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Brexit and Its Reflection in British Society and Literature

Bakalářská práce

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Olomouc 2021

Obor v rámci kterého má být VŠKP vypracována: Anglická filologie

Podklad pro zadání BAKALÁŘSKÉ práce studenta

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Téma práce: **Brexit and its reflection in British society and literature**
Téma práce anglicky: **Brexit and its reflection in British society and literature**
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Zásady pro vypracování:

1. Introduction
2. Comparisson between Churchill's and Johnson's politics
3. Brexit's negotiations
4. Issues caused by Brexit
5. Influence of Brexit's campaigns
6. The Reflexion of Brexit in Literature

Seznam doporučené literatury:

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Podpis studenta: 

Datum: *14. 10. 2019*

Podpis vedoucího práce: 

Datum: *14/10/2019*

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci na téma “Brexit and Its Reflection in British Society and Literature” vypracovala samostatně pod vedením vedoucího práce a uvedla jsem veškerou použitou literaturu a zdroje.

V Olomouci dne:

Podpis.....

Poděkování:

Ráda bych poděkovala doc. Mgr. Pavlíně Flajšarové, Ph.D. za odborné vedení této práce, za cenné rady, ochotu a trpělivost.

Dále děkuji své rodině za velkou trpělivost, kterou se mnou měli při psaní této práce a za podporu v průběhu celého studia.

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Introduction

This bachelor thesis deals with the topic of Brexit, what it means, how Brexit developed and the circumstances that arose along with it. The main intention is to introduce how Brexit affected British society and literature. There is also a big focus on the importance of the Brexit campaigns. It is very difficult to contain the topic comprehensively as there are still many unclear aspects in the UK-EU relationships. Nevertheless it is undeniable that the 2016 referendum and the following development influenced not only the United Kingdom and the European Union, but also the whole world. In the modern, multicultural society leaving such a close cooperation can be seen as a step back and a need to protect from this growing phenomenon of transparency and openness to the whole world. On the other hand, it is highly understandable in case of the United Kingdom as this country is based on traditions, which are deeply rooted in the British citizens, much more than in other countries.

The first part of this thesis is concerned with the developments before the Brexit referendum and the proceeding relations between the UK and the European Community, later Union, including UK's membership. The second chapter focuses on the negotiations that began after the announcement that the UK will be leaving the EU. After that are introduced the problems that arose in the whole process after the United Kingdom activated Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. In the fourth chapter are analysed the massive campaigns that played an important role in Brexit and are an example of modern political campaign with all its aspects. The fifth chapter deals with two politicians, Winston Churchill and Boris Johnson. These two men stood as the leaders of the UK in the crucial times of big changes, therefore it is important include them in this discussion. Last part of this thesis opens the topic of literature and how Brexit affected the book industry.

The thesis questions this text aim to answer are: What are the problems that arose after the Brexit referendum and how did Britons deal with them? Would voters vote the same if they knew what issues Brexit could bring and how many areas will be affected by it? As the hypothesis I claim that Brexit brought along several unexpected problems and clearly showed how unprepared the British were in some areas. The second hypothesis declares that many voters would probably change their decision in case they knew how massively it will change their lives.

1. Steps to Brexit

Brexit (the act of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union) is based on the referendum from 23 June 2016. To understand why this referendum was even announced, it is crucial to closely examine the historical development of the United Kingdom in the European Community as well as the political situation in the UK before Brexit. These are the two most significant pillars in the process of leaving the European Union. Another very important factor which contributed to this situation were the Brexit campaigns. Especially the “Leave campaign” showed completely new and progressive way of political marketing and working with the minds of the voters. However the Brexit referendum showed the danger of populism and how easy it could be in this time of social networking sites, where people even unconsciously put personal data, to manipulate and influence millions of voters.

We live in time when nations and societies are already extremely divided. The role of the politicians must be to unite their countries and bring people closer together despite their differences, not to tear them apart even more. National referendum is undoubtedly a perfect tool for dividing citizens more than anything else. The usage of direct democracy element (such as a referendum) in the unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy is highly questionable and unwise. To put authority in to the hands of the people can be very dangerous especially in a country where the citizens are represented by a parliament. Many politicians, as well as voters, see the referendum as something that brings justice and decision making closer to the people. The question is whether they just do not want to give up their responsibility and use this populist step to gain more power for themselves as well as satisfy those who desperately demand to grab justice into their own hands. On the other hand referendum can help the part of the society that feels like it is not heard, to speak up and tell their opinions.¹ Former Prime Minister David Cameron, who is responsible for the Brexit referendum, is a clear example of this kind of politician. Not to mention that he was personally against the leaving European Union. Even worse is that this step could bring so much hate and

¹ Adam Quinn, “Referendums: the pros and cons,” University of Birmingham, accessed April 26, 2021, <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/referendums.aspx>.

discontent into the society. The close result of the referendum (51.9% for leaving the EU)² (see appendix 1) clearly shows how deeply divided the country was on the topic.

It is really difficult to write about this process comprehensively as Brexit is still ongoing and, in many ways, chaotic. Both sides of negotiating are very strict in their opinions and convictions and neither is willing to compromise. It is even more complicated when the dialogues between the countries are led by the main representative politicians. They do not want to depart from their ambitions. The main goal for them is to show their strength to their opponents as well as to their own nation and prove how wrong the other side is.³ That makes the whole process even more difficult. To leave all the negotiation only to the experts and negotiators would be easier and probably quicker for everybody. How problematic the whole process of leaving the EU is also proves that Article 50 from the Treaty of Lisbon established a two-year period for negotiations⁴. Even though the referendum took place more than four years ago, and the debates about the leaving conditions started on 29 March 2017, situation is still unclear in some areas.

The referendum started a four-year period of still ongoing negotiations, which seem endless, between the European Union and the Brexit negotiators. It is natural that this significant step is hard to negotiate. Countries in the European Union are connected on several levels not only economically, politically and legally, but also culturally, symbolically and mentally. According to the official statements of the EU - “The EU values are common to the EU countries in a society in which inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination prevail.”⁵ Over all these years of European cooperation, these states created extremely strong position among the world leaders and their power helped them in all aspects of their existence. The leaving of the United Kingdom will certainly have a tremendous effect not only on the European Union and

² “EU REFERENDUM – Results,” *BBC News*, accessed February 28, 2021, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu_referendum/results.

