for empire, however, they still implied a subtly nostalgic desire to reinvigorate the lost potentials of Britain's disrupted imperial and colonial trajectory.

I therefore closed the section by discussing how Vote Leave's optimistic references to the advantages of reclaiming a global British register, where technology would dissolve geographic distance and Britain could reconnect with the modern spirit of the Anglosphere, represented tempered modes of imperial and colonial nostalgia. In the chapter's final section, 4.3, I further explored the nostalgic politics of the Global Britain discourse through a case study of Vote Leave's proposals for a post-Brexit Australian-style immigration system. This 'scientific' scheme adopted a seemingly inclusive and 'post-racial' appearance that invited migration from the diverse former colonies of the British Commonwealth and by highly qualified professionals from around the world. Such preferences conferred modern and 'progressive' connotations on the Brexit project, with appeals to the "brightest and best" settlers forming an important part of how the campaign imagined that an innovative post-Brexit future might be achieved. Nevertheless, like in the examples considered earlier in the chapter, this forward-looking appearance simply provided further evidence of emotionally tempered and temporally complicated imperial and colonial nostalgia modes in the campaign's public communications. On this view, the Australian-style immigration system was a vessel of the past perfect Anglospherist future, where historic connections with Britain's former white settler colonies were sanitised and subtly privileged. Within this system, Vote Leave's advocacy of English language ability appeared both as an imperially inflected mechanism for refreshing global commercial links and as a subtle, racialised marker of civilisational advance. This analysis links Vote Leave's immigration proposals to a deep-rooted colonial nostalgia mood exhibited in hierarchical imaginaries of the Eurosceptic Anglosphere to which Cummings' own political thought also appears to adhere. Whilst such racialised hierarchies were only subtly expressed in the empire nostalgias considered in this chapter, however, in the next chapter I explore how similarly racialised themes acquired a much more overt manifestation in a variety of nostalgia I dub *Powellite* for its relationship with the incendiary racial politics of former British MP Enoch Powell.

Chapter Five: Powellite Nostalgia and Racialised Narratives of "Taking Back Control"

In the previous chapter, Chapter Four, I explored how a distinctive nostalgic temporality – the past perfect future – characterised Vote Leave's forward-looking approach. On this view, the campaign's claims of a futuristic post-Brexit vision were underwritten by a nostalgic desire to reinvigorate Britain's former imperial and colonial paths, and to finally realise the global potential supposedly lost to the nation's EU membership. In the present chapter, Chapter Five, I review Vote Leave's employment of a much more traditional, backward-looking, nostalgic temporality – one that explicitly advocates for the past's restoration (cf. Boym 2001). Here, I discuss how a racialised *Powellite* form of nostalgia, most strikingly expressed in the campaign's overarching calls to "Take Back Control", embodied a desire to reassert colonially-rooted forms of authority over the immigrant 'Other', and thus restore historic racial hierarchies. Indeed, whilst the imperial and colonial nostalgias described in the preceding chapter maintained a post-racial public appearance via a modern foreground nostalgia mode, their racialised underpinnings were increasingly revealed in Vote Leave's supplementary Powellite narratives. This chapter therefore explores how nostalgic understandings of race generated through the expansive imperial and colonial encounters of the previous chapter's Global Britain informed a much more defensive Powellite imaginary of the nation known as Little England. Whilst extant research on the referendum has tended to attribute the former discourse to Vote Leave and the latter to UKIP-Leave.EU, this chapter demonstrates how particularly explicit Powellite nostalgia moods and modes connect these discursive traditions and the distinctive emotional communities of elite British Euroscepticism.

I therefore begin in section 5.1 by recounting how the post-racial tone that characterised Vote Leave's advocacy of a Global Britain also informed how interviewees evaluated their campaign's treatment of immigration and race, and their resulting feelings of moral superiority over Eurosceptic rival, UKIP-Leave.EU. Despite such claims, however, further empirical evidence suggests that an overtly racialised approach to immigration was central to Vote Leave's messages. I commence my analysis of this evidence by discussing how the campaign's "Take Back Control" slogan represents a restorative form of nostalgia connected to the explicit racial politics of former MP Enoch Powell. On this view, Powellite nostalgia

describes how colonial understandings of race and racial control, acquired through the prior imperial encounters of an expansive Global Britain, inform seemingly contradictory desires to retreat into an insular, racially homogenous Little England. In the next section, 5.2, I further unpack this relationship by assessing how the Powellite form of nostalgia imbued Vote Leave's representation of Little England's island boundaries. Here, the campaign's communications combined imagery of the nation's island defences, central to the Whiggish narratives of territorial integrity explored in Chapter Three, with an imperial and colonial tradition of using images of vulnerable borders to connote similarly fragile racial boundaries. Through an historicised analysis, I therefore discuss how dynamics of gender and race informed how Vote Leave could invoke a migration 'crisis' to which its calls to "Take Back Control" invited the nostalgic, Powellite, restoration of both territorial and racial frontiers.

I then explore how similar connotations were implied in Vote Leave's use of small-scale and domesticated imagery of the English national 'home'. Once more, such representations drew on imperial and colonial history to imply the fragile boundaries of Englishness, to be reasserted and defended through the nostalgic reclamation of control. Whilst this analysis highlights how the English race has traditionally been represented through feminised imagery, however, the ways in which the 'Other' is portrayed in Vote Leave's racialised communications requires further unpacking. In the final section of the chapter, 5.3, I therefore focus on this question and highlight how, despite the campaign's inclusion of white Eastern Europeans in its broad critique of uncontrolled EU migration, the Muslim 'Other' appeared as the primary target of its racialised discourse. I then position Vote Leave's treatment of Muslim migrants in historical context in order to explore how racialisation according to religious and civilisational themes relates to imperial and colonial imaginaries of a 'backward' and threatening 'Other'. I conclude the chapter by discussing how Vote Leave's references to the prospective EU accession of Muslim-majority Turkey employed such imaginaries via a particularly explicit Powellite nostalgia mode. This form of emotional expression connects Vote Leave to its rival Eurosceptic emotional community, UKIP-Leave.EU, suggesting that the groups are united here by a Powellite structure of feeling emanating from a broader cultural treatment of immigration and race rooted in Britain's imperial and colonial past.

5.1 Immigration, race and the Powellite variety of nostalgia

In this section, I discuss how Vote Leave's overarching slogan "Take Back Control" can be interpreted as a restorative and racially exclusive Powellite form of nostalgia. Beginning by recapping the campaign's seemingly forward-looking and post-racial proposals for an Australian-style immigration system discussed in the previous chapter, I explore how similar post-racial themes animated how interviewees evaluated Vote Leave's relationship with immigration and race. Interview subjects tended to characterise Vote Leave, in contrast to its Eurosceptic referendum rivals Leave.EU, as the campaign of liberal, outward-looking people, keen to avoid the racist connotations of the immigration debate. Yet further evidence suggests that racialised ideas about immigration were central to all planks of the campaign's primary messages, on sovereignty and the NHS, as well as borders. I therefore discuss how Vote Leave's prominent calls to "Take Back Control" operated both as an ostensibly principled meditation on the importance of reclaiming national sovereignty from the EU and, in certain contexts, as an invitation to reassert colonially inflected authority over the racialised 'Other'. This analysis shows how the expansive Global Britain and insular Little England discourses are intimately connected by nostalgic ideas about racial discipline gleaned through the experience of Britain's imperial and colonial past. In this sense, the term "control" operates alongside the conventional temporal marker "back" to express the slogan's colonially inflected nostalgia. Whilst this nostalgic form intersects with the varieties of nostalgia that I identified in previous chapters, however, I close the section by showing how its authoritarian proclivities are linked to the racialised politics of former MP Enoch Powell. Doing so enables me to provide further evidence of how the seemingly contradictory Global Britain and Little England discourses are connected by the overtly racialised Powellite form of nostalgia.

Immigration and race in the Vote Leave campaign

In the final section of the previous chapter, I highlighted how Vote Leave's appeals to an Australian-style points-based immigration system superficially complemented its forward-looking self-image. On this view, the proposed system's modern and progressive credentials were emphasised via seemingly post-racial promises to facilitate the entry of Commonwealth citizens with British family ties, and to attract the "brightest and best" migrants from around

the world, regardless of nationality or race (see Chapter Four). With the migration of professionals and innovators such as doctors, scientists and entrepreneurs given top priority within this scheme, the campaign's proposals were a key means through which its imaginary of a futuristic post-Brexit Global Britain could be achieved. Yet the policy's forward-looking veneer was complicated by a distinctive nostalgic temporality, implying a longing for the imperial and colonial past perfect post-Brexit future. Here, Vote Leave's favoured immigration system was underwritten by deep-rooted Anglospherist ideas, which exhibited a subtly nostalgic desire to reinvigorate an imperial and colonial past premised on the expansive and civilising potentials of science and technology. Such themes implicitly tied the campaign's 'progressive' immigration proposals to a hierarchical, racialised politics, which favoured those with a high degree of perceived cultural similarity and excluded a host of purportedly less advanced (and often non-white) others. Throughout the following section of this chapter, I explore what such findings suggest about the relationship between the imperial and colonial nostalgias of the Global Britain discourse and the more explicitly racialised nostalgia of an insular imaginary of the British nation known as Little England. Doing so is important as the two discursive strands are more intimately connected by nostalgic perspectives of Britain's imperial and colonial past than is commonly acknowledged.

Indeed, the close relationship between these discourses has been overlooked in extant scholarship on the Brexit referendum, with some observers claiming that the presence of the outward-looking Global Britain discourse suggests that characterisations of Leave campaigners as "parochial" Little Englanders should be thoroughly dismissed (Wellings 2017, 1; 2019, 38). Several other studies have excused Vote Leave campaigners in particular, locating the use of distasteful and overtly nostalgic Little England imaginaries in the Brexit referendum primarily within the realms of Farage, UKIP and the Leave.EU campaign (e.g. Virdee and McGeever 2017; Gaston and Hilhorst 2018; Browning 2019, 231; Campanella and Dassù 2019, 61). Similar patterns permeated the reflections of Vote Leave interviewees. Several campaigners felt that Vote Leave was more moderate on Little England's core issues of immigration and race and spoke to a different audience than the UKIP-aligned Leave.EU (Anonymous 2, 3 & 10, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019). Whereas the Leave.EU voter base was

described as "nativist",[50] Vote Leave was thought to appeal "more to liberal, out-facing sort of people" (Anonymous 2, 2018). One interviewee, who pitched their campaign's ethos in opposition to the "nationalist" outlook of UKIP (see also Chapter Three), stated that Vote Leave campaigners were themselves also "genuinely internationalists", reflecting a "peculiar trait of internationalism in British history, looking not just to Europe but to other parts of the world" (Anonymous 6, 2018). Further interviewees suggested that, unlike their Eurosceptic referendum rivals, Vote Leave strategically downplayed immigration and race within its communications. As one subject reflected, "Immigration, with the Vote Leave campaign was always a side issue, I felt, which was the right thing to do because to win the referendum from a strategic point of view, we already had those people [who were concerned about immigration] on board" (Anonymous 3, 2018; also Anonymous 13, 2019).[51]

Interviewees also suggested that Vote Leave was particularly concerned that any discussion of immigration would be interpreted as racist. One respondent stated that the campaign's director Dominic Cummings was of the view that "if we did push it [immigration] too hard we would get into trouble as being racist, even though it wasn't racist, it would sound as if it was" (Anonymous 13, 2019). Another interviewee suggested that, to their knowledge Vote Leave had a "professional attitude" that eschewed "outrageous" messages that would "stir it up" (Anonymous 1, 2018). This subject also reflected that "there's an extent to which you need to grab people and to motivate them, and an extent to which you then become subject to criticism on the other side because you're essentially doing dog-whistle" (Anonymous 1, 2018). Despite such professed concerns, however, as I explore throughout this chapter, racialised references to immigration were a central feature of Vote Leave's referendum output. Other interviewees recognised the importance of immigration to Vote Leave through descriptions of the campaign's core messages as a combination of proxies from three groups: "sovereignty/Take Back Control", "cost/£350 million a week/NHS funding", and "immigration/Turkey's accession to the EU/border control" (Anonymous 4, 6, 9, & 12, 2018). Although clearly central to the latter of these thematic groups, as I explore further below the

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[50] By "nativist" the interviewee clarified that they meant "you're more concerned about your own community and your own local institutions […] and you think it's more important to look after your own village or town than it is to look after the whole of the rest of the world." (Anonymous 2, 2018)
[51] Cummings has expressed a similar view on his personal blog (Cummings 2014b, 2017a).

invocation of immigration was in fact fundamental to all three. Campaign director Cummings has, for example, argued that Vote Leave's discussion of the NHS was the "right" and "unifying" way to talk about immigration (Cummings 2017a). The campaign's broad appeals to sovereignty, meanwhile, also raised the question of who was permitted to benefit from being designated a sovereign subject. Indeed, where themes of sovereignty and immigration were articulated via Vote Leave's slogan "Take Back Control", the campaign's messages acquired a notably nostalgic register, which connected an expansive imaginary of a Global Britain to a more defensive Little England.

The nostalgic elements of Vote Leave's calls to "Take Back Control"

Vote Leave interviewees explained that the campaign's overarching slogan, "Take Back Control", was "a better way of talking about sovereignty" (Anonymous 9, 2018; also Anonymous 13, 2019), which resonated with the voting public (Anonymous 2, 4, 6, 9 & 10 2018). As such, some subjects identified it as the campaign's top (Anonymous 6, 2018) or second most effective message, behind its communications on the NHS (see below) (Anonymous 9, 2018). For many campaigners, "sovereignty" referred to a moral, legal and democratic principle which stood for the ability "to have your country back effectively from an undemocratic organisation that's now making […] legislation, laws over your life" (Anonymous 3, 2018; similar sentiments expressed by Anonymous 5, 7 & 10, 2018, and Anonymous 13, 2019). This theme was echoed widely in Vote Leave's public campaigning. The second rationale the campaign provided for Britain's EU withdrawal, in both versions of its primary piece of canvassing literature that detailed the top five reasons, was the ability to "Take back control over our laws" (Vote Leave 2016a; 2016b). As the accompanying text explained, "We should be able to vote out the people who make our laws" (Vote Leave 2016a; 2016b). Similar principles were expressed throughout a host of campaign speeches and news articles (e.g. Gove 2016a; 2016b; Johnson 2016a; 2016b), email communications (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bx; 2016cg), and social media content (e.g. Vote Leave 2016cf). Nevertheless, as others have already observed, despite its ostensibly "high-minded, democratic" appeal, in certain contexts "Take Back Control" also invoked "a highly racialised appeal to fear of 'the other'" (Kenny 2016; Black 2019, 203). As I explore further in subsequent sections of this chapter, such connotations became apparent when Vote Leave leveraged its slogan to speak

about the imperative of controlling borders and immigration, implying that the benefits of national sovereignty were reserved for Britain's native population.

