Brexit and European Nationalism in Perspective

Foreword—Ella Blackburn

In her maiden speech to Parliament, the late MP Jo Cox championed immigration saying, 'We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than the things that divide us'. However, set against the backdrop of an unremitting, xenophobic and frenzied campaign, the Brexit Leave victory was to many an enormous shock that highlighted the vicious divisions in modern Britain. It is impossible to view the outcome of the EU referendum and not to question Britain's place within the world.

We are faced with a significant proportion of the electorate that feel disenfranchised and disillusioned with our current system of elitism in modern politics. No politician better embodies this feeling than ex leader of UKIP Nigel Farage, once considered a caricature to be mocked in British politics, but now the man who seems to best represent the ideas of a large number of English voters. The mantra of 'taking back control' was only successful because sufficient numbers felt powerless in the ability to influence their own lives. It comes as no surprise then that the areas that overwhelmingly voted to leave the European Union are those with high white, working-class populations with legitimate cause for anxiety – the fallout from the 2008 financial crash, increasing economic inequality and the collapse of domestic industry. This working-class demographic is hit hardest by the cuts imposed by the current Conservative government. To where, if not the government, can the blame be shifted? An easy answer to this question is to blame the group first accused throughout history – immigrants. Perhaps this also represents a weakening of the left. Labour, a party that is rooted in representing the interests of the working classes, is increasingly being displaced by the anti-immigration, anti-elitism rhetoric of UKIP.

Brexit not only represents the stewing resentment of the unheard but also a deep generational and educational divide within Britain. 73% of 18-24 year olds voted to remain within in the EU, as opposed to 40% of 65+ voters. For young voters, many feel angry as the future is decided by those it will least affect, leading to a demand for the voting age to be reduced to 16. An educational divide is also prominent, with popular ignorance set against expert knowledge in perhaps an even more toxic conflict than rich vs. poor and expertise now laden with assumptions of self-righteousness and moral superiority.

The Oxford Dictionary's new word this year is 'post-truth', and certainly the press assault leading up to the referendum exemplifies the dangers of modern media and the insignificance of fact. Right wing newspaper headlines swung between superficial compassion for the refugee crisis and thinly veiled racism. The picture of a three-year-old boy who drowned trying to escape bombing in Syria was on the cover of every major newspaper in the country - the Daily Mail ran with the headline 'Tiny victim of a human catastrophe'. The government's apathy was met with public outcry – you must do more! And yet, within a week, the Mail had returned to the fear inducing 'MIGRANTS: HOW MANY MORE CAN WE TAKE?' and The Sun's clamouring nationalism with 'QUEEN BACKS BREXIT'. How easily 'humans' can switch back to becoming a 'swarm' again; the volatility of the press fed into the increasingly emotive Leave debate, whilst Remainers continued to unsuccessfully spout expert opinion to an electorate that didn't care about 'the facts speaking for themselves'. How else could a bus emblazoned with the proven lie, 'We send the EU £350 million a week, let's fund our NHS instead' have such an impact?

With the decision made just hours before, Google reported that searches for 'what is the EU?' surged by 250%; Brexit seems not only to have illustrated an educational, class and age divide, but also a conflict between the

head and the heart. Politics is now dominated by emotion, and not fact. Britain was impulsively plunged into the unknown, and this could only have happened with a campaign that appealed to the silent fears and thoughts of those who feel excluded from our current political system. Brexit legitimised these previously silent thoughts and fears – in the month following the EU referendum, there was a 41% increase in racially or religiously aggravated crimes in England and Wales, precipitating a rise in post-Brexit hate crime.

The Leave campaign won by a margin of 2%, Britain remains divided in two and unsure of the implications that Brexit will have for the future. However, as Tony Benn said and as my mum often tells me in times when things seem a bit uncertain, "Every generation must fight the same battles again and again. There's no final victory and there's no final defeat."

Is the Brexit vote an example of self-determination? – Scarlett Ballantine, Cal Baker, Catherine Soulsby & Eden Button

To a certain extent the Brexit vote could be seen as an example of self-determination, due to some of the views of the people in the Vote leave campaign and the historical definition and back ground of the term itself. This argument is not fully convincing, however, as it was in large part the media who influenced voter opinions in order to secure their own economic interests. Also a sense of alienation among the working class led to an anti-establishment vote for change.