³ Cristina Gallardo, “Brexit negotiators keep talking but Boris Johnson warns UK to prepare for no-deal,” *POLITICO*, October 16, 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/boris-johnson-keeps-talking-with-eu-but-says-uk-should-prepare-for-no-deal/>.

⁴ *The Lisbon Treaty*, (Foundation for EU Democracy, 2009), 67.

⁵ “The EU in brief,” Europa.eu, accessed November 24, 2020, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en.

the United Kingdom but also on the whole international market and relationships between countries in the entire world.

1. 1. UK – EC Relationship before Entering

The relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Community was always difficult and very unique. The problematic entry was only the beginning of long years of challenging coexistence. At the beginning of the European Community in 1945, the UK was invited to take part in the talks, but the Labour government decided not to participate.⁶ Boris Johnson called this “Labour’s mistake”⁷ and saw in it the origin of all current problems. Since the very beginning, the UK tried to maintain balance between not being left out and keeping its sovereignty and this conflict defined the whole partnership. Britons tried almost all the time to negotiate exceptions and a special position for themselves in many levels of the European cooperation. They were opposed the amount of money they had to contribute to the European budget and they were against the ever closer union. That seems highly paradoxical after all the efforts they put into gaining the original six founding countries of the European Community. It is only natural that they did not want to have the highest input to the European Community funds. Even though Britons lost most of the influence they had thanks to their colonies, the United Kingdom was still a rich country. It is possible that their membership made them worried about their sovereignty and they did not want to lose it in the relationship with other European countries.

The United Kingdom is an extraordinary and unique country in the attitude towards the EU. This whole coexistence is connected with huge tensions on both sides. The entrance and also the exit of the UK were very complicated and the 47 years of membership seemed more like endless fight than a peaceful relation.

As the UK was not successful in the first negotiations (“known as ‘Maudling talks’”⁸) with the European Community in late 1950s about trade and possible accession, the country decided to create its own group known as the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). By the Stockholm Convention, the group of six non-EC

⁶ Boris Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2015), 297.

⁷ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 307.

⁸ Christopher Preston, *Enlargement and Integration in the European Union*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), 26.

states agreed on free trade arrangements⁹. After this followed two applications into the European Community in 1961 and 1967, both unsuccessful and vetoed by French president Charles de Gaulle. De Gaulle was deeply concerned that the UK was not ready, on several levels, to participate in this close relation with the EC. Finally successful became the third application and the Treaty of Accession was signed in January 1972 with a one-year period for ratification.¹⁰

It is also important to mention that the 2016 referendum was not the first one concerning the relationship between the UK and the European Community/Union. In the 1975 referendum, the Britons should decide whether they want to continue being members of the Community, which might seem surprising after all those long years the UK spent trying to enter the Community. As in 2016, also in this referendum most politicians, business leaders and the press were in favour of staying in the EC. Contrary to 2016 at that time the British society fulfilled the wish of their leaders and 67.23% of voters decided to stay in the EC membership.¹¹

The process of leaving the EU gets even more complicated as it is more than four years from referendum and the negotiations are still ongoing. This only proves how complicated the whole companionship is. The United Kingdom can be proud of its uniqueness as it was the first country with such a complicated accession and also the first country that actually activated Article 50 of Lisbon Treaty and decided to leave the EU.

1. 2. Development under David Cameron

Another fact that proves how hard is to break such a close relationship and unity which countries in the European Union have is that the UK already changed two Prime Ministers, without making a deal. The personalities of both former Prime Ministers David Cameron and Theresa May and their roles are especially interesting. They both fought for something against their inner conviction. The behaviour of David Cameron was mostly populist in order to gain more power for himself and to satisfy the voters

⁹ Preston, *Enlargement and Integration in the European Union*, 26.

¹⁰ Preston, *Enlargement and Integration in the European Union*, 26 – 36.

¹¹ Denis MacShane, *Brexit: How Britain Left Europe* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 2.

who wanted the referendum. This was not successful and Cameron resigned shortly after the referendum.

David Cameron first mentioned the possibility of a referendum and the reconsideration of the relationship with the European Union in his speech at Bloomberg on 23 January 2013¹². He pleased supporters of sovereign and independent country and was re-elected in 2015. Cameron stayed loyal to his original attitude and started negotiating about the position of the UK in the European Union. He introduced his plan for the referendum during the European Council meeting on 25 June 2015. Later in October Cameron announced his plan to the Parliament and confirmed it in his speech on Europe in November. Therefore four areas for reformation are introduced to Donald Tusk (then President of the European Council) in the letter from David Cameron same month.¹³

Significant step happened on 17 December 2015 with the European Union Referendum Act receiving the Royal Assent. The referendum about the future membership of UK in the European Union could officially take place. Therefore the European Council published Draft Decision, concerning new settlement for relationships between the Great Britain and the European Union. On 22 February 2016, David Cameron formally announced the date of the EU referendum as 23 June 2016. In April, the EU referendum leaflet was published by the government and delivered to every household in the United Kingdom.

The significant question the voters had to answered was stated as: “Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?” “In a referendum held on 23 June 2016, the majority of those who voted chose to leave the European Union.”¹⁴ It is extremely important to understand that even though it was the majority that decided about the destiny of United Kingdom the result was very close - 51.9% of voters supported leaving the European Union. By this referendum the UK suddenly became more polarized than ever before. The Brexit

¹² Nigel Walker, “Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK’s exit from the European Union,” UK Parliament, accessed November 22, 2020, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7960/>.

¹³ Walker, “Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK’s exit from the European Union.”

¹⁴ Walker, “Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK’s exit from the European Union.”

referendum created a significant and permanent gap between two camps in the British society.

Right after the announcement of the referendum results, David Cameron declared his resignation, promising to stay in office until the new Prime Minister is elected. “On 13 July 2016 Theresa May becomes the new UK Prime Minister and David Davis is appointed Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.”¹⁵ In this staff structure the negotiating had began and the problematic areas started to rise.

¹⁵ Walker, “Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK’s exit from the European Union.”