Before I discuss this documentary evidence, however, I first explore the nostalgic hallmarks of "Take Back Control" in order to show how the phrase mediates between the apparently divergent discursive poles of an expansive Global Britain and insular Little England, through imaginaries of Britain's imperial and colonial past. Here, I contend that the slogan's nostalgia is embodied as much in the term "control" as it is in the direct temporal label "back". To advocate taking something "back" immediately puts a statement into a nostalgic register since it indicates a dissatisfaction with the present and a desire to retrieve a prior, superior state of affairs (see Chapter One). On this view, Vote Leave's overarching slogan was its most overtly nostalgic message, generating tensions with the ostensibly forward-looking yet subtly nostalgic approach I described in previous chapters (see Chapters Three & Four). Nevertheless, campaign personnel tended not to view the slogan as straightforwardly nostalgic. Interviewees conceded that "Take Back Control" *could* be viewed as nostalgic (Anonymous 6 & 12, 2018), especially since it implied a situation that had changed for the worse (Anonymous 12, 2018). Nevertheless, these subjects insisted that the campaign avoided harking back to how things used to be and continued to argue that the feeling of lost control was not *necessarily* equated with nostalgia (Anonymous 6 & 12, 2018). As one subject put it, the "emotional instinct" of the slogan's phrasing revolved instead around the natural human tendency to want to recover something that had been taken away from you (Anonymous 6, 2018). This response echoed the perspective of Vote Leave leader Cummings, who argued after the referendum that "'back' plays into a strong evolved instinct – we hate losing things, especially control" (Cummings 2017a). Indeed, in this essay Cummings also appeared to imply that "Take Back Control" should be viewed in more forward-looking terms than its inherent temporality suggested, since it enabled people "to vote positively for something" (Cummings 2017a).

Given the classic relationship between nostalgia and feelings of loss and longing outlined in Chapter One, however, the above loss-infused statements suggest that campaigners like Cummings may simply have failed to recognise nostalgia's conventional hallmarks. Indeed, as I noted in that chapter, the emotional experience of nostalgia often eludes adequate

recognition by the nostalgic subject. Given the evidence discussed in previous chapters, it is also likely that campaigners' disregard for the nostalgia embodied in their descriptions of "Take Back Control" leveraged a broader anti-nostalgic desire to generate distance from the emotion's historically and culturally conceived pejorative connotations (see Chapters Three & Four). Elsewhere, however, observers interpreted Vote Leave's slogan as directly and necessarily nostalgic. In a television dramatisation of the referendum, broadcast in January 2019 – a production that received advice from Cummings (see Wakefield 2019), and was well-regarded by former Vote Leave campaigners (Anonymous 13, 2019) (e.g. Elliott 2019a) – the Cummings character expanded on his real-life counterpart's previously expressed understanding of "Take Back Control". As the fictionalised Cummings stated in the film, "To take something back means it was, is, rightfully yours, taken from you. So much of our understanding of who we are comes from this nostalgic view we have of our past" (see Haynes 2019). Although we may never know whether Cummings truly held such a grasp of the relationship between his slogan and nostalgia, similar nostalgic themes were implied in further interview responses of Vote Leave campaigners. Here, evaluations of the "control" element of the slogan in particular suggested inherent nostalgias premised on dominant imaginaries of the national past. As one interviewee argued, "there's something in us [as a country] that says we want to control our own destiny, and [in the EU] we weren't. And I think that that is, if you like, the spiritual motivation for leave, the sense of control." (Anonymous 7, 2018).

Another interview subject suggested that, "being in control […] I think makes sense with English people, we always have been individuals really, we're not part of the big land mass" (Anonymous 8, 2018). Some interviewees also felt that the messaging spoke to a desire for "greatness" (Anonymous 7, 2018), through its implication that by recovering control "Britain could be great again" (Anonymous 3, 2018). One participant additionally noted that the slogan offered a sense of certainty, drawing on "sort of an authoritative emotion" to convince the public that "if we do this, this *will* happen" (Anonymous 7, 2018, emphasis original). Taken together, these statements are suggestive of the nostalgic vestiges of a 'great' imperial past in which "Take Back Control" spoke to "The memory of Britain exercising unfettered sovereignty in its imperial heyday […]" (Wellings 2016, 375 cited in Black 2019, 203; see also Gaston and Hilhorst 2018, 51–52). Indeed, extant research has also suggested that "control"

holds an individual and collective psychological and emotive appeal, signifying agency and order, especially in times of 'crisis' (Subotic and Steele 2018, 388–89; Browning 2019, 224–25). Whilst such meanings clearly align with a buccaneering view of the imperial past embodied in the Global Britain discourse, however, I contend that they also resonate with colonially inflected and authoritarian imaginaries of an insular Little England. Indeed, this is particularly the case in the slogan's use as an accompaniment to campaign messages about an immigration 'crisis' in Britain. The term "control" has long been associated with discourses advocating the restriction of immigration in Britain (Squire 2008), and references to the "loss of control" frequently characterised high-profile debates about immigration, race and the state of the nation in the years immediately preceding the Brexit referendum (Kenny 2014, 23; Cap 2017, 73). As I argue below, such notions of lost control generate nostalgic imaginaries for the reinstatement of colonial forms of authority, premised on views about race cultivated during Britain's imperial encounters.

Control, colonial authority, and Powellite nostalgia

As Paul Gilroy and others have observed, the racial logics of the British empire, frequently enforced through violence, have weaved into "authoritarian modes" of discipline, control and belonging with respect to immigration and race in contemporary Britain (cf. Gilroy 2005, 31). Theses of internal colonialism suggest, for example, that Britain's colonial assets were "laboratories" (Colley 1992, 327; Gilroy 2005, 46), whose experimental findings transmuted into domestic policies on immigration and race, stretching into the present-day (see Shilliam 2018; Turner 2018; El-Enany 2020). During empire, whilst "legal and land reform" trialled in Ireland was later implemented in India (Colley 1992, 327), methods of racial discipline and control enacted in further colonial territories "transformed the exercise of governmental powers at home and configured the institutionalization of imperial knowledge to which the idea of 'race' was central" (Gilroy 2005, 46). Such knowledge continues to inform the contemporary British approach to immigration, known as the hostile environment, which works to discipline racialised 'Others' by controlling their access to the "spoils of empire" according to their perceived "deservingness" (Shilliam, 2018; El-Enany 2020, chap. 3). As such, Britain remains in the throes of a "colonial hangover", a term used to connote "the everyday hidden legacies of Empire" (Akhter 2019, 248). Indeed, in addition to their embodiment in

specific policies, such colonial legacies are also more broadly apparent in the racialised nostalgia of authoritarian populism, directed at restoring control amidst perceived 'crises' in national life (S. Hall 1988, chap. 2). As I outlined in Chapter Two, such narratives of 'crisis' or moral panic typically invoke intersecting themes of "race, law-and-order, permissiveness and social anarchy" in order to generate a sense of lost control (S. Hall 1988, 151). By seeking the recovery of "conformity" and "security" as a response to such 'crisis' (Norris and Inglehart 2019, 71–74, 76–78), such authoritarian discourses possess a conventionally nostalgic, restorative temporality (cf. Boym 2001), which Stuart Hall implies when he notes that:

> [W]hen crime is mapped into the wider scenarios of 'moral degeneration' and the crisis of authority and social values, there is no mystery as to why some ordinary people should be actively recruited into crusades for the *restoration* of 'normal times' (S. Hall 1988, 143, emphasis added).

Taking these insights together, I argue that Vote Leave's calls to "Take Back Control" operated within a wider discourse of lost control in national life, inflected with nostalgic, authoritarian themes of racial discipline dating back to Britain's imperial and colonial past. Whilst the "back" element of the framing acted as a clear marker of a conventionally nostalgic, restorative temporality, the "control" element provided a comforting, and persistently racialised, sense of the order, agency and stability to be reclaimed in response to the 'crisis' posed by the presence of racialised 'Others'. Here, the urgent invocation of an immediately threatening refugee 'crisis' – with migrants fleeing war-torn countries such as Syria and Iraq in the months preceding the referendum – fed into a longer-standing perceived migration 'crisis' in which Britain had already been overrun by 'foreigners'. Such imaginaries of Britain as a "container of limited capacity" (Cap 2017, 79) owed much to its territorial constitution as an island and utilised the Whiggish narratives introduced in Chapter Three to posit immigration and border controls as a defense against contemporary 'invasion' (cf. Gilroy 2005, 23). This defensive and insular imaginary of a Little England, however, also drew on racial knowledge gleaned through the country's former imperial encounters as an expansive Global Britain. As I discuss further in the next section of the chapter, Vote Leave's calls to "Take Back Control" over borders and immigration, were often supplemented by nostalgic imagery of the national 'home' – represented in both a territorial and domesticated sense –

used during the British empire to convey concerns about racial pollution and legitimate the exertion of paternal, colonial authority (cf. Ware 2015, 220; Abbas 2019, 2463). In further communications the meaning of such suggestive framing was rendered more explicit. In the final section of the chapter, I therefore review how the colonial, civilisational themes that subtly permeated Vote Leave's preferred Australian-style immigration system were explicitly used to invoke the threatening character of the Muslim 'Other'.

In each of these examples, "Take Back Control" acted as a nostalgic invitation to restore the military-masculine agency and heroism recounted in Whiggish historiographies of the national past, with their imperial and colonial 'highlights'. Although this authoritarian form of nostalgia intersects with the Whiggish, banal variety I discussed in Chapter Three and the more specific imperial and colonial iterations I reviewed in Chapter Four, in the remainder of this chapter I refer to it using the dedicated moniker *Powellite* nostalgia. I do so in order to show how the authoritarian themes of nostalgia rose to prominence in the racial politics of former Conservative and later Ulster Unionist MP Enoch Powell, which further illuminates how the Global Britain and Little England discourses interact in contemporary elite British Euroscepticism. Powell is now notorious for incendiary views on race and immigration, most famously apparent in the so-called "Rivers of Blood" speech in which he lamented the "white man['s]" perceived loss of status to black immigrants in highly emotive terms (Powell 1968). In this speech, amongst numerous others, Powell argued that immigration from the British Commonwealth posed combined threats to England's native population by depleting essential public services, draining economic opportunities rightfully reserved for 'ordinary' citizens and diluting the English race (Powell 1968). Here, Powell explained:

> We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependents, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. So insane are we that we actually permit unmarried persons to immigrate for the purpose of founding a family with spouses and fiancés whom they have never seen (Powell 1968).

Powell's language in this speech, and broader discourse, was suffused with nostalgic themes of national decline and loss rooted in a distinctive imaginary of England and Englishness with imperial and colonial undertones (Kenny and Pearce 2018, 96–97). Increasingly sceptical of the 'folly' of empire, Powell posited that Britain's imperial exploits were superfluous to England's longer and more glorious independent heritage. Despite such scepticism, however, his evocation of the "unbroken continuity of existence and homogeneity of England" simply adapted old imperial and Anglospherist ideas about the inherent superiority of the English race for a more defensive, post-imperial era (Kenny and Pearce 2018, 86–101; see Powell 1961). Indeed, further ties to the activities of the British empire were suggested in his now-infamous insistence that black immigrants were gaining the "whip hand" over England's native white population (Powell 1968); imagery which called to mind the violent methods of racial control previously employed by white colonial 'masters'. Powell's quotation of such methods was, however, less a critique of their immorality than a nostalgic meditation on how the 'natural' racial hierarchy was about to be upended and must be preserved. By characterising immigration as a national 'crisis' leading to the "total transformation [of areas of the country] to which there is no parallel in a thousand years of English history", Powell therefore argued for the nostalgic return to a racially homogeneous nation, enforced via contemporary colonially inflected means of authoritarian control, designed to limit immigrants' entry to, and activities within, Britain (Powell 1968). Vote Leave's calls to "Take Back Control" utilised many of these themes of Powellite nostalgia, with varying degrees of explicitness, as I will show in the next section. At the end of the chapter I discuss how evidence of Vote Leave's most explicit foreground Powellite nostalgia mode complicates ideas (expressed above by interviewees) about the campaign's separateness from, and moral superiority to, its rival Eurosceptic emotional community, the UKIP-aligned Leave.EU. Before doing so, however, I explore how Vote Leave employed nostalgia modes of varying explicitness, beginning in the next section with a discussion of how the campaign represented a threatened English national 'home'.

5.2 Powellite nostalgia and the racialised boundaries of the English 'home'

I begin this section by reflecting on how Britain's island imaginary, central to the expansive imperial and colonial nostalgias associated with a Global Britain, also informs a more traditionally insular nostalgic understanding of a Little England. Here, the island boundaries that previously featured in Whig histories as Britain's prime defences against invasion have been repurposed in the context of contemporary immigration debates to depict a nation under renewed siege from a foreign 'Other'. As such, during the referendum, Vote Leave also employed the island mentality of a Little England in siege narratives of a threatening migration 'crisis'. Whilst visual and verbal imagery of the nation's island constitution seemingly connoted a small country with limited capacity to host new arrivals, further inspection of the imperial and colonial roots of such imagery reveals how it has historically been used to represent fragile racial boundaries. In the second subsection I therefore focus on how such connotations were invoked in Vote Leave's map-style graphics of the British Isles being 'invaded' by migrants from Syria and Iraq. Here, I argue that dynamics of race and gender interacted such that the violation of a feminised English territory by marauding masculine 'invaders' could be interpreted as a metaphor for the transgression of racialised sexual boundaries. Indeed, gender and sex have historically been important features of how the boundaries of white Englishness are depicted, with white women classically used to connote the vulnerability of racial frontiers (e.g. A. M. Smith 1994; Webster 2005). In the final subsection I therefore expand on how such representations of the national 'home' featured in Vote Leave's communications, particularly in its discussion of the NHS. Taken together, the examples explored throughout this section provide evidence of Vote Leave's use of foreground Powellite nostalgia modes of variable explicitness, which respond to the 'crisis' of masculinised 'invasion' by advocating the restoration of paternal, colonially-inflected "control" over territorial and racial borders.