Some of those who voted for Brexit were in fact voting for self-determination, the majority of Vote Leave's proposals can be interpreted as acts of self-determination; "The 'in' campaign claim that we can't be a normal democracy which stands on our own two feet-they are doing Britain down." The definition of self-determination is, "The process by which a country determines its own statehood and forms its own allegiances and government". This definition very clearly links to the Vote Leave campaign's proposals, for example, when they said that "We'll be in charge of our own borders. In a world with so many new threats, it's safer to control our own borders and decide for ourselves who can come into this county, not be overruled by EU judges", or "Our laws should be made by people we can elect and kick out-that's more democratic. Over half our laws are made by unelected EU bureaucrats in Brussels for whom we never voted." Many people who voted Brexit agreed with these proposals and thus voted with confidence that the Leave campaign would fulfil these proposals. They thought they were voting for a self-determined Britain. Another example of the Vote Leave's campaign portraying itself to be about self-determination is its policy on where the money we give to the EU could elsewhere be spent. "We send the EU £350 million a week, let's fund our NHS instead". However, many Vote Leave proposals were soon shown to be impossible. For example, the morning the outcome of the vote was announced, Nigel Farage on the ITV show, This Morning, announced that the £350 million in fact could not be directly used to fund the NHS.

Self-determination is defined as an act to allow free choice of one's own act or states without compulsion and determination by the people of a territorial unit of their own future political status. On 14th December 1960, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which supported the granting of independence to the colonial countries and people providing an inevitable legal link to self-determination. For example, in World War 1 the USA claimed self determination to stay out of a war which they did not believe to be their fight. This allowed the country to remain out of the war. So in this context it is easy to see why some argue that the vote to leave the EU was an act of self-determination.

However, one of the real causes of Brexit was the act of the billionaires and estate moguls. The UK has an outsized financial sector, which contributes significantly to the overall economy (financial services contributed around 12% of taxes in the UK in 2012) and, as with many other financial sectors, there is plenty of fraud going on. This is especially true in relation to fraudulent money regulations. The EU holds strong regulations on fraudulent money and taxes, so leaving could mean a lack of restraint for billionaires. This was a clear motive of those such as Rupert Murdoch, who wants to make certain he can continue without some of the restrictions that he and other tycoons may feel. However, the desire to leave was not shared throughout the financial sector, especially in international corporations such as banks, who all overwhelmingly wished to remain in the EU. This is possibly because international trade relations would be significantly diminished for the UK outside of the EU, which is a problem for banks but not so much for tycoons and businessmen like Murdoch, who operate inside the UK, simply looking for tax loopholes and havens that can benefit themselves. On the Spectator website – the news outlet of Boris Johnson – there is an article which says that, "The EU has acquired the attributes and trappings of a nationhood: a president and a foreign minister, citizenship and a passport, a written constitution, a flag and a national anthem. It is these things to which Leavers object, not the commerce and co-operation that we will continue to enjoy." This quote shows how the media portrayed Brexit being about national pride and self-determination. Nevertheless, on further inspection it can be observed that the co-owners of The Spectator magazine are the Barclay brothers, David and Frederick. The Sunday Times rich list of 2015 estimated their wealth at £6.5 billion, and they have been accused of tax evasion from offshore money laundering. The Ritz hotel – which they own – has not paid corporation tax in 17 years. They also own a Channel island. They stand to benefit personally from Brexit and the relaxation of financial regulation that it will bring.

Lack of education amongst the working class is most certainly a leading reason why the country voted Brexit. The poorest households, with incomes of less than £20,000 per year, were much more likely to support leaving the EU than the wealthiest households, as were the unemployed, people in low-skilled and manual occupations, people who feel that their financial situation have worsened, and those with no qualifications. Groups vulnerable to poverty were more likely to support Brexit. Age, income and education matter, though it is educational inequality that was the strongest driver. Other things being equal, support for Leave was 30 percentage points higher among those with GCSE qualifications or below than it was for people with a degree.