2. Process of Brexit's Negotiations

Right when the negotiating process begun the attention focused on several problems, including hard borders, tariffs, fisher policy, the status of Gibraltar and Scotland and many others. Prime Minister Theresa May had to deal with these problems as well as with the tensions from the European offices, her own government and also the whole British Parliament, along with British citizens. She resigned in July 2019 and was replaced by former Mayor of London Boris Johnson.

2. 1. Theresa's May Negotiation

Both the British government and the European Union were unwilling to compromise their attitudes. Nevertheless the terms needed to be negotiated despite the tensions and time was running out. Prime Minister Theresa May started the negotiating process in March 2017 by invoking Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon and this period should take two years. Main issues for May were the trade between the EU and the UK, immigration and labour rights for foreign EU nationals living in the UK.¹⁶ This process is connected with the important bill: the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill, which is referred to as Great Repeal Bill, and which was put in motion in spring 2017.¹⁷

Same as the current Prime Minister Johnson, Theresa May also called a snap election and she did so in June 2017. Nevertheless, she was not so successful in controlling the House of Commons and a minority government was created. The Conservative Party had to run the country with a confidence-and-supply agreement with the Democratic Unionist Party.¹⁸ This fact vastly influenced and made difficult the whole process of negotiating the UK's leaving.

The first talks between the EU and the UK leaders in June 2017 already revealed many issues, mainly in the questions of trade, borders and fishery. It was followed by a period of negotiation over one year long. In December 2017 both sides ended Phase 1 of the negotiations, moving into Phase 2 with the finale in June 2018, when the European

¹⁶ Jim Greene, "Brexit negotiations," Salem Press Encyclopedia, accessed February 18, 2021.

¹⁷ Walker, "Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK's exit from the European Union."

¹⁸ "Elections 2017 – Results," *BBC News*, accessed February 24, 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2017/results>.

Union (Withdrawal) Bill became an Act of Parliament.¹⁹ During the talks, the UK also had to prepare for a no-deal Brexit in case negotiations collapsed. The agreement was published in November 2018.

During the process of negotiating, May had to deal with tensions from many sides, and in the middle of talks in July 2018 the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union resigned and was replaced by Dominic Raab.²⁰ The change of people in charge, in this incredibly complex step for the country, complicated the situation even more. In November of the same year the position was given to Stephen Barclay.²¹

Nevertheless the Former Prime Minister Theresa May was in an incredibly difficult situation as her difficultly settled deal, called ‘Meaningful Vote’ was rejected by the British Parliament in January 2019, the members of May’s own Conservative Party and the British society. In March 2019 the two year period for leaving the EU ended and still there was no deal, in fact May lost also the second and third ‘Meaningful Vote’. The EU decided to extend the period for negotiating until the end of June 2019. During this time Theresa May tried to settle a new deal. She was under huge pressure and there were also voices from the British public calling for new referendum. At the top of that the UK’s geographical division caused tension mainly in the regions, whose voters were against leaving the EU, such as Scotland and Northern Ireland. Especially people in Northern Ireland were scared of hard borders and of losing the connection with the Republic of Ireland, therefore “Irish backstop” was agreed upon.²²

Quite ambivalent is the fact that in the process of leaving the European Union, the United Kingdom still voted in the European Parliament elections in May 2019,²³ while, at the same time, trying to leave the Union as soon as possible. This election added even more chaos to the already confusing situation.

Despite several attempts, Theresa May was not able to close the deal that would have support from both sides and resigned in July 2019. The Conservative Party chose Boris Johnson as their new leader.

¹⁹ Walker, “Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK’s exit from the European Union.”

²⁰ Charlie Cooper, “David Davis resignation: Key questions,” *POLITICO*, July 9, 2018, <https://www.politico.eu/article/david-davis-resignation-brexit-negotiation-key-questions/>.

²¹ Walker, “Brexit timeline: events leading to the UK’s exit from the European Union.”

²² Greene, “Brexit negotiations.”

²³ Sofia Vasilopoulou, “Brexit and the 2019 EP Election in the UK,” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 58, no. S1 (August 2020): 80-90, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcms.13078>.

2. 2. Negotiations under Boris Johnson

New Prime Minister Boris Johnson brought fresh air into the negotiating process and clearly established his strict and firm attitudes towards the whole process of Brexit. Unlike Theresa May, Johnson was very precise in his bargaining. He was not so willing to make the deal at all costs as his predecessor and he stood for his opinions being ready to leave the EU as planned without any further delay.

After Johnson was put into office, the original plan was to leave the EU in October 2019, nevertheless he also had to face opposition in the Parliament. To solve this situation Johnson called an early General Election to prove his steps and hopefully strengthen his position, which he successfully accomplished.

Since May's resignation Boris Johnson managed to vindicate his position twice. Firstly in the Conservative Party leadership election he beat all nine opponents. In the last ballot, on 22 June 2019, Johnson defeated his biggest rival Jeremy Hunt and was announced as the new Prime Minister the following day.²⁴ Second time he had to fight for his seat was in the general elections on 12 December 2019. Johnson felt very confident as he called this snap election himself. As he predicted the Conservative Party beat other parties and the biggest opponent Jeremy Corbyn, leader of Labour Party. The Conservative Party won 365 seats and comfortably gained the majority in the House of Commons.²⁵ The main topic of this election campaigns was obviously Brexit and the future of the country in relation to the EU. Johnson stated his goal clearly and was determined to leave the EU without any further extensions. The voters were already tired of the three years of ongoing negotiations without a clear ending and as other parties were not so clear about leaving the EU and wanted to continue the talks, stay in the EU or order a new referendum, the public decided to trust to Johnson and his party. This clear solution in the chaotic bargaining reaffirmed Johnson's position as the leader of the country. Most of British society was not scared of leaving without deal anymore as they preferred to know where the country stands instead of living in insecurity. In this situation the question arose whether the 2019 elections stood instead of the second

²⁴ Neil Johnston, "Leadership Elections: Conservative Party," UK Parliament, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01366/>.

²⁵ "Elections 2019 – Results," *BBC News*, accessed February 23, 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2019/results>.

referendum. As the voters chose Boris Johnson, who was clear about leaving the EU, there is the possibility that the new referendum could end up the same way.