Little England's island mentality and imaginaries of invasion

As I discussed in previous chapters, the territorial constitution of Britain as an island has long animated historical imaginaries of the nation. In the previous chapter, this 'island story' was expressed in the expansive terms of a free-trading "world island" or Global Britain (see

Chapter Four). In Chapter Three, Britain's island boundaries appeared in more conventionally insular terms, as an important defence against invasion from abroad within a victorious, Whiggish narrative of national continuity. In this section I discuss how the latter island imaginary of a defensive Little England combines with the imperial and colonial exploits of a Global Britain in racialised discourses of Powellite nostalgia. As I suggested above, these narratives advocate the reassertion of colonially inflected, authoritarian forms of racial control in times of 'crisis'. Gilroy has already noted how the defensive version of Britain's island mentality informs contemporary debates about immigration and race, highlighting that:

> [A]n obsessive repetition of key themes—invasion, war, contamination, loss
> of identity—and the resulting mixture suggests that an anxious, melancholic
> mood has become part of the cultural infrastructure of the place, an
> immovable ontological counterpart to the nation-defining ramparts of the
> white cliffs of Dover (Gilroy 2005, 23).

Similar themes were recounted by one Vote Leave interviewee, who suggested that British media depictions of boats of migrants fleeing their homelands during the refugee 'crisis' that coincided with the Brexit referendum period, were animated in part by "our island mentality" (Anonymous 7, 2018). As the interviewee continued:

> Whenever boats have sailed to this country they've done so under an
> attempt to invade, armada, you know, 1066, the Nazis, all these people. And
> I think the papers have used that historical narrative and the language. […]
> And again that's something deep-rooted within us. And I think even people
> who voted Remain would think "Ooh that's a bit scary, lots of people coming
> on a boat, why are they doing this?". We don't automatically look and think
> "Oh these poor people are fleeing", the first human reaction is "Ooh! That's
> scary, that's different", and I'm not saying that's bad, it's just what's there
> (Anonymous 7, 2018).

Indeed, some campaigners suggested that the media's treatment of the refugee 'crisis' in the months preceding the referendum provided a useful context within which to operate (Anonymous 6, 7 & 9, 2018) (Cummings 2017d), whilst others argued that images similar to those described above featured only minimally in Vote Leave's own communications, particularly in comparison with Leave.EU (Anonymous 9, 2018). A review of Vote Leave's referendum output supports the contention that the campaign made limited use of photographic images of migrant boats and border crossings in its digital (Vote Leave 2015l; 2016ae) and printed materials (see Chapter Three, Figure 11). Nevertheless, such images were not the only means through which the campaign employed the defensive imaginary of an insular Little England to represent migration 'crisis'. Further campaign materials drew on Britain's island geography to convey the impression that the nation was a "container of limited capacity" (Cap 2017, 79), with finite space about to be overwhelmed by mass migration. This was the case in a particularly striking social media advertisement, which showed an outline of Britain literally filling up with people (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 46, 79), as well as in further visual and textual outputs, which argued that current and projected rates of immigration to Britain were equivalent to importing the populations of cities like Birmingham or Newcastle, or entire nations like Scotland, several times over (e.g. Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 47; Fox 2016; Gove 2016e; Johnson 2016c; Vote Leave 2016ca). Such representations were sometimes complemented by specific language, classically used to portray immigration as an invasion of limited space (Cap 2017, 72–73). Whilst some interviewees invoked a flood metaphor to describe a popular (Anonymous 9, 2018) or personal understanding of immigration (Anonymous 3, 2018), on the campaign trail Vote Leave's Dominic Raab MP argued that it was necessary for: "people [to] come in at a rate that can be *absorbed* by local communities. Last year, over a million arrived in Europe from the Middle East, north Africa and beyond. They *swept* across the continent" (Vote Leave 2016bx, emphasis added).

Similar themes of invasion and limited space also permeated a speech delivered by Vote Leave's Liam Fox MP in which he lamented the impact of "uncontrolled migration" on England's housing supply and, in turn, its vanishing green spaces (Fox 2016). Fox summed up by saying that were the situation to continue: "we will pay a much more subtle [sic] and long-term price than money can measure" (Fox 2016). Such framing, I suggest, is subtly indicative

of a nostalgic sense of loss in which England's green spaces stand implicitly for the heart of a racialised English identity. None of the examples considered in this section, including Fox's speech, utilised nostalgia's conventional backward-looking temporality as part of their primary content – neither visual nor verbal imagery employed nostalgia's classic aesthetic codes of longing and 'pastness' (see Chapter One). Nevertheless, I argue that their subject matter and position within Vote Leave's broader calls to "Take Back Control" are indicative of a foreground discursive mode of Powellite nostalgia, which worked to imply a desire to restore control over traditional racial boundaries. This was the case in Fox's speech, where his invocation of the English countryside tallied with a longstanding conservative tendency to use rural imagery as a metonym for Englishness itself (see Chapter Three) (Kenny 2014, 10). Here, the countryside is both "a tenuous refuge from a variety of threats associated with modern life" (Kenny 2015, 42), and a nostalgic embodiment of the Powellite desire to preserve the continuity of "ancient England" and the English race (see above) (cf. Kenny 2017, 264). A similarly racialised Powellite form of nostalgia was also implied in visual and verbal imagery which supplemented the campaign's overarching restorative slogan to conjure Britain's vulnerable island boundaries. As I explore further below, in the twilight of the British empire, such representations were imbued with racial connotations, as "imagery of boundaries and frontiers often signalled fears and insecurities about collapsing and permeable boundaries—between colonizers and colonized, black and white" (Webster 2005, 18).

Migration 'crisis' and the aesthetic representation of racialised boundaries

The examples considered above were not the only racialised representations of Britain's island boundaries that Vote Leave employed. The campaign also made striking use of map-style graphics of the British Isles, which leveraged increasingly explicit suggestions of the threat of invasion posed by migrants from Eastern Europe and the Middle East. This was the case in several campaign leaflets (Vote Leave 2016k; 2016l; 2016n; 2016o; 2016s) (see Figure 17 below for one example), and a host of organic and monetised social media materials (e.g. Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 15–19, 20–21, 25, 32–34, 72–73, 84, 88–89; Vote Leave 2016by; 2016ce). As part of a four-page leaflet titled "The European Union and Your Family: The Facts", the example in Figure 17 suggested the imminent danger posed

by entire populations of potential EU accession countries (Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey), and refugees from 'neighbouring' Syria and Iraq, moving to Britain (Vote Leave 2016k).[52] The sense of 'crisis' implied in these aesthetics was further codified at the bottom of the page in direct references to "the Euro crisis, the migration crisis, and new countries like Turkey and Serbia being lined up as new member states" (Vote Leave 2016k). Elsewhere, the visual message was also rendered more explicit, such as in social media images that depicted arrows extending from Turkey, Syria, or Iraq towards Britain, alongside population statistics or icons suggesting the potential scale of migration (e.g. Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 20–21, 25, 32–34, 72–73). In some cases, the visuals were accompanied by labels pointing directly to "Britain's new border […] with Syria and Iraq" (see Figure 18 below, for example) (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 34). Vote Leave's chief representatives made similarly explicit claims, misrepresenting a limited reciprocal migration deal struck between the EU and Turkey shortly before the referendum in the context of the ongoing refugee 'crisis'. Here, both Gove and Johnson referred to the creation of "visa-free travel" between Turkey and the EU as a scheme that would effectively create a border between Britain, Syria and Iraq (Gove 2016e; Johnson 2016d; Vote Leave 2016bx).

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[52] Cummings has suggested that a plainer, unbranded version of this leaflet with a simpler title and no images (Vote Leave 2016m) was most effective amongst focus group participants in general (Cummings 2017b, 7). He has also indicated, however, that some participants responded better to the more "aggressive" version, shown here (Cummings 2017b, 7).

Redacted image.

Part of Vote Leave leaflet using map-style graphics to emphasise the proximity of the UK to possible EU accession countries (listed with their population sizes), and to Syria and Iraq.

Figure 17: Extract from Vote Leave leaflet "The European Union and your Family: The Facts"
Source: Vote Leave 2016k

Redacted image.

Vote Leave social media image using map-style graphics with arrows of potential migration to illustrate Britain's "new border" with Syria and Iraq.

Figure 18: Vote Leave imagery depicting Britain's "new border" with Syria and Iraq
Source: Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Committee 2019b, 34

Such claims were repeated in open letters released by Vote Leave towards the end of the referendum, co-signed by the MPs Gove, Johnson, Gisela Stuart and, in one case, Priti Patel (Vote Leave 2016bm; 2016bo). Similar phrasing was also apparent in further campaign email communications, some of which referred notably to the movement of the Syrian border to the "English Channel" (Vote Leave 2016ah; 2016bf). Indeed, whilst many interventions spoke of the perceived threat to Britain, it is striking that the images utilising arrows of potential migration appeared to land exclusively in England (see e.g. Figure 18). The imagery considered in this subsection, I argue, therefore provides further evidence for what Gilroy identified as a pervasive imaginary of a defensive Little England under threat of siege and invasion from a

foreign 'Other' (see above). Such imagery drew on a Whiggish historiography of a country that had hitherto "never been invaded" (see Chapter Three), and implied the need to reassert military-masculine forms of heroism to protect the nation against a renewed threat of invasion from abroad. In this sense, references to the English Channel subtly invoked the island boundaries of the White Cliffs of Dover, the primary defences in shared histories of prior attempted sieges, such as during the Second World War. Whilst these connotations contributed to the nostalgia of the imagery, however, further aspects of its content and historical context spoke to a more specifically racialised, colonially inflected Powellite nostalgic form. As I introduced above, with Britain's imperial dominion fading, imagery of fragile boundaries pervaded national narratives to mirror similar concerns about the porous boundaries between races (Webster 2005, 18). In this light, Vote Leave's use of aesthetics of England's island boundaries being breached by invading 'Others' was redolent of similarly-racialised themes, implying a nostalgic desire to preserve the integrity not just of the territory but of its native population through the re-instatement of colonial forms of authority.

As Wendy Webster outlines, colonially inflected imagery of boundaries can take on many forms, including the "geographical and territorial, national and domestic, sexual and racial" (Webster 2005, 17–18; cf. A. M. Smith 1994). Indeed, several of these themes often coincide in one image. On this view, the territorial visuals outlined above are suggestive of a vulnerable, and thus feminised, territory under threat of violation from a marauding, and thus masculinised, invader (A. M. Smith 1994, 159). The gender dynamics of this imagery then act as an implicit metaphor for the vulnerability of feminised, sexually enforced racial boundaries. In mid-20th Century narratives of imperial Britain, white women were often represented as the vulnerable "internal frontier", the pre-emptive guardians of the sexual boundaries of the English race, responsible for protecting a racialised Englishness against miscegenation, or racial pollution (Webster 2005, 10). As I discuss further in subsequent sections, Vote Leave's communications were often reminiscent of such themes, employing imagery that extended beyond the suggestive depiction of territory discussed here. In their most explicit form, for example, the campaign's messages pointed directly to migrants as "dangerous criminals who came to the UK to commit serious offences including murder and rape" (Vote Leave 2016aj; see 2016ak; 2016al)(see section 5.3). Indeed, such claims also operated within a broader context of high-profile media reports alleging a series of sexual assaults perpetrated in

Germany by recent Muslim refugees (Virdee and McGeever 2017, 6). These links are significant since, in popular representations of Britain's imperial history, "powerful images of white female vulnerability set against black male sexual aggression" were used as a common means through which the exertion of paternal colonial authority, with its methods of racial domination and control, could be legitimated (Ware 2015, 220). In this light, the imagery discussed above, situated in the broader context of Vote Leave's calls to "Take Back Control" over borders and migration, invoked a gendered and racialised foreground discursive mode of Powellite nostalgia, expressing a colonially-rooted authoritarian desire to reassert territorial and racial boundaries. I explore these contentions further below, by discussing how intersecting themes of gender, race and coloniality featured in further examples of the campaign's communications.

Siege narratives and nostalgic small-scale representations of the English national 'home'

As I introduced above, Vote Leave's suggestive visuals of a threatened, feminised English territory were not the only vessels of a gendered, racialised and colonially inflected Powellite form of nostalgia. Further campaign communications made more specific use of classic nostalgic tropes, such as the white woman and the nuclear family. Such imagery operated within a discursive tradition, first cultivated during the colonial wars of the British empire, of using representations of "the small-scale and familiar—hearths, homes, families, streets, neighbourhoods" to construct a racially homogeneous Englishness in opposition to a foreign 'Other' (Webster 2005, 8). Indeed, from the 1950s onwards, representations of the English "white woman guarding the boundaries of her home against invasion became a common image of a nation under siege by immigrants" (Webster 2005, 10). As noted above, in such imagery, white women stood as rather literal guardians of the English race, vulnerable to exploitation and violation due to their role in enforcing internal sexual boundaries. Similarly-gendered and racialised themes have traditionally also been conveyed in representations of broader constructs, such as the nuclear family and domesticated home, used as "emblems of white life" (Webster 2005, 170) and a racially coherent "cornerstone of the nation" (Ware 2015, 13–14). Here, the nuclear family structure of a man, a woman and two children represents a natural, "biological unit" – the most appropriate means for rearing children – which precludes the depiction of more diverse compositions of family and household

common in different ethnic, class and generational settings (Michèle Barrett and McIntosh 1982, 49).[53] Within the domesticated imaginary of racial coherence that is the nuclear family, the white woman continues to stand for feminine characteristics, such as "vulnerability, sensitivity, passion, security, danger [and] dependence", whilst her husband conveys masculine authority and her children epitomise the future (Ware 2015, 13–14).

The Powellite nostalgia embodied in such small-scale representations of the English nation and race has several facets. Firstly, whilst men have overwhelmingly been used to represent the "progressive, forward-looking project of nationhood", as in Vote Leave's Whiggish narrative of military-masculine heroes discussed in the preceding chapters, women have traditionally personified the nation's "continuous" past (McClintock 1993, 66; Radcliffe 1996, 6).[54] Like for Powell, here such continuity is a code for a racially homogeneous, white, English past to be conserved and defended. Basic, feminised representations of the nation then acquire an additional nostalgic dimension thanks to their association with domesticity. Here, nostalgia's original relationship with longing for the comforts of a lost home (see Chapter One) is leveraged as the gendered, homely features of the small-scale are conferred on the nation (McClintock 1993). On this view, the physical and emotional safety embodied in gendered imagery of the small-scale (Michèle Barrett and McIntosh 1982, 38-43), translates to a nostalgic image of the national 'home' as a "haven" (Duyvendak 2011, 38), imbued with the comforting connotations of "a warm, safe 'inside' that is free of 'harm'" (Hutchison 2016, 105). Once this elision between the domesticated and the national home occurs, "little room is left for minorities" (Duyvendak 2011, 85). Immigration can then be constructed as a threat to the feminised and racially homogenous small-scale, domesticated version of home and, in turn, to the national 'home' (or, as in the territorial examples of the preceding section, vice versa). Once such a 'crisis' has been invoked, a nostalgic longing for the authoritarian reassertion of the security of the home ensues. Given that the preferred imagery of the threatened home emanates from Britain's colonial past, as I noted above, the nostalgic solution is also necessarily colonially inflected, inviting the restoration of masculinised heroism and colonial authority.