In contrast, support for Leave was just 10 points higher among those on less than £20,000 per year than it was among those with incomes of more than £60,000 per year, and 20 points higher among those aged 65 than those aged 25. For this reason it seems that a majority voted not because of the flag or national anthem, but for a new, radical politics that they were told would benefit them. After all, Farage seems like a real man of the people. It is for this reason that there is a strong case for Brexit to be seen as an anti-establishment vote rather than one of self-determination. Support for Brexit varied not only between individuals but also between areas. People with A level qualifications were more likely to vote Leave in low-skill areas compared with high-skill areas. However, this effect was stronger for the more highly qualified. In low-skilled communities the difference in support for Leave between graduates and those with GCSEs was 20 points. In high-skilled communities it was over 40 points. In low-skill areas the proportion of A-level holders voting leave was closer to that of people with lower qualifications. In high-skill areas their vote was much more similar to graduates. Clearly people in low-skilled areas were more likely to vote against the establishment. Brexit was a vote by people in de-industrialised and poorer communities against the globalisation and European integration championed by the mainstream political class.

Racism, Xenophobia and hate are seen to have been one of the leading causes of Brexit. Both before and after Brexit, open racism and xenophobia have risen dramatically. News headlines of racist behaviour during the lead up to the referendum were common. For example in the Independent earlier this year "Welsh Muslim told to 'pack bags and go home' after campaigning for Remain". Mubina Irfan, leader of the Scottish Refugee Policy Forum, said the Brexit vote will have a damaging effect on asylum seekers fleeing terror in other countries. When asked if she believed racism was responsible for the Leave campaign's victory, she said: "I think it is, yes." Her concerns echo those of other refugee charity groups, who said the referendum result has led to "uncertain, unsettling times" for foreigners in the UK. In a statement on the day of the referendum, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants said: "For far too long we have been spun a line on immigration that blames migrants for all of our ills. We are now in a position where migrants in the UK, particularly those from the EU, are scared for their future in the country they have made their home." The Scottish Refugee Council added that many refugees are anxious about their status following the result. Media officer Pauline Diamond Salim said: "The tone of the debate in parts of the UK was driven by fear and hate, especially the stoking of fears around immigration and the scapegoating of refugees". Nicola Sturgeon also expressed fears that the vote to leave the European Union has taken the UK back to a bygone age of racism and intolerance. Weeks after Britain voted to leave the EU, racist and religiously motivated stickers were found in Glasgow proclaiming some areas of the city as 'white zones' while there have also been reports of migrants being told to go home.

In conclusion Brexit is not an example of self-determination. Corporate media exploited the general public's fears concerning immigration and the feelings of alienation and marginalisation among many people in low-skilled, de-industrialised regions of the UK.

Nationalism in Germany: A Force for Good? – Sadie Askwith, John Bell, Jake Knight, Jack Parsons-Munn & Helen Piercy-Mycock

At the birth and formation of a unified German Reich, it can certainly be argued that the German nationalism which was being expressed was a force for a better Germany. Indeed, German philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and Johann Herder first devised the concept of nationalism in the late 1700s, as a response to the public's views of the unification of Germany. This nationalism was romantic in nature, based on values of self-determination, a cultural identity, and territorial unification. Though the cultural identity would give rise to the Aryan views of the Nazi party, here it epitomised the collectiveness of the German populace, a constructive, inclusive force.

Prior to 1848, the collection of German states had been in constant dispute, with cultural divides between North and South Germany, Prussia and Austria (then the dominant state). Under Napoleon and the domination of the First French Empire, these states realised the need to be united in their aims to repel foreign invaders. This birthed the first great movements of German nationalism. In the political turmoil of 1848-50, which succeeded the French retreat out of Germany, Prussia was to become the dominant German state. A more liberal Government formed here, and in 1848 Prussia would take a positive role in establishing the first steps towards a unified Germany. The first attempt was abandoned, however, due to disputes between Austria and Prussia, and partially because German nationalism was not yet strong at this point. To contrast, in 1870, German nationalism was so strong – and divided – that the issue of Grossdeutschland (Germany with Austria) or Kleindeutschland (Germany without) had to be resolved. And as Prussia was the dominant state, and Bismarck – who despised the southern Austrians – was their chancellor, this issue was resolved as Kleindeutschland. Though German nationalism here could be argued to be an elitist force, excluding Austria in the South, overall it can be viewed as a positive, constructive force in the unification of Germany.

The formation of the German Empire in 1871 gave most German speakers in Europe a common, political, economic and educational framework. The same nationalistic approach which led to unification would be used by the country's leaders to utilize and manipulate support for nationalistic policies and initiatives.