The main difference between May's and Johnson's deal is in "Irish backstop". Johnson insisted on "replacing the Irish backstop with special customs regulations that would enable the UK to create its own international trade agreements but imposed tariffs on certain goods moving between Great Britain and Northern Ireland."²⁶ Nevertheless Johnson also struggled to vindicate his way of leaving the EU in front of the Parliament, but with the comfortable majority in the House of Commons the date of the leave was stated on 31 January 2020 and on this date the United Kingdom left the EU. The MPs approved the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, that became a law on 23 January 2020 and the transition period begun, with the end after extension on 31 December 2020.²⁷

²⁶ Greene, "Brexit negotiations."

²⁷ Greene, "Brexit negotiations."

3. Issues Caused by Brexit

3. 1. Borders

Even though the United Kingdom was never a part of the Schengen Agreement and people were not used to traveling freely to the UK and crossing borders without passports, Brexit closed the UK's borders completely. Travellers will have to adjust to the new situation in terms of crossing borders and carrying the goods along. These cause complications especially at the border crossings between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, where it was common to move freely.

Closed borders cause complication for goods transporters as well as for ordinary people. Everyone will have to deal with waiting in long lines and proper controls. At the top of that there is also the ongoing world pandemic of Covid-19 and most of the countries closed their borders anyway.²⁸ Truck drivers need to apply in advance for a permit and long traffic jams can cause huge problems in import and export markets as the Brexit transition period end on 1 January 2021.²⁹ Full control on the goods exported to the EU starts right on 1 January, but due to the Coronavirus pandemic, full checks on goods imported to the UK from the EU are six months delayed until 1 July 2021.³⁰ As the infrastructure of these borders is delayed and will not be ready on time, the UK government had been forced to delay these import checks by another six months.³¹ The UK will therefore have its border checks a year later than the EU. This fact is not very comfortable for the UK. It shows that the country was not prepared for the step which they initiated and negotiated for years. Another inconvenience could be the rising prices especially in the food and drink industry as these products are the main trade

²⁸ Rosie Fitzgerald, "Coronavirus travel update: Which countries are open and which are closed?," *Wunderlust*, February 10, 2021, <https://www.wanderlust.co.uk/content/coronavirus-travel-updates/>.

²⁹ Joe Mayes, "Not so Fast! What Brexit means for Border Crossers," *Bloomberg*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-12-24/not-so-fast-what-brex-it-means-for-border-crossers-quicktake>.

³⁰ Chris Morris, "Brexit: Are the borders ready?," *BBC News*, January 1, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/55134903>.

³¹ Joanna Partridge, "UK forced to delay checks on imports from EU by six months," *The Guardian*, March 11, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/mar/11/uk-forced-to-delay-import-checks-on-eu-goods-by-six-months-2022-border-post-not-ready>.

commodity. This goes along with the slowdown of the products' delivery periods from the EU to British consumers.³²

Short travels between the EU and UK will not be much more problematic, but longer stays will require more paperwork and visa in case the UK citizens would want to spend more than 90 days in the EU. With regard to students, "Erasmus" program will be cancelled between the UK and the EU and European students may face higher fees for studying in the UK.³³

A special case is definitely the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Luckily the Northern Ireland protocol was negotiated so the country can remain in the EU single market for goods. More problematic is the trade between the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Mainly the trade of animal products is crucial as these commodities are under strict EU rules.³⁴ The whole process brings with it more paperwork and inspections and unfortunately also a big portion of chaos, until the new rules are settled.

3. 2. Tariffs

The process of leaving the European Union inevitably brings along the need for new trade deal and creation of tariffs as the UK leaves the tariff free relation of countries. The negotiations about trade and tariffs created a significant part in the Brexit talks as both sides decisively defended their attitudes, interests and rights. Both sides wanted to keep running the movement of the goods over the borders with as big benefits as possible. To settle such an agreement usually takes years of intense bilateral talks between the countries.

For now both sides agreed on the free trade deal that is applied since 1 January 2021, preventing any tariffs or quotas. The European Union is the biggest and also the closest partner in the area of trading goods and it is important for the UK's economic future to stay in this free trade relationship. Unfortunately this deal does not have to last forever and in the future some tariffs might be introduced. For citizens, as this deal came into force at the beginning of 2021, it basically means more checks and

³² James Cook, "Food traders say Brexit impact 'could get worse'," *BBC News*, February 10, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-56010036>.

³³ Mayes, "Not so Fast! What Brexit means for Border Crossers."

³⁴ Morris, "Brexit: Are the borders ready?."

paperwork, along with the getting used to new rules and longer periods for goods transportation.³⁵

3. 3. Scotland

The act of withdrawing close connection with the EU caused even more tensions between UK's four countries including Scotland. In case of independency Scotland is unique because Scottish people already tried to become independent several times. The most important referendums were in 1979, 1997 and 2014. Along with Northern Ireland, the majority of voters in Scotland voted for remaining in the EU and Scotland had the biggest majority of all four countries and with 62%³⁶ for staying in the union. Therefore it is clear that Scotland did not agree with the steps the whole country was taking and they wanted to stay close to the EU as they see major benefits in partnership with the EU's countries. Due to the unsuccessful referendum on independence in 2014, when 55% of voters wished to stay part of the UK, a new referendum was planned for 2017. PM Theresa May was strictly against this referendum saying that 'now is not the time'³⁷, because she knew that not so long after the Brexit referendum the support for Scottish independence was quite big and people were still full of emotions.

After the UK left the European Union for good on 31 January 2020, there are still strong tensions in Scotland and another independence referendum is current topic for Scottish people. The First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon calls strongly for a new vote. She builds her arguments and urgency for a new referendum mainly on the results of the almost five-year old Brexit vote. Nevertheless it is fair to say that she has had the same attitude to Scottish independence since the 2016 referendum. The Scottish National Party (SNP) managed to keep a pro-independence majority in Scotland, but the current PM Boris Johnson is also against the referendum³⁸ like his predecessor Theresa May. His main argument is that Scotland already voted in a referendum in 2014. Although the UK underwent a huge change since, the result of the new referendum is

³⁵ Tom Edgington, "Brexit: What trade deals has the UK done so far?," *BBC News*, February 8, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-47213842>.