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[53] Pagination per iBooks version of the text.
[54] Although, as noted in Chapter Three, the inclusion of suffragettes as signifiers of modernity and progress is an exception to this rule.

As I suggested above, the latter theme of Powellite nostalgia was implied in Vote Leave's calls to "Take Back Control". The dual racialised and gendered dimensions of Powellite nostalgia discussed in this subsection, however, were more distinctly conveyed in further campaign materials which made notable use of imagery of the English small-scale as a metaphor for race and nation. Here, as in the aesthetics reviewed above, the campaign typically avoided employing classic aesthetic markers of nostalgic 'pastness', such as monochrome tints. Nevertheless, the presence of a Powellite variety of nostalgia was implied through a foreground discursive nostalgia mode, which employed historically rooted visuals of white women and the nuclear family to insinuate the fragile boundaries of the English race. These connotations were most striking in the social media image shown below in Figure 19 (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 98).[55] Here, the visual of the white mother holding a newborn baby is accompanied (within the image) by text warning of the closure of maternity units, and (alongside the image) by further text arguing that "We can't cope with pressures like immigration" (see Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019c, 263). This image, I argue, was particularly suggestive of the racialised menaces that the EU's "open-door migration policy" (see below) posed to the white woman, and by extension, to a racialised view of the English nation. Ostensibly at least, the image spoke to the alleged impact of immigration on the diminishing capacity of public services like the NHS – a common theme within Vote Leave's campaign materials. Yet given the gendered, racialised and "eugenicist" history of the welfare-state and its core public institution, this was far from a neutral proposition in itself (see Shilliam 2018, 74).

Redacted image.

Vote Leave social media image showing a white woman lying in a hospital bed cradling a newborn baby. Caption reads: "Imagine if we gave money to our maternity units instead of to the EU! Save maternity units".
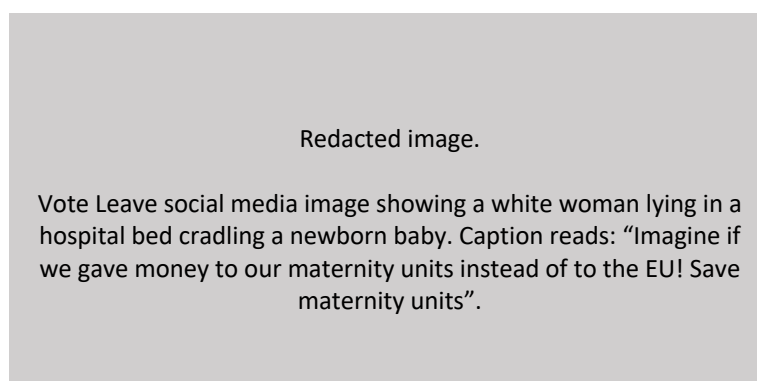
Figure 19: Example of Vote Leave's visuals of vulnerable white women
Source: Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee 2019b, 98

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[55] Vote Leave employed several versions of this image in its monetised social media content (Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 39–40, 98), which sometimes featured slight changes to the accompanying text.

New welfare institutions such as the NHS were facilitated in part through the financial rewards of the British empire, and were explicitly designed to serve the continued "quality" and reproduction of the "British race" (Hunter 2017, 169; El-Enany 2020, 69–72). Vestiges of these origins remain in contemporary debates about access to the NHS, which rely on colonially-rooted imaginaries of "deservingness" that privilege the native population and work to exclude immigrant 'Others' from the benefits of Britain's imperial "spoils" (El-Enany 2020, 69–72; Shilliam 2018). In Vote Leave's campaign materials, white 'English' women therefore appeared as the prime deserving beneficiaries of the NHS.[56] In addition to the image considered above, white women starred as NHS patients in the campaign's televised referendum broadcasts, which followed overtly nostalgic imagery of the early health service (see Chapter Three) with a tale of competing British hospital scenarios before and after Brexit (Vote Leave 2016bi; 2016cb). Elsewhere in the campaign's communications, similarly vulnerable, feminised, familial subjectivities, such as children and the elderly, were also proffered as an endangered health service's implicitly deserving recipients (e.g. Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 40–41, 72, 93–94; Vote Leave 2016e; 2016f). Themes of feminised vulnerability and deservingness had also animated Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech where he declaimed how, thanks to excess Commonwealth immigration, England's native citizens:

> [F]ound their wives unable to obtain hospital beds in childbirth, their children unable to obtain school places, their homes and neighbourhoods changed beyond recognition, their plans and prospects for the future defeated […] they began to hear, as time went by, more and more voices which told them that they were now the unwanted (Powell 1968).

Indeed, the statement that immediately preceded these claims was particularly telling of the operation of a racialised nostalgia for the national 'home', as Powell lamented how the extant population had "found themselves made strangers in their own country" (Powell 1968). Given

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[56] The prominence of women in Vote Leave's treatment of the NHS likely responded to focus group evidence, which had found that women with concerns about "issues to do with money, cost and the NHS" were an important constituency of swing voters (Vote Leave 2016am, 36). Nevertheless, despite these strategic concerns I argue that the campaign's disproportionate focus on white women in its NHS materials carried deep-rooted nostalgic connotations, which I review in this subsection.

this context, and the historic metaphorical meaning attached to imagery of the small-scale considered above, I argue that Vote Leave's suggestive use of small-scale aesthetics of white women and other familial subjectivities implied that immigration was not only a threat to the (already racialised) capacity of the NHS, but to the racial fabric of the English nation itself. Similar themes were also conveyed in the campaign's prominent depiction of the nuclear family under the banner "Vote Leave is the safer choice" in both versions of its most popular piece of canvassing literature (see Figure 20 below)(Vote Leave 2016a; 2016b). Although the non-white appearance of the father in this leaflet complicated the nuclear family's conventional meaning as a white institution, the very portrayal of the socially conservative nuclear family structure was automatically exclusionary to the full diversity of contemporary British families and households that prevail in different cultural settings. Here, a racialised undercurrent of cultural exclusivity was implied as the threatened nuclear family – the cornerstone of the nation – appeared as the deserving beneficiary of accompanying calls to restore the "ultimate authority" of British laws (see Figure 20). Indeed, the image of this 'average' family alongside appeals to its "safety" further suggested that the nuclear family was a traditional marker of British culture that needed to be defended. The campaign interventions considered in this section therefore imply the workings of both cultural and biological understandings of race in suggestive foreground Powellite nostalgia modes. These narratives, I argue, implied a desire to preserve the racial integrity of the English 'home' via the reassertion of colonially inflected authority, which worked to exclude racialised 'Others'. In the next section I unpack who was racialised as such and how their racialisation moved from being suggestive to explicit in further examples of Vote Leave's communications.

Redacted image.

Extract from Vote Leave's "5 Reasons Why" leaflet using a photograph of a nuclear family to illustrate the campaign's assertion that "Vote Leave is the safer choice".
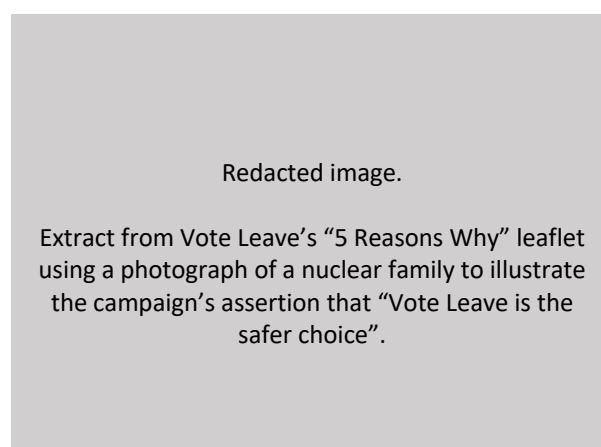
Figure 20: Fifth reason to vote for Brexit from Vote Leave's "5 Reasons Why" leaflet
Source: Vote Leave 2016a

5.3 Powellite nostalgia and the Muslim 'Other'

I begin this section by further unpacking how the 'Other' was racialised in Vote Leave's referendum materials. Although the campaign advanced a broad critique of uncontrolled EU immigration, encompassing white migrants from culturally different Eastern European countries, the racialised subject that appeared to disturb the campaign the most was the Muslim refugee. Here, the map-style graphics that depicted England under siege by Syrian and Iraqi refugees, discussed in the previous section, were given further meaning through the explicit depiction of such Muslim migrants as criminals and terrorists. By directly invoking a 'crisis' of law and order, Vote Leave was able to specify authoritarian solutions, such as legal and border controls, which were further imbued with a Powellite nostalgia inclined towards the restoration of colonially rooted racial hierarchies. In the next subsection I historicise such hierarchies by exploring how Muslims have typically been racialised in British historiography. Noting that such racialised imaginaries pre-date colonial understandings of race, I discuss how religion has historically been an important marker of racial difference. Nevertheless, I argue that religion is only one feature of a broader civilisational understanding of British cultural advancement and Muslim 'backwardness'. On this view, further biological and cultural treatments of race connect an imperial and colonial Global Britain to contemporary imaginaries of an insular Little England underpinning the Powellite variety of nostalgia. Finally, I expand on how such civilisational themes were strikingly expressed in Vote Leave's treatment of the prospective EU accession of Muslim-majority Turkey. Homing in on how one such example of the campaign's communications represented a particularly explicit foreground Powellite nostalgia mode, I conclude by discussing how such Powellite forms of nostalgia link the distinctive Eurosceptic emotional communities of Vote Leave and UKIP-Leave.EU.

Depicting the Muslim 'Other' through 'crisis' imaginaries of crime and terrorism

Throughout the referendum, Vote Leave cultivated the sense of a migration 'crisis' by referring to the perils of EU free movement, or what the campaign sometimes provocatively dubbed the EU's "open-door migration policy" (e.g. Gove 2016c) (see Figure 21 below for a visual rendering). Here, the notion of the door performed similar work to the feminised

imagery of the small-scale, described above, in that it also called to mind a domesticated imaginary of a vulnerable national home. Narratives of EU migration 'crisis' also enabled the campaign to conjure a variety of racialised migrant subjects by employing both cultural and biological understandings of race. As such, some of Vote Leave's messages cast suspicion primarily on culturally different migrants from majority white countries of Eastern Europe. This approach was evident, for example, in the campaign's production of a list of "50 of the EU's most dangerous criminals who came to the UK to commit serious offences including murder and rape" (Vote Leave 2016aj; see 2016ak; 2016al). Vote Leave regularly invoked this list, which in its aesthetic form featured 'mug-shots' of the overwhelmingly white perpetrators (Vote Leave 2016ak), particularly on social media (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bs; 2016bt; 2016bu; 2016bv; 2016bw). As one campaign interviewee put it, "by the end [of the referendum] our [message] grid was kind of like NHS, immigration, crime, repeat, NHS, immigration, crime […]" (Anonymous 9, 2018). By linking crime to predominantly white immigration from Europe, Vote Leave invoked traditional authoritarian themes of law and order and offered justification for its advocacy of increasingly draconian forms of immigration control, whilst maintaining a seemingly moral and post-racial veneer (see Chapter Four). In this vein, the campaign presented the European Court of Justice as an institution that "interfere[s] with our ability to deport criminals and others whose presence here is not conducive to the public good" (Vote Leave 2016bk; 2016bm).

Despite this general sense of a 'crisis' of law and order induced by a broad EU migration 'crisis', the more specific and immediate context of the refugee 'crisis' most strikingly permeated the campaign's communications and provided an opportunity for the increasingly explicit racialisation of Muslim subjects. This was the case in the map-style graphics discussed in the previous section, which argued that EU migration and asylum policies were generating a dangerous border between Britain and the predominantly Muslim countries of Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Here, as suggested above, the campaign's broader references to the arrival of criminal immigrants destined to commit "murder and rape" were also tinged with inferences to the Muslim asylum seekers alleged to have recently committed mass sexual assaults in Germany. As I explore further below, such connotations have long been a feature of the racialisation of Muslims in Britain. Vote Leave's racialisation of the Muslim community also drew on another common trope connected to the theme of law and order: the automatic

elision of Muslim subjectivities with terrorism (Abbas 2019). References to specific cases, such as that of the daughter-in-law of "extremist cleric and convicted terrorist Abu Hamza" (Vote Leave 2016ab) carried a certain "metonymic magic", through which individual examples can be extrapolated to suggest essentialised features of a broader population (Lentin and Titley 2011, 60). Convicted of trying to smuggle a mobile phone SIM card to Hamza in prison, the European Court had reportedly prevented this woman's deportation on the grounds that "the UK cannot deport non-EU convicted criminals if they are the sole carer of resident EU children" (Vote Leave 2016ab).[57] Vote Leave therefore employed the case as an example of how Britain's ability to deport terrorists, and their associates, was constrained by the EU (e.g. Gove 2016c; Vote Leave 2016be; 2016bq, 24).

Despite its lofty, constitutional connotations, however, the case held a further appeal which served to tarnish all Muslims with the actions of a few individuals. Indeed, like Campaign Director Cummings had previously noted with respect to Abu Hamza's original case, this example also served to bring several of Vote Leave's core messaging pillars together. As Cummings had found through public opinion research he had previously conducted for Business for Britain, "The Hamza case ('the guy with the hook') is raised repeatedly and is particularly emotive as it wraps immigration, crime, extremism, the EU, human rights, and benefits into one stark story" (Cummings 2014a, 11). A similar combination of themes was implied in Vote Leave's references to Hamza and his daughter-in-law, with overtones of extremism reinvigorated thanks to the elision of recent continental terror attacks with the refugee 'crisis' emanating from majority Muslim countries (see Virdee and McGeever 2017, 6; Abbas 2019). Indeed, although one Vote Leave interviewee sought to distance the campaign's messages from explicit links between the refugee 'crisis' and terrorism, they also noted how such a conflation held a popular appeal, stating that Vote Leave's public opinion research suggested that:

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[57] Though this case was proffered in higher-profile campaign interventions as settled evidence of the contemptible encroachment of EU institutions into British jurisdiction, an ancillary Vote Leave research report expressed the matter in far weaker terms, stating simply that "The European Court *could* block [this woman's] deportation *after* the referendum" (Vote Leave 2016bq, 24 emphasis added).

[The] refugee crisis I think just confirmed in people's minds that […] it was the sort of thing that would come up in focus groups, they were like: "What do you mean it's safer to stay in [the EU]?". People did say it's less safe to stay in when we've got all these terrorists coming over, that's what they would say like unprompted […] we don't have control of our borders and all these people are […] flooding over from Syria or wherever, so it was definitely on people's minds (Anonymous 9, 2018).