Nationalism was later strongly promoted by Kaiser Wilhelm II to bring together nationalists in support of the crown and to undermine the regional feeling and the growing socialist movement. It was also used to pursue an aggressive foreign policy. Most German citizens desired imperial territories such as those of France and Britain, and put pressure on the nation's leaders to pursue similar acquisitions made by other major European countries. It was this focus on nationalistic driven colonial policy which later provided the support for Germany's expansion of armed forces, and particularly naval fleets.

The new Kaiser was ambitious in building Germany's prestige and considered the greatest status would only be achieved by the creation of a large and powerful naval force that would rival the British Navy (the Arms Race) and he would utilise nationalistic sentiment to achieve this. For example, a popular photograph depicted the Kaiser wearing a naval uniform; clothing resembling German naval uniforms became fashionable for children to wear. Symbolism was critical for the perpetuation of nationalism within Germany, so when the Kaiser was seen wearing a naval uniform, it was intended to encourage nationalistic support for naval expansion. Naval themed cigarette boxes, beer mugs, toys and chocolate bar wrappers were also sold, ensuring that German citizens were constantly reminded of the national cause of naval expansion. It was nationalism that ultimately founded the German Navy.

In the period of 1914-1918, during the First World War, German nationalism became increasingly negative. This was mainly due to countries becoming aggressive because they thought that they were superior to the other countries. However, this was the force that enabled Germans to believe they could win the war. There was competition between the main powers in Europe, Germany, Great Britain, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Russia. Due to nationalism, countries believed that they needed to have the best economy and the best military, which led to another Arms Race, where countries (mainly Britain and Germany) were trying to build up their military quicker than the others; a key cause of WW1.

The German nationalism which began to develop before World War II was a major motivation behind many individuals who joined the Nazi Party. Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazi Party, used his profound oratory skills to manipulate the German people into following his regime's propaganda. These people were looking for something or somebody to improve the economic situation caused by the Great Depression. The Nazi Party had a great propensity to purvey mythical nationalist beliefs; in 1933, they began blaming the Jewish population for the economic situation in Germany. The fact that the Jewish population was targeted as scapegoats was accepted as the Nazis persuasively justified it. The Nazis told people to blame the Jews because many Jewish citizens were still wealthy while everyone else was monetarily suffering, using economic inequalities to disturb relations between groups. This began to fuel the anti-Semitism that the Nazi Party endorsed. The once disjointed Germans unified under a nationalistic government that provided comfort and security, a new state that would take control and help Germany become a rising power. This newfound nationalism was built around a common enemy: the Jewish people.

The people were blinded by these newly instilled nationalist beliefs, coerced by their superiors to believe that the Nazi way was the right way. The government was telling the people to represent and preserve national interest first and foremost. Simultaneously, the people were told that the Jewish citizens were threatening this national security. Individuals were just nationalistic pawns of the Nazi Party who were so programmed to operate for the state and its interests. The Holocaust happened in large part because an overpowering government took advantage of a weak people who just wanted to be provided with direction during a time of disparity. The people followed their government wholeheartedly because their faith in the previous government, the government where they had lost their possessions and valuables, had been compromised.

Any German nationalism that would emerge after the war was very controversial. After the catastrophic effects of nationalism in Germany during the Third Reich, many Germans were ashamed and scared of what new Nationalism could bring after the country's troubled and turbulent past. It is possibly for this reason that Germany has been so dedicated to the EU in the last twenty years, a champion of European integration rather than European separation and nationalism. Patriotism only began to re-emerge in the late twentieth century such as at the fall of the Berlin wall which had divided Germany into East and West for almost 30 years and so compromised the formation of a national identity. Equally shows of pride were seen at the 20th anniversary of that fall, and in a more casual sense when Germany were in the football World Cup final in 2010. These expressions of nationalism or patriotism show Germany uniting over their achievements as a country, and the guilt associated with displaying pride in their country beginning to lift. There is in modern-day Europe, however, a sinister side to German nationalism that causes many to brand the idea of nationalism a taboo, and dismiss the idea of nationalism in Germany (as opposed to nationalism within the EU) altogether.