³⁶ "EU REFERENDUM – Results."

³⁷ Gerry Hassan, *Story of the Scottish Parliament: The First Two Decades Explained* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 298-299.

³⁸ "Scottish independence: Will there be a second referendum?," *BBC News*, January 28, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-50813510>.

still very uncertain and there is no assurance that the majority of voters will really want to leave the UK. The bond between Scotland and the rest of the country is still extremely strong and not to mention the danger of campaigns in these tensed world relations we live in. To find truthful information is still harder and the campaigns for a new referendum could easily create a huge informational chaos as the world already witnessed in the Brexit campaigns.

The Scottish nation is a very nationalistic one and as the referendums in past show they always fought for their nationality and their own interests. The Scots have a strong and loud voice and are not afraid to be heard, but Scottish independence is huge step for the whole country and especially in the UK, the nation that is used to slow, gradual changes and the sudden Brexit referendum clearly shows that making such a fundamental changes, is very fragile. The Scottish independence would undoubtedly be a huge intervention not even to the whole United Kingdom, but also to the whole international relations. Many new problems would definitely arise for Scotland such as hard borders or tariffs and it is always harder to fight against this alone than stay a part of bigger unit.

3. 4. Gibraltar

After Brexit, the Spanish-Gibraltarian bilateral relations face the biggest change since 1713, when Gibraltar was ceded to Britain. “The Brexit agreement between Gibraltar, the U.K. and Spain is heavy on symbolism. It provides for the demolition of the 1.2-kilometer physical barrier that encircles the Rock and has been at the center of constant rows among the three governments for decades.”³⁹

In fact the main difference after Brexit is in moving Gibraltar’s international border to the airport and seaports, removing the physical border barrier, as Gibraltarians are under the auspices of Spain. Gibraltar decided to stay part of EU’s single market and respect EU policy. Spain will be responsible for Schengen checks and moving of travellers.⁴⁰

³⁹ Cristina Gallardo, “What the post-Brexit Gibraltar deal means,” *POLITICO*, January 12, 2021, <https://www.politico.eu/article/what-the-post-brexit-gibraltar-deal-means-uk-spain/>.

⁴⁰ Gallardo, “What the post-Brexit Gibraltar deal means.”

3. 5. Fishery Policy

The question of fishery was always a big issue for the UK, both economically and symbolically. Therefore Boris Johnson does not hesitate to take hard negotiations in this area mainly with France as they share borders of national waters and both coasts benefit from fishing. Although fishery is not a high-profit industry and its contribution to the UK's economy is little over £ 1 billion, the importance for fishing communities is enormous.⁴¹ Some of these people work in fishery all their lives, they often follow their ancestors and centuries long tradition in the industry. Fishery is undoubtedly connected with generations of people living in seaside areas, but also uninteresting to big economic centres and governments' interests. These citizens, living in left-behind towns, broadly voted for Brexit, therefore the UK's government along with Boris Johnson feel so committed to these voters and insist on strict fishing rights and protection for their business. It is crucial to keep the symbolism that fishing industry in these areas brings along and not let those people feel abandoned.

In the terms of Brexit more important than symbolism is the dependency of the UK's fishermen on the trade with the continent, not to mention the expansion of technology that vastly harmed smaller businesses in the fishing industry. The whole of fishery is an extremely fragile environment as the main commodities are living creatures. The interests of conservationists and business owners are always contradictory and tensed. Brexit brought new complications for this already weakened industry.

The Brexit trade deal gave the final solution to the question of fishery. The five years of "adjustment period" was introduced and until 2026 EU boats can fish in UK waters. After this time annual negotiations will take place and the UK would have the right to completely exclude the EU boats from their waters.⁴²

⁴¹ Tom Mctague, "Why Britain's Brexit Mayhem Was Worth It," *The Atlantic*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/12/brexit-trade-deal-uk-eu/617509/>.

⁴² Chris Morris, Oliver Barnes, "Brexit trade deal: What does it mean for fishing?," *BBC News*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/46401558>.

3. 6. Economy

Brexit is undoubtedly a huge interference into the UK's economy. Mainly the tariffs significantly influence the budget of the country. People in the UK will have to get used to completely new terms and not being part of the nontariff barriers anymore. As the result of the Brexit referendum was announced the sterling quickly collapsed. Another economic harm is produced in the welfare losses.⁴³ In case of the "hard Brexit" scenario the economic damage would be much bigger. Luckily for the Britons, both sides managed to agree on staying in the nontariff relationship⁴⁴, but the UK's future in this area is still unclear as the EU can decide to resign from this agreement. Also as the UK is not a part of the European Union's Customs Union they have to face rules-of-origin requirements and antidumping duties and the predictions are that the trade costs will fall faster in the UK.⁴⁵ Nevertheless British economist John Van Reenen thinks that:

Under all plausible scenarios, Brexit will make Britain poorer compared with remaining in the European Union. This is because the United Kingdom will have higher trade costs with its closest neighbors in Europe (which account for about half of all U.K. trade), and this will reduce its trade and therefore welfare. The magnitude of these losses will outweigh the modest benefits of lower net fiscal transfers to the EU budget.⁴⁶

On the other hand the advantage for the United Kingdom now is that they can focus more on the cooperation with other countries and partners outside of the EU. The United States or China, with their huge markets, are undoubtedly great allies, but the EU is still the UK's closest neighbour.

3. 7. Foreign Workers and Immigration

One of the main desires before Brexit and during its campaigns was to reduce the amount of foreign workers and provide more work places for native Britons. Along with

⁴³ John Van Reenen, "Brexit's Long-Run Effects on the U.K. Economy," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, (Fall 2016): 367, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/90000441>.

⁴⁴ Edgington, "Brexit: What trade deals has the UK done so far?."

⁴⁵ Van Reenen, "Brexit's Long-Run Effects on the U.K. Economy."

⁴⁶ Van Reenen, "Brexit's Long-Run Effects on the U.K. Economy."

this the problem of increasing immigration was connected and many voters made their decision in the referendum based on these factors. Mainly the people with less stable jobs felt endangered by the still growing number of migrants, who were willing to do the work for less money. “Between 1995 and 2015, the number of EU nationals living in the United Kingdom tripled”⁴⁷ and the fear of not enough vacancies grew along with the new workers. Especially the workers from former communist countries or the Middle East are known for lower demands, standards of living and for being hard-working.