It was perhaps such sentiments that informed the campaign's promotion of inflammatory comments made by erstwhile members of the security establishment, such as former MI6 chief, Sir Richard Dearlove and former Secretary General of Interpol, Ronald K. Noble. Here, Vote Leave cited Dearlove as saying that Britain's so-called new border with the Middle East was like "storing gasoline next to the fire we are trying to put out" (Vote Leave 2016bx), and repeatedly quoted Noble's assertion that EU free movement was "like hanging a sign welcoming terrorists to Europe" (e.g. Gove 2016a; Vote Leave 2015k; 2016ah). Indeed, Vote Leave figurehead Gove also strikingly referred to the EU's "fundamentalist" free movement regime, arguing that: "With a significant number of terrorists, who have been training and fighting alongside ISIS, now back in Europe and able to move freely across much of the continent, that issue could hardly be more live" (Vote Leave 2016br). Such a sense of 'crisis' enabled Vote Leave to present restrictive immigration policies, such as the Australian-style system considered in the preceding chapter, and human rights violations, such as the deportations mentioned above, as common-sense solutions. Below, I unpack how the campaign's calls to "Take Back Control" over such measures in the context of Muslim immigration represented a Powellite form of nostalgia, indicative of how historically rooted ideas about race informed desires for renewed control over the activities of Muslim communities.

The racialisation of Muslims in Britain – religious and civilisational themes

The racialisation of Muslims in Britain has a longer genealogy than accounts that begin with 18th & 19th Century colonialism and Atlantic slavery suggest (Meer 2013, 386–88). Scholars have, for example, used Shakespeare's *Othello* to point to raced depictions of Muslim Moors

in 16th Century Elizabethan London (Meer 2013, 388), and studied Whig histories of the 17th Century Stuart era for their portrayal of Moors as "savages" and "barbarians" with a propensity for sexual violence (Zook 2002, 221). Religion is an important, though often overlooked, component of such accounts, which suggest that "religious culture and biology" animated conceptualisations of race well before the 18th Century (Meer 2013, 387). For Shakespeare, for example, imaginaries of the "infidel" and "barbarian" Moor acted as "corporeal shorthand for non-Christian difference" (Meer 2013, 388). Indeed, later depictions of amoral and lawless Moors also stand in stark contrast with the sanitised Whiggish portrayal of the righteously and responsibly violent Protestant Christians of the Glorious Revolution (cf. Zook 2002, 219, 228). There is some evidence to suggest, in addition to the campaign's general partiality for such Whiggish historiography (see Chapters Three & Four), that a preference for Christianity underscored Vote Leave. By equating Muslim migrant subjects with extremism and terrorism, as highlighted in the preceding section, Vote Leave's messages exhibited similarities with "Eurabian" conspiracy theories, which peddle fears of Christian Europe's impending "subjugation" to Muslims and Islam (Lentin and Titley 2011, 51; Meer 2013, 393; Miah 2018, 635). Some campaigners have also highlighted the importance of religion in British Eurosceptic public opinion. In one striking example from prior public opinion research, Cummings noted how a focus group participant was disturbed by his daughter allegedly being "forced at school to kneel down and pray to Mecca" (Cummings 2014a, 11). The incompatibility of Islam and Christianity in Britain was suggested in further focus group responses, which Cummings summarised as follows:

> The Muslims can say what the hell they like and the police turn a blind eye. Other countries have their own rules on religion and all that, France bans the burkah [sic], but we have to abide by their [EU] rules. We ban people wearing crosses and don't ban the burkah [sic]. You can't tell who's under a burkah [sic] (Cummings 2014a, 11).

One interviewee also aligned the role of nostalgia in the referendum specifically with the prevailing Christian identification of Leave voters, suggesting that:

> I don't think it [nostalgia] was the dominant thing, but it's undoubtedly true that if you look at the demographics [of Leave voters] it was older people […] one of the strongest correlations is between people [who voted to Leave and] who were C of E [Church of England], so there is definitely a cultural divide there, it just wasn't a powerful message (Anonymous 9, 2018).[58]

Nevertheless, the racialised nostalgia embodied in Eurosceptic anti-Muslim and Islamophobic sentiment is confined neither to considerations of religion (Taras 2013, 422), nor to the realms of public opinion. Colonially inflected civilisational themes, like those I considered in the preceding chapter's discussion of the Eurosceptic Anglosphere, represent the core of anti-Muslim racial imaginaries, of which Vote Leave made significant use (Taras 2013, pp.422-3). Religion can, of course, still be an important part of civilisational discourses, which posit the inherent superiority of Western (often former imperial) powers (Wilson 2012, chaps 4, 5). As noted in the previous chapter, calls of late Victorian imperialists for a hierarchical Greater Britain, designed to preserve a version of empire with Britain and its 'civilised' white settler colonies at the globe's centre, conceived the federation in part as a "unity of religion" (see Chapter Four). Nevertheless, like in plans for a Greater Britain, and later for an Anglosphere network, civilisational discourses extend beyond religious signifiers of cultural advancement alone. Such narratives operate instead through a broader "racial historicism", which favours similarity in additional institutions and sensibilities (Miah 2018, 634). Here 'primitive' Muslims are thought to "have failed to undergo history based upon normative European trends of modernisation, such as the Reformation, the Enlightenment, secular democracy and the separation of church and state" (Miah 2018, 634). This cultural form of racialisation often combines with and enhances a biological "racial naturalism" to position Muslims as inferior to civilised society by both birth and experience (Miah 2018, 634). Civilisational themes

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[58] According to Lord Ashcroft's exit poll "Nearly six in ten (58%) of those describing themselves as Christian voted to leave; seven in ten Muslims voted to remain" (Ashcroft 2016). A subsequent study found that, whilst Christian evangelists tended towards Remain, identification with the (Protestant) Anglican Church of England was "a major independent predictor of voting Brexit" even when other demographic factors like age and location were controlled for (G. Smith and Woodhead 2018, 208).

permeate the anti-Muslim and Islamophobic campaign messages considered above, which are underwritten by a view of the Muslim as primitive and backward to the extent that they are aggressive, threatening and out of control. In this context, Vote Leave's invocation of migration 'crisis' and concurrent calls to "Take Back Control" of Britain's borders and laws is suggestive of an increasingly explicit Powellite nostalgia mode, which advocates a return to civilised order through the colonially inflected authority of the native English population.

Similar civilisational themes were also strikingly conveyed in the campaign's treatment of one predominantly Muslim country in particular: Turkey. As noted above, interviewees identified Vote Leave's approach to Turkey as a central theme of the campaign's messages. Vote Leave frequently invoked Turkey to suggest that a vote to Remain in the EU would be tantamount to "paving the road from Ankara" (e.g. Gove 2016e; Vote Leave 2016bh; 2016bz). Here, the campaign subverted a phrase, which had previously been used by Prime Minister David Cameron to promote Turkey's EU accession (Vote Leave 2016bh, 9), to imply a threat of imminent invasion. Such references were imbued with civilisational themes, echoing how other EU member states had already objected to Turkish accession from fear of a "clash of civilisations" (Tocci 2012, 411). Social media videos produced by Vote Leave, for example, juxtaposed images of Cameron's advocacy of Turkish accession with footage, connoting uncivilised emotionality and backwardness, of a physical altercation that had recently broken out amongst members of the Turkish parliament (e.g. Vote Leave 2016bn). Elsewhere, the campaign combined insinuations of libidinous Turks with subtle connotations of miscegenation, briefing the press that Turkey's birth rate was "so high, we can expect to see an additional million people added to the UK population from Turkey alone within eight years" (Boffey and Helm 2016). Fears of racial pollution by uncivilised Turks were also more explicitly conveyed in campaign images, such as that in Figure 21, which showed muddy footsteps traipsing through a British passport fashioned to represent the EU's "open-door migration policy" (see above) alongside the caption "Turkey (population 76 million) is joining the EU" (Vote Leave 2016bj).[59] With the open door invoking a vulnerable, domesticated

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[59] Vote Leave deployed this image in several iterations – sometimes to highlight differences between the EU and Australian-style points-based immigration systems (Vote Leave 2016ch), and elsewhere with different captions highlighting the perils of Albania's supposed EU accession, or of mass immigration in general (see Digital, Media, Culture & Sport Committee 2019b, 46, 76). Nevertheless,

imaginary of the nation, as above, the muddiness of the invading footsteps was redolent of the threat of contamination that marauding Turks posed to the nation, represented by the British passport. In the following subsection I further explore how such representations embody Powellite forms of nostalgia and consider how they compare to the UKIP-Leave.EU treatment of immigration, which Vote Leave campaigners distanced themselves from.

Redacted image.

Vote Leave tweet, 23rd May 2016. Illustration of a British passport fashioned to look like an open door with muddy footsteps traipsing through it. Text on image reads: "Turkey (population 76 million) is joining the EU" and "Vote Leave, take back control". Bright red background.

Figure 21: Vote Leave's imagery of muddy footsteps
Source: Vote Leave 2016bj

Powellite nostalgia and Eurosceptic emotional communities

The above image of the muddy footsteps is reminiscent of a racialised representational practice known as the "racial gothic", which has historically been used to portray Muslims as uncivilised and threatening through "Gothic tropes of the monster or monstrous, hauntings and the spectral, and abjected states" (Abbas 2019, 2451). Indeed, there is something ghostly and haunting about these footsteps in their disembodiment, which conjures fears of a mysterious 'Other'. Such mysteriousness is central to Gothicised imagery, which plays on fears of the indeterminacy and thus potential ubiquity of the 'Other', and invokes associations of menace and revulsion connected to anxieties about imminent racial contamination (Abbas

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the Turkish iteration garnered the most attention, as I discuss below, with *The Observer* using it as evidence that Vote Leave was "embroiled in [a] race row" (Boffey and Helm 2016).

2019, 2451, 2463). As Madeline-Sophie Abbas puts it, "[i]nability to see the Other undermines the authority of the white nationalist, inciting an angered desire to regain power and control considered rightfully theirs" (Abbas 2019, 2463). Whilst Abbas connects Gothicised representations to emotions such as anger, I suggest that they are also intimately connected to another emotion: the racialised form of nostalgia I have dubbed Powellite. As I have explored throughout this chapter, Powellite nostalgia responds to a racialised sense of 'crisis' by advocating the comforting restoration of colonially inflected racial order and control, most strikingly suggested by phrases such as Vote Leave's slogan "Take Back Control". On this view, in the Gothicised image above, the ghostly portrayal of the disembodied and dirty footsteps traipsing through an emblem of Britishness suggests a racial 'crisis' to be remedied by reasserting historically rooted racial hierarchies. Like the other examples of Vote Leave's aesthetics considered in previous sections, the image in itself is not explicitly redolent of nostalgic tropes of loss, longing or 'pastness'. Nevertheless, in its treatment of race and association with Vote Leave's slogan (which, in the example above, adorns the image itself), I suggest that it represents one of the most explicit discursive modes of Powellite nostalgia employed by the campaign during the referendum.

As I noted above, Vote Leave utilised a range of visual and verbal foreground Powellite nostalgia modes to discuss immigration and race. Sometimes this imagery was more suggestive than explicit, such as in the small-scale aesthetics of white women and families considered in the previous section. Elsewhere, the Powellite associations of the campaign's messages were more direct, such as in the map-style graphics of invasion, and the civilisational and Gothicised treatment of Muslims reviewed above. Such explicit representations challenge claims made by Vote Leave interviewees, introduced at the beginning of this chapter, that their campaign was distinct from the "racist" and "nationalist" associations of their Eurosceptic referendum rivals, UKIP-Leave.EU. Indeed, Vote Leave's imagery of footsteps, considered here, drew particular public criticism during the referendum, with one newspaper using it as evidence that the campaign was "embroiled in [a] race row" (Boffey and Helm 2016). Will Straw, the leader of the Remain campaign, later also pointed to the racialised similarities between this image and an infamous poster that UKIP's Farage released shortly before polling titled "Breaking Point" (see Figure 22) (H. Stewart and Mason 2016; Shipman 2016, 302). Some Vote Leave interviewees offered the

Breaking Point poster as a specific example of how the UKIP-Leave.EU campaign was more extreme than Vote Leave (Anonymous 3, 7 & 9, 2018) (see Vote Leave 2016cd for similar). Nevertheless, in its rather explicit representation of an imminent Muslim invasion, which echoed Second World War Nazi imagery of Jewish refugees (Abbas 2019, 2459-61), the *Breaking Point* poster was, like Straw suggested, rather close to Vote Leave's own aesthetics, which strikingly invoked Muslim invasion via graphics of maps and footsteps, as noted above. Such visuals were not, however, the only discursive similarities between Vote Leave and UKIP-Leave.EU.

Redacted image.

Photograph of Nigel Farage standing in front of his "Breaking Point" poster, showing a queue of migrants at a border crossing. Further text on the image reads: "We must break free of the EU and take back control".
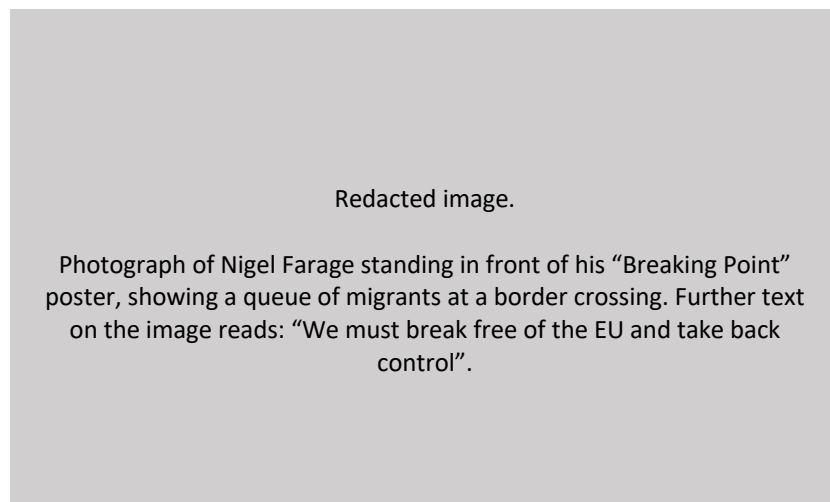
Figure 22: Farage's "Breaking Point" poster
Source: H. Stewart and Mason 2016

As noted in Chapter Two, the phrase "breaking point" had already appeared in a 2015 UKIP manifesto describing the pressures of immigration on the NHS. It is in such terms that Vote Leave also employed the phrase, several weeks prior to the release of Farage's *Breaking Point* poster, in televised referendum broadcasts that highlighted how "Our NHS is at breaking point" (Vote Leave 2016bi; 2016cb), and in a media interview which invoked similar pressures on schools (see Doyle 2016). There was also a significant overlap between the campaigns' use of the phrase "Take Back Control". Vote Leave interviewees credit Cummings with developing the slogan from prior research into Eurosceptic public opinion (Anonymous 6, 2018; Anonymous 13, 2019). Cummings had indeed utilised the motto "keep control" in a previous campaign (see Chapter Two), and later identified the public resonance of "let's take back control" in research he conducted for the Vote Leave precursor, Business for Britain (Cummings 2014a; 2014b). Nevertheless, "control" had been part of the Eurosceptic vernacular since at least the Maastricht era (see Chapter Two), and had long characterised

the immigration debate in Britain, as noted above. References to "control" in the context of immigration and borders were a key feature of the UKIP discourse from at least 2010 and appeared to replace the campaign's prior overtly nostalgic calls of "We want our country back" (see Chapter Two). Later UKIP campaign materials appeared to combine the two sentiments in the phrase "Take back control of our country" (see Chapter Two). It is such connotations that later imbued Farage's *Breaking Point* poster, which also featured the nostalgic "take back control" in its accompanying tagline (see Figure 22). Given the overlaps in imagery and phrasing highlighted in this section, Vote Leave's claims that the campaign's approach (particularly with respect to the NHS) was the "right" and "unifying" way to talk about immigration, different from the "divisive" UKIP language of "we want our country back" (Cummings 2017a), appear increasingly spurious.