Parties such as the NPD focus solely on 'True Nationalism', more obvious to us as fascism and Neo-Nazism, spreading a racist and xenophobic message about new nationalism in Germany. Many more are based on a rising wave of Islamophobia, using it as a scapegoat for troubles in Germany and Europe as a whole. Other parties such as the AFD are gaining seats in the German Parliament, the Bundestag. The AFD stand for less involvement in the EU, and other policies involving anti-immigration and homophobia, making comments such as 'Muslims are not welcome in Germany'. Parties such as these turn the majority of Germans away from new Nationalism as it spreads more of a negative message in Germany - regardless of its past - than a good one. Whether modern German Nationalism is a good force or not is yet to be determined. As problems within the EU rise and Germany has to deal with issues such as the Refugee Crisis, tensions within the country, from both sides, will inevitably rise.

Brexit, Euroscepticism and the Right - *Evie Ridgway, Bethany Windle, David Purkiss & Laura Turner*

The European Union was set up in 1957 as an attempt to secure peace between European nations. The 6 founding countries were: Belgium, France, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany and Italy. Currently there are 28 countries involved. The EEC, or Common Market, was created in the same year, and looked to reinforce ideas of peace by bringing the countries politically and economically closer. Many of the countries were originally dedicated to the end of frequent wars against each other. However, a number of far right-wing parties have in later years established themselves as Eurosceptic, or at least have expressed issues with the union. The result of Brexit this year highlights how keen many far-right parties are to leave, and this threatens the stability of the EU.

When considering why right-wing parties oppose the EU, it is important to look at the shared policies and shared moral responsibility that may cause resistance. Immigration policy has some common measures regarding legal immigrants. One of these is that EU-wide rules allow citizens outside of the EU to work and study within it. This may cause some issues for nationalistic parties who believe that the people of their country should be the first priority for employment. As well as this, the Syrian Refugee crisis has provoked some hostile responses in Europe, and the sudden influx of asylum seekers for some countries has been met with resistance. Particularly in the eastern countries, there are claims that they have limited capacity for more refugees. In Germany, Angela Merkel's welcoming attitude has somewhat worsened the situations and has created reservations for other countries. An anti-immigrant group, Pegida, rallied against refugees in Germany, with 10,000 people attending the 37th protest in 2015. Even among parties inhabiting the political centre ground there has been a call for better security policy but for the far-right and definitely among the more xenophobic parties, there is a strong reaction which blames the EU for showing a lack of control and security over the borders.

UKIP's former leader, Nigel Farage, clearly felt particularly strongly about immigration and focused his campaigning for Brexit on the basis that "mass migration into Britain on this scale is not good for our country". He made explicit links to the "horrors that we saw in Paris," pushing the necessity for better border control to prevent the same acts of terrorism from occurring in Britain. The net migration to Britain (year ending March 2016) was 327,000.

This comprised of 180,000 EU Citizens and 190,000 Non-EU citizens immigrating to Britain. According to UKIP MEP Jonathan Arnott, the key reasons for leaving the EU were: the cost for the taxpayer, the ability to negotiate trade deals, control of the borders, freedom to create laws independently and finally to prevent the EU restraints and regulations which affected small businesses. On the far-right the BNP were also in support of Brexit and have been since 1982. David Furness, the BNP London mayoral candidate claimed "The free movement of workers in the EU has more to do with the movement of people searching for temporary, favourable economic conditions and less to do with a permanent displacement of people." Thus suggesting that a motivator for right wing Euroscepticism is the search for better economic stability and job opportunities for British citizens, as he pushes for "the handover of jobs to British workers". All of these claims highlight the strong inherent right wing nationalism which the EU cannot satisfy given that it is a *Union* of countries that all have different cultures and values.

One example of the impact of the Brexit vote on the political right in Europe can be seen in Germany. Beatrix von Storch, an AfD leader, was quoted saying "I cried with joy" when asked what her reaction was to Britain deciding to leave the EU. She believes that her views are justified. FORSA research group showed recently that the majority of AfD supporters wanted to leave the EU. Although this does not represent the nation as a whole, it does show the large amount of support within the German far right group and how that support could not only improve in the next few years depending on the outcome of Brexit, but could lead to Germany's very own referendum, with many AfD members calling for "a new Europe". The EU was set up originally with the intention of ending wars between European countries and the Nazi regime obviously made Germany's role in creating peaceful relations crucial. However, given that we are long past the wars that led to the EU, the union no longer puts this idea of peace at its centre. Euroscepticism in Germany is at a high because a significant percentage of the country now wishes to leave, whereas originally there was some investment in ending conflict in Europe and cooperating for stronger political and economic structures. The AfD was created as a reaction to the Eurozone crisis and has recently pushed for better immigration control, similar to many of the other European right-wing countries.