The huge advantage for the EU members is being part of the Single Market and the ability of workers to move freely. This can cause over pressure in the most wanted job markets. Nevertheless this can cause also many troubles to UK’s citizens interested in working in the EU, which will not be so easy for them anymore.

Many employers were used to hiring foreigners who work hard for smaller amount of money than the British-born workers. Especially the bigger cities are known for its multiculturalism that can be seen mainly in the growing numbers of all kinds of international restaurants and demand for quality cuisines. The immigration is also projected into the culture and the structure of some cities, mainly in the communities these minorities create.

One of the areas greatly dependent on foreign workers is the fruit picking industry. As these jobs are seasonal, thousands of people mainly from Europe were used to spending their summer holiday on the UK’s fields harvesting fruit and vegetables.⁴⁸ Employers and farmers in this area, who used to employ mainly foreigners, are now significantly influenced by Brexit as well as the world pandemic of Covid-19, the next season is very uncertain for them. Johnson’s government promised to introduce permits for seasonal workers⁴⁹, but there are the concerns that it will not be enough and the lack of workers could significantly harm UK’s agriculture. There are efforts to persuade

⁴⁷ Van Reenen, “Brexit’s Long-Run Effects on the U.K. Economy.”

⁴⁸ “Brexit: How will it affect fruit farmers?,” *BBC News*, last modified January 14, 2019, video, 0:48, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-england-kent-46840131>.

⁴⁹ Rob Merrick, “Brexit: Ministers to tremble number of foreign fruit and veg pickers to ease fears of rotting harvests,” *Independent*, December 19, 2020, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-fruit-veg-pickers-eu-b1775742.html>.

Britons to join this industry for seasonal jobs, but the interest is not big enough⁵⁰ to fully compensate for the work of foreigners. Experts had warned that such a situation would arise. The ‘Vote Leave’ campaign was strictly against the foreign workers and guaranteed vacancies for Britons, but the reality is that local people are not interested in manual labour and will not work for the same salary as the workers from abroad.

⁵⁰ Sahar Butler, “UK farmers to get more help from overseas workers for 2021 harvest,” *The Guardian*, December 22, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/dec/22/uk-farmers-to-get-more-help-from-overseas-workers-for-2021-harvest>.

4. Influence of Brexit Campaigns

The period between the announcement of the referendum and the referendum date was filled with campaigns which completely pulled in the whole of British society. These campaigns showed how extremely important is the ability to think critically and sort out big portions of information. The people behind them, created tendentious headlines and intentionally targeted people on social networking sites. These months before the referendum clearly showed how campaigns work nowadays and how significantly they changed since the beginning of the 21st century. The main tools for successful campaigning are now social networking sites. Mainly the people standing behind the ‘Vote leave’ campaign were well aware of this and they focused on manipulating people on their internet accounts in order to present to them only the biased information which suited their ends.

Political campaigns usually have to be presented in a populist manner. It is important to target the voters directly and promise a better future. Nevertheless, the range of populism along with the desire to succeed the Brexit referendum and leave the EU, introduced at the whole new level. Completely fake information was used to win this vote. Experts were discredited in order people stop believing them. Even many politicians tried to break people’s trust in experts. UK’s justice secretary Michael Gove, who led the campaign for leaving the EU, clearly expressed his attitude towards authorities in the economy or on the global market. “People of this country have had enough of experts.”⁵¹ With this statement Gove tried to get people to his side and show that he sympathized with the “working people” unlike some experts, who do not have the same standard of living, as those common citizens, therefore they can never understand them. Not to mention that also Gove, as justice secretary at that time and white man at high working position, is far from their problems. As other politicians, who wanted to leave the EU, Gove used this populist rhetoric to manipulate people and create even bigger chaos in society. This whole process hit the British society hardly, people were confused and lost their faith.

⁵¹ “Gove: Britons “Have Had Enough of Experts,”” YouTube, last modified June 22, 2016, video, 1:03, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGgiGtJk7MA&ab_channel=rpmackey.

Campaigns against staying in the EU were promising a free United Kingdom, without people from abroad, who took the job of “common” Britons. Nevertheless it was the UK as one of the first countries that opened their job market for foreigners. Even now there is still a question of who will perform the physically demanding jobs for them because British natives will never work for the same salary as foreigners.

As in every election, there is part of people who made the decision how will vote even before its announcement. These voters are usually loyal to their principles, ideology and party. They vote for the same political party, sometimes for their whole life. It is not rare that several generations of one family vote for the same party. The campaigns do not target this group of voters. The voters they are interested in are so called ‘swing voters’, who do not have a strong preference for any political party and they tend to join the side they currently agree more with. Some of them wait the whole period before the election to make the conclusion and can often decide at the very last moment at polls. The campaigns need to attract these people’s attention and the fight over the votes is often very brutal and many citizens decide not to vote at all. The aim of the campaigns is not only to make people believe they are the right ones to vote for, but also persuade people who do not usually attend polls to come and express their point of view. In case of Brexit it was a bit easier for the campaigners to target voters as the step of leaving the EU is huge and inevitably affects in some way everyone living in the UK. The referendum also does not require sympathizing with one particular political party, therefore over 72%⁵² of people expressed their opinion and decided the future development of their country.

4. 1. Vote Leave

The main campaign that stands behind the winning side of the referendum is the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign. Even though it is not the only one that was fighting for the UK to leave the EU, it is the most significant and loudest one. With the use of ‘fake-news’ and populist slogans it managed to catch people’s attention and persuade them to vote “leave”. The main focus of this campaign was on the UK’s contribution to the European budget, immigration, sovereignty and independency. Unfortunately the creators of

⁵² “EU REFERENDUM – Results.”

‘Vote Leave’ chose to build their campaign on the fake information, slogans and images.

The main website of this campaign claims that the UK contributes £350 million to the EU budget every week and some ads suggest this money would be better spent on the NHS or schools⁵³. A photograph of the migrants on the Slovenian borders is used to persuade voters that these are the migrants crossing the UK’s borders.⁵⁴ This information was used falsely⁵⁵ with the intention to manipulate voters along with the whole mood of the society to create an even bigger chaos and strengthen the tension between the two sides.