As one Vote Leave interviewee observed, "Taking control was a very strong rallying cry for the whole Leave campaign […] there was, you know, quite a big overlap between the objectives or the objections to the EU, that was certainly true" (Anonymous 2, 2018). The findings of substantial overlap in the Powellite discourses of Vote Leave and UKIP-Leave.EU, presented above, have important implications for our understanding of nostalgic Eurosceptic emotional communities. At the start of the thesis, I suggested that elite British Euroscepticism had fractured into two primary emotional communities each constituted by a distinctive background nostalgia mood, or structure of feeling, expressed in peculiar foreground nostalgia modes. On this view, Vote Leave represents one emotional community, characterised by feeling rules that limit the overt display of nostalgia, whist UKIP-Leave.EU is another emotional community, organised by feeling rules that value more explicit nostalgic representations. These propositions have been borne out in previous chapters, where I traced the evolution of British Eurosceptic emotional communities and their discursive traditions through time (see Chapter Two), before assessing how banal and empire nostalgic traditions featured in Vote Leave's referendum materials via tempered foreground nostalgia modes (see Chapters Three & Four). Nevertheless, in my original discussion of emotional communities I also suggested that there was some overlap between Vote Leave and UKIP-Leave.EU (see Chapters One & Two). Whilst I have found some examples of overlap in previous chapters, in the above discussion of Powellite nostalgia, the similarities between the nostalgic discursive traditions of campaigns is striking. As I have shown above, most Vote

Leave interviewees, and some Vote Leave materials, adhered to emotional norms that downplayed the campaign's association with nostalgia and race in implicit and suggestive nostalgia modes. Nevertheless, further campaign communications tended towards a much more explicit mode of Powellite nostalgia, most commonly associated with UKIP. These findings suggest that Eurosceptic emotional communities, at least to some extent, share a particularly explicit Powellite representation of nostalgia, perhaps due to their joint exposure to a broader British cultural meaning context, where the discussion of immigration and race implies that an overtly "anxious, melancholic" nostalgia mode is the most appropriate form of emotional display (cf. Gilroy 2005, 23).

Conclusions

In this chapter I have explored how the Powellite variety of nostalgia connects the seemingly contradictory Global Britain and Little England discourses. Following the previous chapter's exploration of the post-racial pretence of a Global Britain, I began this chapter in section 5.1 by recounting how similarly post-racial themes characterised how Vote Leave interviewees evaluated their campaign's treatment of immigration and race. Although interviewees tended to claim that Vote Leave, unlike the rival Eurosceptic UKIP-Leave.EU campaign, did not exploit such incendiary themes, empirical evidence suggests otherwise. I therefore commenced my discussion of Vote Leave's overtly racialised treatment of immigration by unpacking how the campaign's "Take Back Control" slogan could be interpreted as a call for the nostalgic restoration of colonial forms of authority over the immigrant 'Other'. I then connected this analysis to the politics of former MP Enoch Powell to show how his adaptation of such colonial understandings of race, acquired via the imperial encounters of a formerly global Britain, informed his nostalgic imaginary of an insular, racially homogenous Little England. In section 5.2 I then began to assess how this Powellite form of nostalgia imbued Vote Leave's own representation of Little England's island boundaries. Here, I discussed how the campaign employed map-style aesthetics of the British Isles to depict a vulnerable territory under threat of 'invasion' by migrants from countries such as Syria and Iraq. Such aesthetics combined the militarised Whiggish narratives of Britain's island defences, explored in Chapter Three, with an imperial and colonial tradition of using imagery of vulnerable borders to connote similarly

fragile racial boundaries. Employing an historicised analysis, I therefore argued that dynamics of gender and race informed how such imagery could connote a migration 'crisis' in which the masculinised violation of a vulnerable feminised territory acted as a metaphor for the sexual boundaries of the English race. In this context, the campaign's calls to "Take Back Control" acted as a Powellite mode of nostalgia that utilised paternal colonial race thinking to advocate for the comforting restoration of territorial and racial boundaries.

I then explored how similar connotations were implied in Vote Leave's use of nostalgic small-scale imagery of the English national 'home', including representations of white women and the nuclear family. Once more, such representations drew on imperial and colonial history to imply the fragile racial boundaries of Englishness – with race conceived in both biological and cultural terms. Whilst this analysis also pointed to how feminised English subjects were subtly characterised as the prime beneficiaries of renewed national control over already historically racialised institutions like the NHS, I suggested that it was necessary to further explore who Vote Leave had earmarked as the racialised 'Other' in such narratives. In the final section of the chapter, 5.3, I therefore argued that whilst the campaign advanced a broad critique of uncontrolled EU migration, the Muslim 'Other' appeared as the primary target of its racialised discourse. Here, representations of Muslims as criminals and terrorists complemented the campaign's aesthetics of an impending 'invasion' from Muslim-majority countries, explicitly connecting the extant sense of 'crisis' to classic authoritarian themes of law and order. This invocation of 'crisis' also enabled the campaign to advocate for the restoration of authoritarian immigration controls which, through a Powellite nostalgia mode, also spoke to a desire to reassert colonially-rooted racial hierarchies. I then discussed how such hierarchies had historically evolved such that Muslims in contemporary Britain are typically racialised according to religious markers and broader civilisational themes, which draw on imaginaries of Britain's former imperial and colonial pursuits to present the Muslim 'Other' as threatening and 'backward'. Finally, with a focus on how such civilisational themes infused Vote Leave's representation of the prospective EU accession of Muslim-majority Turkey, I discussed how a particularly explicit Powellite nostalgia mode connected the campaign to its Eurosceptic counterparts, UKIP-Leave.EU. This analysis suggests that these distinctive Eurosceptic emotional communities are connected, to some extent, by particularly explicit Powellite nostalgia moods and modes, perhaps due to their shared exposure to a broader British

cultural environment that has long valued overt displays of emotion in the immigration debate. In the thesis Conclusion, I return to these themes, and review how the findings presented throughout the preceding chapters contribute to our understanding of elite British Euroscepticism and nostalgia.

Conclusion

I began this thesis with an emblematic story of the 2016 Brexit referendum Vote Leave campaign, told through a major address given by one of its primary representatives, Conservative MP Michael Gove. I argued that Gove's speech was suggestive of how Vote Leave's core themes of 'crisis', change and control intersected with a subtle sense of nostalgia for a lost national past, and a wealth of elite British Eurosceptic tradition. On this view, the nostalgias that are embodied, but often overlooked, in the history of British campaigning against 'Europe' acted as a comforting and inspiring foil for a variety of 'crises' relating to the nation's EU membership, enabling Vote Leave to challenge defeatist interpretations of contemporary Britain and its post-Brexit possibilities. This thesis has explored such dynamics of 'crisis' and nostalgia through an in-depth and historically-situated discussion of the Vote Leave campaign. In doing so, it has exposed nostalgia's many contradictions, showing how it problematises conventional binaries of reason and emotion, memory and amnesia, past and future, stability and revolution, and has thus illuminated the emotive politics of Eurosceptic portrayals of the national past. Indeed, the overarching contribution that the thesis makes is to the extant EU Studies Euroscepticism literature, which despite making valuable strides in highlighting how elite British Euroscepticism is rooted in prevailing imaginaries of British history, has largely ignored the close relationship between such historical narratives and nostalgia. As I highlight further in subsequent sections, understanding how dominant ideas and practices of history are embedded in different forms of nostalgia is crucial to our grasp of how Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions have persisted and fractured through time, and how they continue to operate in both complementary and contradictory ways.

The interdisciplinary themes of the thesis also aim to speak to wider audiences. The multifaceted nature of the Eurosceptic project demands engagement with a variety of Politics and International Studies sub-disciplines beyond the EU Studies and Euroscepticism literatures. As such this thesis both draws from and speaks to the sub-disciplines of IR, IPE, and British Politics. Researching nostalgia in the context of British Euroscepticism also requires an approach that draws on concepts and methods emanating from Psychology, Sociology and History, which capture diverse aspects of political emotions. The study that such an approach has resulted therefore also aims to speak to those researching political

emotions in general, and nostalgia in particular. The best way to unpack these contributions further is to review the specific contributions made by each thesis chapter. Having posed a primary research question designed to explore how nostalgia was invoked by the Vote Leave campaign during the 2016 Brexit referendum and how this relates to the evolution of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions over time, in Chapter One I generated a theoretical framework and set of research methods capable of addressing such a question. Here, I drew insights from extant Psychological and Sociological studies of nostalgia, broader research into political emotions, and New Institutionalisms concerned with processes of discursive evolution over time. My resulting framework provided a sociological reading of Discursive Institutionalism (DI) to posit that background emotional experiences of nostalgia sparked in times of perceived 'crisis' – nostalgia moods – expressed through foreground discursive representations of nostalgia – nostalgia modes – work to constitute Eurosceptic emotional communities, defined by distinctive emotional cultures. As I explore further below, this framework allows me to make conceptual and empirical contributions to the study of nostalgia, particularly in developing typologies of nostalgic forms and temporalities, and to the EU Studies Euroscepticism literature, which has hitherto overlooked the value of research into political emotions and emotional communities.

The framework also has broader salience, however, with its adaptation of DI for research into emotions suggesting future analytic pathways for those who engage extant DI frameworks. Indeed, as I underline further at the end of this chapter, the DI-rooted framework of the background emotional mood and foreground discursive mode of emotional expression would lend itself to the study of a multitude of specific emotions and political settings. In Chapter Two, I began to apply this framework to the study of British Euroscepticism, highlighting how different *varieties* and *modes* of nostalgia characterised and constituted successive emotional communities of elite British Eurosceptics over time. As I highlight further below, this typology of nostalgias contributes to our understanding of the diversity both of elite British Euroscepticism and of nostalgia itself. The analysis is also, however, pertinent to those interested in British Politics and political communities more broadly, directing our attention towards the activities of extra-parliamentary organisations – often still marginalised by a disproportionate focus on party politics in Britain – and the overlapping networks of individual elites and collective emotional cultures that sustain them. The findings of the remaining thesis

chapters, which focused on how Britain's nostalgic Eurosceptic traditions were invoked by the Vote Leave emotional community during the Brexit referendum, also suggest applications beyond the study of Euroscepticism alone. Chapter Three demonstrated how a banal or habitual variety of nostalgia is entangled with a specific Whiggish historiographical practice, which favours a heroic narrative continuity of national identity over time. These findings will therefore be relevant to those interested in the politics of British history and historiography, illuminating an emotional dimension to such a politics that remains underexplored (e.g. Wellings 2016).

A similar contribution is suggested by the findings of Chapter Four, but this time with a more specific focus on the emotive politics of historically rooted economic ideas. Here, my focus on imperial and colonial (or, taken together, empire) varieties of nostalgia pointed to the emotional underpinnings of Anglospherist political-economic models. These findings aim to resonate with IPE scholars, especially since evidence of the nostalgic appeal of such emblems of neoliberal hyper-globalisation raises questions about the straightforward modernising credentials that some have conferred on neoliberal projects (e.g. Davies 2014, 310). The findings of this chapter will also be important for observers of Anglosphere advocacy more specifically, adding evidence about the nostalgic political-economic preferences of previously overlooked Vote Leave personnel, most notably Campaign Director Dominic Cummings, to extant inventories of who and what constitutes the Anglosphere (e.g. D. Bell and Vucetic 2019; Kenny and Pearce 2018; Vucetic 2011a; Wellings 2019; Wellings and Baxendale 2015). Scholars of the Anglosphere, along with those concerned with the politics of British history, will also be interested in the findings of Chapter Five. In that chapter, I documented how a racialised Powellite variety of nostalgia is informed by both colonial understandings of race and Whiggish imaginaries of the national past. As such, the chapter adds to growing efforts to expose the colonial underpinnings of contemporary British politics (e.g. Shilliam 2018; Akhter 2019; El-Enany 2020) and contributes to what is at present only a slim body of critical race research on the Anglosphere (e.g. Vucetic 2011a; Namusoke 2016; 2019). The chapter also contributes to understandings of migration, and particularly of domestic responses to contemporary migration 'crisis', which scholars such as Luca Mavelli have argued must be situated in specific national contexts (Mavelli 2017). Having suggested the wider relevance of the thesis, I now return to how it contributes primarily to our understanding of elite British

Euroscepticism and nostalgia. Below, I unpack how my findings address the research questions I set out in the thesis Introduction, examining the value of the typologies of nostalgia that my analysis has generated. I conclude by outlining the project's limitations and the opportunities for future research that they imply.

1. The discursive traditions of elite British Euroscepticism – Three varieties of nostalgia and two nostalgia modes

The focus of this thesis has been on exploring how nostalgia was invoked by the Vote Leave campaign during the 2016 Brexit referendum and how this relates to the evolution of Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions over time. Within this overarching enquiry, I posed my first research sub-question, intent on investigating the continuities and discontinuities in Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions from the 1975 referendum onwards and exploring how their evolutionary pattern relates to the structure of the British Eurosceptic movement. I also proposed a further sub-question, targeted in part at uncovering how such traditions have been emotively framed over time in relation to nostalgia. My research, described in Chapter Two, finds both persistence and adaptation in the historic development of elite British Euroscepticism, with nostalgia playing a constitutive role in how the Eurosceptic movement is structured and how its discourses are framed. From that analysis, I identified the presence of three thematic *varieties* of Eurosceptic nostalgia and two foreground nostalgic *modes* of communication. The three varieties of nostalgia I identified cut across the different factions of the Eurosceptic movement, albeit with varying degrees of emphasis (as I highlight below), and went on to structure the remaining thesis chapters where I surveyed how they were invoked by Vote Leave. The first of these varieties, which I later named banal nostalgia, refers to a nostalgic form rooted in heroic imaginaries of Britishness and British 'greatness', and often emphasises narratives of Britain's roles in the 20th Century world wars (see Chapter Three). The second variety of nostalgia refers to memories of the British empire and can be further categorised into its imperial and colonial components. Whilst imperial nostalgia draws on a general longing for Britain's lost global status, colonial nostalgia is specifically concerned with rehabilitating links with Britain's former colonies (cf. Lorcin 2013) (see Chapter Four). The final variety of nostalgia, which I later dubbed Powellite for its resemblance to the politics of notorious British MP Enoch Powell, draws on anti-immigrant sentiment and refers to a

desire to conserve the racial integrity of England's native population (see Chapter Five).