The situation in Germany is mirrored in France. France's National Front is their only far right party, but in recent months it has been pushing the idea of a referendum and has also viewed the British vote for detachment from the EU as "a victory for freedom". They suggest that it gives them a chance to show that it's not as dangerous to leave the EU as originally believed. A Pew Research Centre survey carried out in May 2013 showed that more and more French voters believed that "membership of the EU is a bad thing" and "only 41% had a 'good opinion' of the EU." A lot of this resistance to EU policies and fears is due to the competitive nature of the free-market. Recent polls show that scepticism has grown. Again, this suggests that a lot of Euroscepticism, right wing or not, is based upon fears of the economy and a lack of control. Because a lot of right wing parties are nationalistic, this idea of a country not leading itself creates fear and this often creates a high level of anti-European feeling.

There are also parallels to be seen in the emboldening of the right and increased Euroscepticism in the Netherlands and Sweden. The Dutch eurosceptic Party for Freedom leader, Geert Wilders, was swift to utilise the Brexit result for his own campaign tweeting "Hurray for the British! Now it is our turn. Time for a Dutch referendum," immediately after the results were confirmed. Currently leading the polls, Wilders is assuredly planning to exploit the Brexit result as part of his electoral campaign for 2017, leaving the question of a potential 'Nexit' in the foreseeable future. However, the reality of the attitudes of the Dutch population remain unequivocally in favour of the country's EU membership, as evidenced by a recent poll in which 71% of people firmly believed EU membership was a positive for their country. Thus suggesting manoeuvres for a successful 'Nexit' appear to be somewhat limited despite an ambitious right wing.

The Swedish Democrats led by Jimmie Akesson are keen supporters of a 'Swexit', with him repeatedly calling for the country to "become a sovereign state again." MP Paula Bieler voiced her hopes that Sweden "will have a referendum as well and a possibility to leave the Union, and find new ways to collaborate throughout Europe rather than have this big state forming where we lose our powers over our own country and sovereignty." Motives for leaving the Union are comparable with those of Brexit with denunciations of immigration levels, freedom of movement and lack of sovereignty all featuring as right wing populist commentary.

For example, Social democrat Party leader for Southern Sweden, Tommy Nilsson expressed his belief that, "There's too much immigration and too many beggars from Eastern Europe. People are starting to realise that this is a serious problem for Sweden." This comment is akin to those made by British Right Wing politicians when campaigning to leave the EU. However the reality of a 'Swexit' remains unlikely due to the support that remains for the EU from the majority of the Swedish population, as shown by a recent poll in which 59% of people agreed EU membership was positive for their country.

A lot of the far-right extremism seems to have connections to fear. Whether this be in the form of economic fears, or more basic hostilities towards other races or nationalities, a lot of people look to extreme parties in crisis as they often provide a strong 'solution' and are able to create a scapegoat for the problems that people experience. As a union which shares policies and encourages the integration and movement of people, it is obvious that this creates resistance from nationalistic people who may feel that the EU does not help in prioritising their needs over immigrants. It is also clear that Euroscepticism has increased since the EU was established, or at least groups are more openly opposed to the EU, as can be seen in the success of Brexit. As we get further from the wars which made a peaceful union so important countries may not believe that it is necessary any longer. A number of polls show that Euroscepticism is growing, alongside far-right politics, which could signify a troublesome future for the EU.

A Destructive Force - European Nationalism in the Early Twentieth Century
– Jenny Teward, Nina Holguin, Sam Nixon, Alex Renfrew & Isaac Gibson

Nationalism is the devotion to your own nation's interests over another's. Nationalism was extremely prevalent in Europe during the early twentieth century and played a large role in making Europe into what is today. Some young countries such as Germany, Italy and Romania were formed by several states combining who shared a national identity. For much of the early twentieth century nationalism in Europe proved a destructive force, however.