The ‘Vote Leave’ campaign chose strong and brief slogans and simple visuals and targeted directly the voters mainly via social networking sites. The combination of all these factors provided the victory of the leaving side. The question remains, whether this campaign, with targeted Facebook advertisements, was completely legal, it has been claimed that personal data of millions of voters was abused. In order to aim at a specific group of people, the campaigners needed to get to their personal data, to find out about their opinions and political orientation. The main sources of these data were mainly social media, especially Facebook. Luckily for them, people willingly and openly share great amount of personal data on the internet. It is easy then to target the people in the environment of social media, where everyone can see different content based on their browsing history.

Not only Facebook was a great tool for presenting campaign slogans and ads, but the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign also vastly used Twitter with the use of political bots⁵⁶ and special algorithms. Thanks to that number of accounts was created which were responsible for spreading the posts in support of the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign and against the EU, often including information that was not true. As scholars Marco T. Bastos and Dan Mercea said: “Common to most accounts in this botnet was the curated replication

⁵³ “Vote Leave’s targeted Brexit ads released by Facebook,” *BBC News*, July 26, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-44966969>.

⁵⁴ “Why Vote Leave,” Vote Leave, accessed March 9, 2021, http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/why_vote_leave.html.

⁵⁵ Andrew Grice, “Fake news handed Brexiteers the referendum – and now they have no idea what they’re doing,” *Independent*, January 18, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/michael-gove-boris-johnson-brexit-euro-sceptic-press-theresa-may-a7533806.html>.

⁵⁶ “What Is a Bot? | Bot Definition,” Cloudflare, accessed March 9, 2021, <https://www.cloudflare.com/learning/bots/what-is-a-bot/>.

of content that was both user generated and a reproduction of tabloid journalism. Another important marker of this group was the overwhelming prominence of content associated with or authored by user accounts affiliated with the Vote Leave campaign.”⁵⁷

Social media are nowadays a great tool for presenting a political campaign, as the campaigners can buy advertising space on a huge variety of social networking sites. Problems arise when the financing of the campaign is not fully transparent or when the advertisements appear without clearly stating who the campaigner is (see appendix 2). As the Electoral Commission discovered this is exactly the case of the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign. They seem to be working with another campaign called ‘BeLeave’ at the time and produced a variety of commercials on social media. These covered various topics such as animal abuse, English tea or polar bear protection.⁵⁸ What all advertisements had in common was that they blamed the EU for all these problems, which was a false and populist way of presenting information. These false accusations are extremely dangerous, especially in this already exaggerated tension in the society. Many people take the hatred towards the European Union very seriously, it can affect them deeply and create bigger gaps in the society, where people will blame the wrong ones based on fake news. Nowadays mainly the social media support these lies and help to spread them.

The ‘Vote Leave’ campaign presented the candidate countries that will join the EU in far future as if they were already joining it now and that the only way to stop the massive immigration from these countries was to leave the union. The main example the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign used was Turkey and emphasized that if they join the EU, millions of Turkish people will inevitably migrate to the UK⁵⁹. Nevertheless the countries like Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and Turkey have only the status of candidate countries and they have to fulfil many more rules before they are allowed to enter the EU. The EU has strong criteria in the form of EU legislation (acquis) and all the potential EU countries have to meet them or they

⁵⁷ Marco T. Bastos, Dan Mercea, “The Brexit Botnet and User-Generated Hyperpartisan News,” *Social Science Computer Review* 37, no. 1 (2019): 39-40.

⁵⁸ “Vote Leave’s targeted Brexit ads released by Facebook.”

⁵⁹ “Why Vote Leave.”

could face lawsuits and large fines.⁶⁰ The step of accepting these countries into the EU is now far away, as these negotiations between the union and candidates take several years and there is no need to worry about millions of new migrants any time soon. Apart from that they have to convince the majority of citizens that to be the part of this union will be beneficial for their everyday lives. Not to mention all the environmental standards and trade agreements that need to be accepted. It will take many more years before they are able to compete and live in the Union with the current member countries. This clearly shows that using the argument of millions of new EU citizens five years ago was completely populist and manipulative.

Other falsely interpreted facts by the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign concern mainly the Euro currency and the European Court⁶¹. In both cases the European Union and its laws and regulations was vastly misinterpreted. Also in these cases campaigners used the information tendentiously to manipulate people’s opinion and put all the blame on the EU. Since it was always the UK that decided to keep and protect its currency, they can blame only themselves for standing outside the Eurogroup and for having less say in some final decisions.

The main slogan of this whole campaign was “take back control”⁶². This was meant to evoke in Britons that they are not in control of their own country and the EU takes away part of their freedom. This slogan was also interpreted as if the EU had no power to influence immigration as for example Boris Johnson claims on the campaign posters.⁶³

Unlike the campaign for remaining in the EU, the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign aimed mainly at the society levels without university education and with lower incomes. With their populist rhetoric they tried to gain people’s trust and show how much they understand their problems. The campaigners also successfully discredited many experts, by claiming how distant they were from ‘common’ citizens and how this elite can never understand the conditions these people from smaller towns live in.

⁶⁰ “Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates,” European Commission, accessed March 9, 2021, <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/candidates.htm>.

⁶¹ “Why Vote Leave.”

⁶² “Campaign Resources,” Vote Leave, accessed March 9, 2021, http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/campaign_resources.html.

⁶³ “Vote Leave’s targeted Brexit ads released by Facebook.”

4. 2. Britain Stronger in Europe

‘Britain Stronger in Europe’ was stated as the official campaign of remaining in the European Union. Unlike that of the ‘Vote Leave’, the official website of this campaign is not active and accessible without creating an account, which may be one of many reasons for their failure in the Brexit referendum and it was not the only barrier created between the voters and this campaign.