In the next section, I use my analysis of how these nostalgias structured the discourses of the Vote Leave campaign in order to further unpack how they interact. First, however, I discuss their relationship with two distinctive sets of Eurosceptic emotional communities. My findings in Chapter Two suggest that these three varieties of Eurosceptic nostalgia exhibited a strong degree of persistence over time. This is especially the case for the banal and empire varieties of nostalgia, which I recorded from the beginning of my analysis, commencing at the 1975 referendum, and which filtered through to the Brexit referendum in 2016. This is not to suggest, however, that there was little variation in how such themes were expressed by different Eurosceptic campaign groups. Within the banal theme of nostalgia, for example, some groups chose to explicitly advance militarised narratives of national heroism imbued with strong anti-German sentiments derived in the 20th Century world wars, whilst others favoured the cultivation of a more general sense of British exceptionalism and 'greatness', subtly inflected with war memory. Likewise, within the empire theme of nostalgia, different groups endorsed distinctive iterations of Britain's post-Brexit possibilities for global reconnection, with some appealing to a cosmetically inclusive Commonwealth, whilst others favoured a restricted white settler imaginary of the Anglosphere, or even more exclusive cooperation with America. As I noted in Chapter Two, the rise of UKIP, which also drew on the banal and empire varieties of nostalgia, developed a third Powellite form of nostalgia within elite British Euroscepticism. This variety of nostalgia has a long history in British politics beyond Euroscepticism, as its moniker suggests. Once UKIP had advanced this nostalgic form, it also persisted within Euroscepticism in the sense that it informed interventions made by groups across the Eurosceptic movement, and became a key feature of the 2016 Brexit referendum. Taken together, the evidence considered here suggests that the discursive traditions of the elite British Eurosceptic movement all draw from the same nostalgic themes – or *varieties* of nostalgia – but with varying degrees of emphasis as to their specific content.

This is, however, only one way in which Britain's elite Eurosceptic traditions can be conceived. Further inspection suggests that such traditions, and therefore the Eurosceptic movement to which they belong, also exhibit a notable degree of heterogeneity. On this view, whilst Eurosceptic campaign groups share the same broad, thematic varieties of nostalgia, they are

differentiated by divergent discursive representations. In Chapter Two, I identified the existence of two persistent foreground nostalgia modes. Following the conceptual framework that I set out in Chapter One, each of these nostalgia modes corresponds to a background nostalgia mood, or structure of feeling, and is governed by peculiar feeling rules that delimit nostalgia's discursive display and inculcate distinctive emotional cultures. Indeed, the peculiar foreground discursive representation of background experiences of nostalgia is what makes individual emotions collective and constitutive of emotional communities. As such, in Chapter Two I explored how an emotionally and temporally tempered nostalgia mode came to characterise a successive set of Eurosceptic emotional communities in the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement, culminating in the 2016 referendum Vote Leave campaign. By contrast, an emotionally and temporally explicit nostalgia mode best described the emotional community represented by successive iterations of UKIP, emanating from the overt nostalgic expression favoured by the Thatcherite right of the Conservative party, and culminating in the creation of the 2016 referendum Leave.EU campaign. The progressive fracturing of the British Eurosceptic movement into these two competing sets of emotional communities, particularly apparent from the early 21st Century onwards, suggests that diverging conventions governing nostalgia's discursive representation had persisted such that they became institutionalised in the distinctive emotional cultures of each community over time. These findings point to the influence not just of elite Eurosceptic individuals – the initial carriers of emotions like nostalgia – but also to the structural power of nostalgia itself within distinctive nostalgic discourses. Nevertheless, as I explore further in the next section, despite much evidence of persistence, Vote Leave sometimes also departed from the tempered mode of nostalgic expression favoured by the lineage of Eurosceptic emotional communities to which it belonged.

The theoretical framework I introduced in Chapter One, plus the historical analysis of Chapter Two and the contemporary analysis of the subsequent chapters, also address my final research sub-question. This question, as I highlighted in the thesis Introduction, enquired about the role of 'crisis' in nostalgic narratives and asked how this relationship had featured in Vote Leave's communications. In Chapters One and Two I therefore explored how extant studies pitch nostalgia as a soothing emotional response in times of 'crisis' and built on extant research into elite British Euroscepticism to suggest that declinist interpretations of Britain's

turn towards 'Europe' had catalysed the creation of nostalgic Eurosceptic communities. My subsequent research found that nostalgia continued to preoccupy successive narratives of contemporary European 'crisis', which breathed new life into longstanding imaginaries of the threatening quality of Britain's EU membership and the superiority of the nation's historically rooted alternative prospects. This was particularly evident in my in-depth study of Vote Leave, which detailed how nostalgic narratives of a superior British past and post-Brexit future offered a solution to intersecting 'crises' of national decline and EU integration. Here, such a general sense of 'crisis' was often enhanced by the context of specific Eurozone and migration 'crises' that surrounded the referendum. Indeed, as interviewees recounted, in such contexts Vote Leave was able to point to an organisation that was failing and backward to claim Britain's forward-looking temporal superiority even while it relied on the nation's history for comfort and inspiration (cf. Wellings and Baxendale 2015; Wellings 2017, 5) (see Chapters Three & Four). These findings provide further evidence for nostalgia's structural power within the persistent Eurosceptic traditions that Vote Leave employed, particularly in a tempered nostalgia mode that offered an optimistic, ostensibly future-oriented solution to contemporary 'crisis'. As I unpack further in the next section, however, further consideration of the ways in which the campaign invoked – or sometimes masked – 'crisis' through different *varieties* of nostalgia and nostalgia *modes* paints a more complex and inconclusive picture about the structural and agential properties of its interventions.

2. Typologies of nostalgia – complementarities and contradictions

Whilst in Chapter Two I identified the persistence of three *varieties* of nostalgia and two nostalgia *modes* in the history of elite British Euroscepticism, in Chapters Three, Four and Five I explored how these nostalgic forms played out and interacted in the Brexit referendum materials of the Vote Leave campaign. Vote Leave, I argued, was an emotional community that emerged from a contemporary Conservative lineage of Eurosceptic campaign groups that featured overlapping personnel and was organised around an emotionally and temporally tempered mode of nostalgic expression. Indeed, interviews with former Vote Leave staffers pointed to the presence of this distinctive emotional culture, with subjects appearing keen to reject pejorative interpretations of nostalgia, to distance themselves from the UKIP brand of

Euroscepticism, and to emphasise their campaign's distinctive forward-looking credentials. Such a tempered version of nostalgic expression was particularly evident in Vote Leave's treatment of the banal and empire varieties of nostalgia (see Chapters Three & Four). Nevertheless, the campaign's adoption of the anti-immigrant Powellite form of nostalgia corresponded more closely to a conventional, explicit mode of nostalgic representation favoured by the 'rival' faction of the Eurosceptic movement, previously represented by UKIP and now embodied in Leave.EU and its allied organisations (see Chapter Five). In this section, I use my case study of Vote Leave to further unpack how the three *varieties* of Eurosceptic nostalgia and two nostalgia *modes*, identified above, interact with one another in order to better understand their complementarities and contradictions. One way in which the three thematic varieties of nostalgia interact is through resonances in their content (see Figure 23 below). On this view, the banal or habitual variety of nostalgia, enmeshed with a Whiggish understanding of heroic British achievement and continuous 'greatness', provides the foundations for the other two varieties of nostalgia.
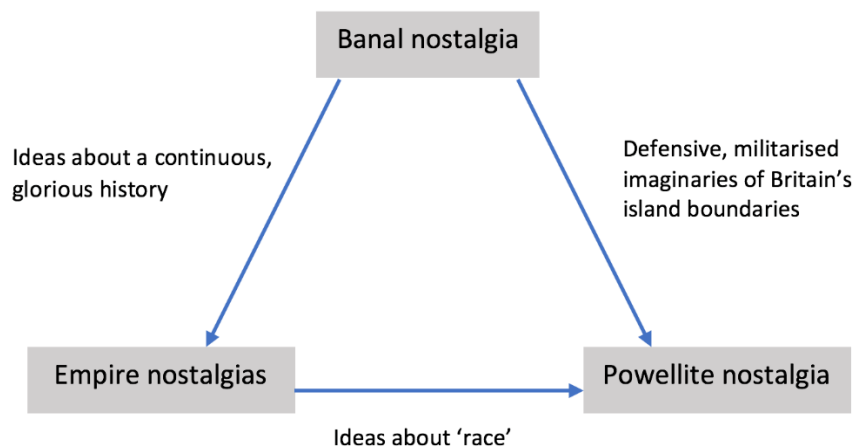
Figure 23: Resonances in the content of the three varieties of Eurosceptic nostalgia
Source: Author's own

The empire iterations of nostalgia, for example, also draw on a Whiggish understanding of the national past, which posits Britain's former imperial and colonial exploits as highlights in a glorious trajectory. The Powellite variety of nostalgia in turn exhibits views about race cultivated during the violent encounters of the British empire, which empire nostalgias themselves attempt to sanitise, and combines them with a Whiggish-militarised imaginary of

a nation preparing for a renewed siege by foreign 'Others'. As I put it in Chapter Five, in the Powellite variety of nostalgia, the empire nostalgias of an expansive Global Britain are more intimately linked to apparently contradictory narratives of a defensive and insular Little England than is commonly acknowledged. Content is not the only factor connecting these three varieties of nostalgia, however, as the preceding analysis also points to the presence of three distinctive temporal patterns possessing both overlapping and contradictory qualities (see Figure 24 below).[60] As I suggested in Chapter Three, the temporality at the heart of the banal variety of nostalgia produces a preference for continuity of identity between past, present and future, which corresponds to the inclinations of Whiggish historiographical practices. Such a preference for continuity can, however, be interpreted in terms that emphasise either a forward-looking or more conventionally nostalgic, backward-looking outlook. Indeed, the evolution of Whig historiography supports this contention for whilst the original 17th Century Whigs viewed themselves as conservationists, intent on restoring the past, their 18th Century heirs attributed a much more radical, revolutionary and forward-looking spirit to their ancestors (Zook 2002, 214–15) (see Chapter Three). In Chapter Three, I therefore suggested that whilst banal nostalgia's preference for continuity can be implicated in masking interpretations of present-day 'crisis', serving a stabilising function, when such a sense of 'crisis' is more clearly invoked banal nostalgia can also acquire forward-looking, revolutionary connotations.

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[60] Here, my typology shares similarities with Boym's conception of "restorative" nostalgia – what I dub a conventional or traditional form of nostalgia that seeks a simple return to the past (Boym 2001). Although my "revolutionary" temporality also resembles some aspects of Boym's parallel "reflective" form of nostalgia, I depart from her problematic assumptions of irony and critical consciousness (see Chapter One). As in Chapters Three & Four, I draw instead on a combination of Boym's approach to the past perfect future of "reflective" nostalgia and her later work specifying the branching temporal possibilities of the "off-modern" (e.g. Boym 2011), plus scholarship on nostalgia and the "revolutionary imagination" (see Bonnett 2010, 45).
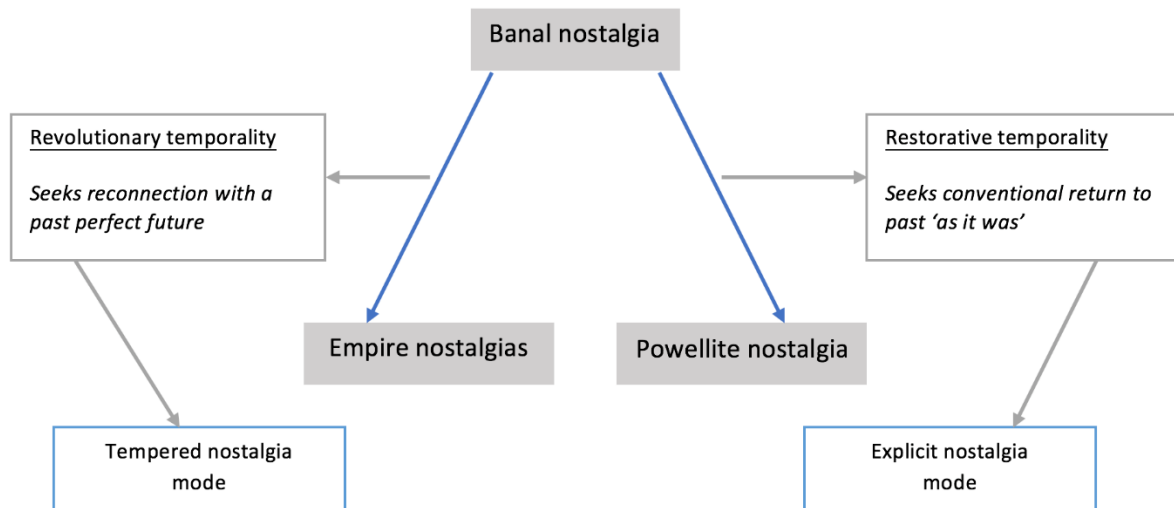
Figure 24: Temporal patterns of Eurosceptic nostalgia
Source: Author's own

Such a revolutionary temporality was invoked by Vote Leave when it positioned Britain's EU membership as a 'crisis' that had disrupted an increasingly modern and progressive trajectory. This was the case in the campaign's communications on British heroes and the NHS, which suggested that Brexit presented an opportunity to reconnect with and reinvigorate a bygone visionary spirit, which could project Britain into a more advanced future (see Chapter Three). Such a revolutionary temporality also characterised Vote Leave's empire nostalgias. In Chapter Four, I suggested that a revolutionary desire to realise the lost potential of the past perfect post-Brexit future animates nostalgias concerned with the British empire emanating from all quarters of the Eurosceptic movement. Here, Britain's EU membership also appears as an inconvenient disruption to an increasingly global and civilised national trajectory (Wellings 2016, 369). Whereas modernising connotations imbue all Eurosceptic treatments of Britain's imperial and colonial past, however, in Vote Leave's hands such nostalgias were particularly enmeshed with the futuristic post-Brexit promise of science and technology. It is this ostensibly future-oriented and forward-looking nostalgia mode, which cut across Vote Leave's banal and empire nostalgias, that best characterised the campaign's origins in successive organisations of the contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic movement. On this view, Vote Leave operated within a lineage of emotional communities, comprised of overlapping personnel, which shared an institutionalised emotional culture cultivated through persistent feeling rules where the only appropriate display of nostalgia was one that was emotionally and temporally tempered. Nevertheless, as I explored in Chapter Five, Vote Leave's adoption of the Powellite variety of nostalgia was at odds with such a distinctive

emotional culture. Powellite nostalgia possesses a conventionally nostalgic, restorative temporality, which expresses a desire to return to the past 'as it was'. When faced with immigration 'crisis', Powellite nostalgia therefore adopts the conservative inclinations of the original Whigs, who sought continuity through a straightforward return to the past (see above).