One example of European nationalism in the early twentieth century that did not prove destructive was Norway regaining its independence after the dissolution of the union with Sweden. Prior to its independent status in 1905, Norway had been involved in five hundred years of political unions with other Scandinavian countries - the Kalmar union until 1532 then the united kingdom of Denmark-Norway and finally a personal union with Sweden until 1905. As a result of gaining independence there was a clear sense of nationalism in Norway as the main reason for its independence was that they wanted to be their own country and manage it for themselves; this is why Norway did not join the European Union, as they have a strong tradition of nationalism relating back to the break from its personal union with Sweden in 1905. Norwegian nationalism was more about self-determination than aggression.

As Europe began to move towards World War One, however, aggressive nationalism became more prominent than other types of nationalism. To understand the aggressive nationalism between France and Germany, the two countries at the forefront of the conflict, we have to look at the Franco-Prussian War between the two nations forty-four years previously. We also have to look at how the nationalism of each country developed into the military catastrophe of the war. Germany became more aggressive as it wanted to build its influence on every continent in the world, by now the nationalism in Germany had solidified, and was strong enough to take over other countries and start a war. France, however, was slightly different, it had already had two leaders who had tried to dominate Europe and failed; after the Franco-Prussian War of 1871 it was in a more vulnerable position. Nevertheless, it was still one of the most powerful countries in Europe and was determined to reclaim what it had lost in the Franco-Prussian War.

Nationalism, in its many forms played a large role in creating the First World War. The Serbian nationalists who killed the Archduke Franz Ferdinand set off a chain reaction that led to the bloody carnage of 1914-18. This nationalism was immensely destructive and wiped out a whole generation of young European men.   When the war ended the Allied powers re-drew the map of Europe so that old empires were broken up and ethnic nationalism and self-determination led to the creation of new nation states. Giving clear voice and shape to these nationalistic forces was designed to avert another war.

Yet an increase in nationalistic impulses that would lead to another war can be seen as a direct result of the settlement that ended the Great War of 1914-18. Many Germans felt betrayed by the Weimar government which signed the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 as this made Germany take full responsibility for causing all the loss and damage of the war. They were also made to pay reparations which were eventually set at 132 billion gold marks which was equivalent to £284 billion in 2013. The German public were extremely angry, as the Weimar government were not able to negotiate the terms of the treaty, which left them feeling humiliated and betrayed. These feelings of humiliation and betrayal were transformed into strong nationalistic feelings. One example of this can be found in a German newspaper called the 'Deutsche Zeitung', which vowed, "We will never stop until we win back what we deserve." A compelling argument can be made that the increase in German nationalism and nationalistic ideas as a result of the Treaty of Versailles led to Hitler's rise to power.

In the early twentieth century nationalism was a way for a country to strive and a way to break free and gain political independence from a dominant empire or as a motivating factor in the desire of strong nations to dominate others. In the twenty-first century with far more heterogeneous societies, it becomes more difficult to have a harmonious patriotic pride in a country as it is viewed in different ways through the lens of different beliefs and cultures. One example of British nationalism can be seen in the form of the British Empire, many British citizens feel ashamed of this as it can be strongly argued that the British Empire represents genocide and colonization, however others may argue

that it represents national pride and superiority which they deem to be important.

Britain today has not got an entirely white population but it is still a high percentage at 87.1%. It can be argued that people often feel threatened by another culture or race for no other reason than that they think 'their' nation is being changed as a result of the increased diversity throughout Britain. They also believe that their values are being compromised. When people predominantly from the ethnic majority, start to feel disgruntled with people who don't think or look like them, they become racist and xenophobic. Often they also drag the term nationalism with them as well and drape it around their beliefs, believing it will justify them. This could be construed as unfair, as nationalism by definition isn't bad, however the thought processes that are adopted by nationalism such as 'my country is the best', can very easily create prejudices and hostile behaviour towards those seen as "other."

Nationalism has proved to be destructive in many ways in the last one hundred years of European history. It does not in itself have to be. Being proud of your heritage or culture is part of celebrating the diversities of humanity. It is possible to separate love for your country from prejudice and or aggression towards others. The European Union was designed to tame the aggressive nationalism that had torn the continent apart in the first half of the twentieth century. If Brexit is the beginning of the end of this project then we may see a new wave of nationalism pose problems in the future.