It is the Powellite variety of nostalgia, with its corresponding backward-looking restorative nostalgia mode that had best characterised the UKIP lineage of Eurosceptic emotional communities, to which the 2016 referendum Leave.EU campaign became affiliated. In Chapter Two, I suggested that this genealogy of Eurosceptic organisations exhibited a more traditionally nostalgic emotional culture, governed by persistent feeling rules that attributed cultural value to the overt display of backward-looking loss, longing and/or 'pastness'. Vote Leave's employment of the Powellite variety of nostalgia with its restorative mode of expression therefore appears at odds with its prevailing emotional culture. Indeed, as I noted in Chapters Three and Five, Vote Leave interviewees were often keen to distance themselves from the conventionally nostalgic, nationalist and racist connotations of UKIP Euroscepticism. Although Vote Leave's organisational structure included a handful of UKIP individuals, this is not enough to explain the campaign's Powellite nostalgia, especially since interview and documentary evidence points to an organisation that remained dominated by contemporary Conservative Eurosceptic figures in general, and Campaign Director Dominic Cummings in particular (see Chapters Two & Four). Put differently, UKIP figures were not numerous enough and did not hold enough sway within Vote Leave to influence its emotional culture so dramatically. Instead, as I ventured in Chapter Five, Vote Leave's adoption of the Powellite variety of nostalgia, expressed through an explicit nostalgia mode, was likely influenced by a broader British cultural environment – or, to use the parlance of DI, a meaning context – which has long recognised the value of overt displays of emotion in the immigration debate, with inconclusive structural and strategic drivers. In addition to contributing to our understanding of elite British Euroscepticism, this discussion of how different varieties and modes of nostalgia both overlap and contradict one another also contributes to a broader project of exposing nostalgia's paradoxes (Bonnett 2010, 45). As such, the typologies of nostalgia generated here will be pertinent beyond observers of elite British Euroscepticism, to researchers of nostalgia and its politics more broadly. I take up this theme again in the next

section, where I highlight the present project's limitations as an opening for indicating future research directions.

3. Project limitations and future research directions

As noted in Chapters One & Two, constraints of time, space, and research resources have contributed to limiting the scope of this project to a focus on the role of nostalgia in the 2016 Brexit referendum Vote Leave campaign. Although conceptualising Vote Leave as a Eurosceptic emotional community necessitated a longitudinal review of its position within the broader networks and traditions of elite British Euroscepticism (see Chapter Two), the majority of the thesis provides a contemporary examination of Vote Leave in the 2015–2016 Brexit referendum period. There are benefits to immersing oneself in the activities of a single organisation, including the ability to provide an in-depth treatment of campaign materials and a detailed sociology of campaigners and their politics. Whilst the project's primary focus on Vote Leave prevents the research findings from being automatically generalised to different contexts, however, the conceptual framework I set up in Chapter One and applied throughout the thesis would lend itself to the study of further political settings. The Brexit referendum's competing campaign groups are immediate candidates for such an analysis. In Chapter Two, I described how Vote Leave's Eurosceptic rival in the referendum, Leave.EU, was constituted in a UKIP lineage of Eurosceptic emotional communities organised around an explicit foreground nostalgia mode, and corresponding background nostalgia mood. Whilst I provided a canonical example of Leave.EU's campaign output, compatible with the methodology I set out in Chapter One, further analysis of its referendum materials supplemented by interviews with former campaigners would provide a more comprehensive comparison.

Any discussion of the Remain side of the debate fell beyond the purview of this thesis, and that campaign's relationship with nostalgia would merit scrutiny in future research also. Whilst pro-Europeans have long viewed themselves as modern and forward-looking (see Chapter Two), Brexiteers' contradictory complaints about Remain nostalgia are not without foundation. Fractious divisions in political identification with either a Leave or Remain identity

became increasingly apparent following the referendum (Browning 2019, 221). Each side continues to dub the other in pejorative terms, with those in favour of EU integration labelled as out of touch "liberal cosmopolitan elites", whilst those who promote Brexit are "parochial xenophobes" (Browning 2019, 227, 235). As this thesis has demonstrated, however, Vote Leave employed both liberal and parochial threads of identity during the referendum. Indeed, narratives of extreme divisions between Leavers and Remainers on issues of national and personal identity obscure the extent to which the camps share similar nostalgic imaginaries of Britishness. As some have already noted, pro-EU communities in British politics have often employed discourses inflected with similar themes of British history to those favoured by Eurosceptics, albeit with different emphases that are employed to contradictory ends (e.g. Kenny 2017; R. Saunders 2020). In particular, as Saunders argues in an historical analysis, whilst Eurosceptics have leveraged an imperial national identity to advocate the viability of Brexit, Remainers have long used similar arguments of hegemony and 'greatness' to insist that Britain's rightful position is to "lead" in EU institutions (R. Saunders 2020, 1144–49). Imperially rooted nostalgic similarities between the two sides are also apparent in a shared emotional attachment to the Commonwealth, with Remainers arguing, in contrast to Eurosceptic myths of Commonwealth betrayal, that Britain's EU membership pays economic and diplomatic dividends to its former colonies (Saunders 2020, 1158–59).

In sum, the evidence that Saunders provides raises important questions for future research about how Eurosceptic and pro-EU emotional communities are situated within broader British emotional communities exhibiting, to some extent at least, shared nostalgias for the national past. Indeed, related questions arise about how such nostalgias correspond to, or problematise, the conventional left–right spectrum of British politics. My research findings suggest that whilst Vote Leave was embedded within a broader Conservative political ecosystem, it exhibited radical and revolutionary nostalgias typically attributed to the political left (see Bonnett 2010; Jobson 2015; 2018). This is particularly the case in Chapter Three, where I showed how the campaign enveloped a nostalgic, and largely left-wing, NHS origin story into its proposals for forward-looking post-Brexit scientific revolution. These findings afford further credence to extant work, which has argued that "both 'conservative' and 'progressive' positions involve nostalgia", and that temporal orientation does not map neatly onto the left–right political spectrum (Robinson 2012, 11; Kenny 2017, 261). Put differently,

British politics cannot be reduced to simple binaries of nostalgic backward-looking conservatism, associated with the right, and anti-nostalgic forward-looking progressivism, associated with the left. Future scholarship could therefore elaborate further on such tensions, exploring how shared nostalgic imaginaries of the national past are employed in support of competing political visions, and revealing how such proposals combine ostensibly opposed nostalgic temporalities (Kenny 2017, 263, 270).

Beyond the context of Brexit and British politics, the approach that I have advanced in this thesis would also lend itself to the study of nostalgia in further aspects of political life. Indeed, there is a pressing need to further explore how nostalgia is implicated in the construction of national identities in different national settings. One possible avenue could leverage the framework of the nostalgia mood and mode that I outlined in Chapter One to examine elite Euroscepticism across the European continent. Whilst there are peculiar national features to the nostalgias of elite British Euroscepticism – notably embodied in the island imaginary of British geography and history – nostalgic dissatisfactions with EU membership, spurred by contemporary 'crisis', are apparent in the domestic politics of *inter alia* France, Germany, Greece, Italy, and the Visegrad countries. In many such countries, the Powellite *variety* and explicit *mode* of nostalgia are particularly apparent, embodied in calls to restore a sense of domestic order, control and 'greatness' amidst immigration 'crisis'. Indeed, similar themes extend beyond Europe, with countries such as Australia, America and Japan adopting corresponding desires to preserve a traditional imaginary of national identity and culture. The role of nostalgia in political life beyond the so-called Global North would likewise merit sustained attention (e.g. Benabdallah 2020). It is only through the investigation of nostalgia in a diversity of national and cultural contexts that we will be able to grasp its common and idiosyncratic dimensions and further illuminate how political emotions are central to the construction of national identities.

In addition to exploring the role of nostalgia in elite Euroscepticism across Europe, and indeed in international politics more broadly, future research would benefit from an examination of its relationship with popular political opinion. Whilst I have referred throughout the thesis, where appropriate, to Vote Leave's own research into public opinion, a thoroughgoing analysis of the role of nostalgia in the popular vote for Brexit was beyond the scope of this

study. Further research could therefore explore how nostalgic discourses of the national past are co-constituted, reproduced and received by the general public such that we might expand our understanding of who and what comprises a Eurosceptic (or broader political) emotional community. Finally, the emotional communities subsequently forged by elites who had previously coalesced within the 2016 Brexit referendum campaigns provide a further important arena for future research. Many such communities remained focused on Brexit, with former Leavers creating new coalitions to lobby successive governments to adhere to the referendum results. These organisations included pressure groups like Brexit Central (co-founded by Vote Leave's Matthew Elliott) (see Brexit Central 2016), Change Britain (chaired by Vote Leave's Gisela Stuart) (see Change Britain 2016), Leave Means Leave (co-founded by Vote Leave's John Longworth and Leave.EU's Richard Tice) (see Leave Means Leave 2016), and the Brexit Party (also linked to Tice, with UKIP's Nigel Farage as co-founder) (see Brexit Party 2019). A future analysis could therefore investigate how the nostalgic structures of the referendum's prior Eurosceptic organisations fed into the creation of such collectives.

A similar analysis would be pertinent to the study of commercial political consultancies linked to the former referendum campaigns. These organisations include Public First (co-founded by James Frayne, an old associate of Vote Leave's Elliott and Cummings, and staffed in part from Vote Leave's lower ranks) (see Public First 2021) and Hanbury Strategy (co-founded by Vote Leave's Paul Stephenson and the Remain campaign's Ameet Gill) (see Hanbury Strategy 2021). Hanbury Strategy was commissioned in 2020 by the National Trust to provide public relations assistance amidst increased scrutiny of how national institutions commemorate Britain's colonial history (Read 2020), providing further opportunities to raise questions about the politics and contemporary resonance of the intersecting varieties of nostalgia identified above. Both firms are also well-connected to the Conservative government of Boris Johnson, from which they received untendered contracts in 2020 for research into "EU exit comms" (Conn and Geoghegan 2020) and public stances on the Covid-19 pandemic (R. Evans and Pegg 2020). Indeed, the activities of the Johnson government offer the clearest direction yet for future research. Installed in summer 2019 and re-elected in December of that year on a platform of "Get Brexit Done", Johnson's government soon found itself dealing with the concurrent 'crises' of EU withdrawal and Covid-19. Populated by former Vote Leavers, and indeed led behind the scenes by former Campaign Director Cummings, the government's

responses to such 'crises' exhibited many of the nostalgic inflections identified above, embodied in promises to "follow the science", calls for "control", and Whiggish references to British heroes. Given the relationship between 'crisis' and nostalgia that this thesis has explored, and the overlap in both discourses and personnel between Vote Leave and the 2020 Johnson government, it will therefore be vital to examine how the nostalgic structures of Vote Leave translated to the highest office in British politics at a particularly notable time of national 'crisis'.

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Appendix

1. Archive visits

Archive location	Collection name	Series	Date of visit
Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK	Ephemera: Common Market debate leading to the referendum of 5th June 1975	MSS.21	2nd July 2018
Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK	Campaign for an Independent Britain papers	CIB	22nd August 2018
	Political papers of Peter Shore	SHORE	25th September 2018
Parliamentary Archives, Houses of Parliament, London, UK	Papers of the Britain in Europe Campaign	BIE	10th & 11th January 2019
	Papers of the National Referendum Campaign	NRC	
Mediatheque at BFI Southbank, British Film Institute, London, UK	EEC Referendum – Anti-EEC Broadcasts	786381	11th June 2019

Details of the box numbers for specific files can be found in the Bibliography.

2. Interviews

Identifier	Method	Interview date	Location
Anonymous 1	Face to face	22nd May 2018	London
Anonymous 2	Face to face	23rd May 2018	London
Anonymous 3	Face to face	25th July 2018	Swansea
Anonymous 4	Face to face	26th July 2018	Cardiff
Anonymous 5	Skype	1st August 2018	Skype
Anonymous 6	Face to face	22nd August 2018	London
Anonymous 7	Face to face	23rd August 2018	London
Anonymous 8	Face to face	25th September 2018	London
Anonymous 9	Face to face	17th October 2018	London
Anonymous 10	Face to face	17th October 2018	London
Anonymous 11	Face to face	23rd October 2018	Coventry
Anonymous 12	Face to face	14th November 2018	London
Anonymous 13	Face to face	6th February 2019	London

Indicative interview schedule

Campaign experiences I

- What were the main drivers of the campaign?
- What was your role on the campaign?
- Why did you decide to join the campaign?
- What would an average day on the campaign look like?
- Would you describe the campaign you participated in as positive or negative? Why?
- Would you describe your personal experience working on the campaign as positive or negative? Why?
- What was the most memorable part of the campaign for you?

Campaign organisation

- Who was involved in strategic decisions?
- How were decisions made?
- What factors typically influenced campaign strategy?
- How did you decide what was most likely to resonate with the general public?
- What research on public opinion did you conduct prior to the campaign? During the campaign?

Campaign messaging

- What was the main message of the campaign?
- What role did the Eurozone/refugee crises play during the Brexit referendum?
- What role did emotions play in the Brexit referendum? What kinds of emotions?
- Did you draw on examples from British history? Such as?
- What role did nostalgia play in the Brexit referendum?
- What imagery of Britishness did you employ? What other imagery was useful?
- What comprises British national identity for you?
- What is your view on Britain's place/role in the world?
- Can you describe the campaign's regional approach?

Campaign experiences II

- Which of your campaign materials was most effective?
- Who was the best spokesperson for your campaign? What tools did they use to deliver their message?
- Was there a particular point in the campaign when you thought public opinion turned in your favour?
- What were your impressions of the other referendum campaigns? (i.e. Leave.EU, Britain Stronger in Europe)