As their major presentation, this campaign created an eight-page long pamphlet⁶⁴, with positive statements about the EU and the reasons why it is beneficial for the UK to remain part of the union. They used long sentences filled with facts based on scientifically approved information, with the focus on the economy, trade, prices and many others. Rather than brief slogans, they relied on reasonable arguments and long explanations why the Britons should want to remain EU citizens. “The stay-in-the-EU campaign counts on the appeal of argument.”⁶⁵ The main focus was put on experts explaining reasons to stay in the EU and ‘Vote Leave’ campaign successfully discredited them with their populist rhetoric and sympathizing with the ‘common’ citizens. The results of referendum showed that this campaign was simply not enough and did not convince the voters the same way as the opposite side.

Unfortunately for the ‘Britain Stronger in Europe’ campaign, their opponents were quite loud in their claims and managed to create fear and chaos in the society by their misinterpretation of information. Even though the campaigns for staying in the EU also had a short slogan “I’M IN”⁶⁶, their communication was not so clear and was not followed with the same wild reactions of the voters as the opposite side’s campaign. Although this campaign was supported not only by the Prime Minister at that time, David Cameron, along with his government, but also by the greater part of UK’s political parties, including Labour Party, SNP, Plaid Cymru, Sinn Fein, Liberal Democrats and Green Party, the majority in society did not follow their opinions.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ “Why Britain is Stronger in Europe,” Stronger In, accessed March 12, 2021, <https://nawo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Britain-Stronger-In-Europe-Key-Briefings.pdf>.

⁶⁵ Robert Colvile, “Britain Stronger in Europe: A grassroots army gets to work,” *POLITICO*, December 22, 2015, <https://www.politico.eu/article/britain-stronger-in-europe-a-grassroots-army-gets-to-work/>.

⁶⁶ “EU Referendum: Who are the Remain campaign?,” *BBC News*, last modified June 15, 2016, video, 0:17, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36542011>.

⁶⁷ “EU Referendum: Who are the Remain campaign?.”

The executive director of the ‘Britain Stronger in Europe’ campaign was Will Straw, the defeated Labour candidate for MP.⁶⁸ Unfortunately the referendum became his second electoral failure. His interview for Politico in 2015 showed how excited and enthusiastic he was about the campaign and could not imagine losing the referendum. His excitement probably blinded him and he failed too. Another problematic area could be that not only this campaign but also others in favour of staying in the EU wanted some kind of reform. They admitted that the current relationship was not ideal, but wanted to stay in, under slightly different conditions. This did not add much trust to the EU and many could see that it is better to leave than to have to negotiate and accept more compromises. Even though the campaigns for remaining tried to portray leaving as dangerous and prove that leaving is very insecure way, they were not firm enough. The arguments presented, such as – more complicated traveling, studying, living and working abroad, were solid, but still not enough to convince the majority of Britons that staying in the EU was better.⁶⁹

This campaign along with other pro-EU campaigns simply failed in presenting their point of view to the voters. A senior editor at *Harvard Business Review* claims that:

The Leave side made sure that immigration became a focus. Not only a focus but *the* focus. And once that’s a focus it’s hard to get other messages through. What we see is all there is. Danny Kahneman said that clearly. We can only pay attention to a limited number of things and if we see that immigration story every day, that’s what affects us more than a rational argument that predicts what would happen if we left.⁷⁰

4. 3. Other Campaigns

Besides the ‘Britain Stronger in Europe’ campaign, other campaigns were mostly created by individual interest groups or political parties, but none of them attracted as much attention. Even though the major part of the UK’s political parties along with

⁶⁸ Colville, “Britain Stronger in Europe: A grassroots army gets to work.”

⁶⁹ Colville, “Britain Stronger in Europe: A grassroots army gets to work.”

⁷⁰ Scott Berinato, “Why the Remain Campaign’s Persuasion Strategy Backfired,” *Harvard Business Review*, June 24, 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/06/why-the-remain-campaigns-persuasion-strategy-backfired>.

most MPs from governing Conservative Party supported staying in the EU, no special named group was created. They more likely presented their opinions from their position in the House of Commons, within their party or on their social media. What was quite unpleasant for some parties was that particular members inside them created groups that were against staying in the EU and it caused complications in party relations and the atmosphere was more tensed.⁷¹ To mention some of the official pro-Europe groups there were for example: European Movement UK, Young European Movement, Academics for Europe, Healthier IN the EU, New Europeans, Global Justice Now, Brand EU, London First, Conservatives In or Wake Up Europe.⁷²

On the other hand, the pro-leave side created louder separate officially named campaigns. More attention was paid to them as they were quite controversial and as well as the 'Vote Leave' campaign tried to shock with brief slogans and populist rhetoric. To mention the most significant ones there were 'Leave.EU' and political party UKIP – UK Independence Party, with its very loud leader Nigel Farage and also the Democratic Unionist party supported leaving the EU.⁷³

A large amount of attention was paid to the UKIP's campaign as the major politician of this party lead the campaign in very extremist and populist way. Farage showed that he was not interested in negotiating at all and wanted to leave the EU as soon as possible no matter the consequences. This was also based on the party's original policies as their goal was to leave the EU since the party was founded in 1993.⁷⁴ Even though they did not create the strongest campaign on the 'leave side', the party finally achieved what they always wanted. Nevertheless this party is not done with its goals as they still long for major changes in the UK's political system, such as a reform the House of Lords, a voting reform, ending mass migration and many others.⁷⁵ Their

⁷¹ Jennifer Scott, "Where do the UK's political parties stand on Brexit vote?," *BBC News*, December 29, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-55177496>.

⁷² "List of campaign organisations supporting Remain in the 2016 United Kingdom European Union membership referendum," Wikipedia, accessed March 17, 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_campaign_organisations_supporting_Remain_in_the_2016_United_Kingdom_European_Union_membership_referendum.

⁷³ "Who are the Leave campaign in the EU referendum?," *BBC News*, June 15, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36542009>.

⁷⁴ "About UKIP," UKIP, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://www.ukip.org/>.

⁷⁵ "Our policies," UKIP, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://www.ukip.org/>.

strategy is to cause fear and create an atmosphere of intolerance which would help them achieve their goals.

5. Comparison between Churchill's and Johnson's Politics

These two politicians are undoubtedly extremely important for the United Kingdom and both of them stood in the Prime Minister office in times of crucial changes. While Winston Churchill witnessed the beginning of the closer relationships between the UK and the European Community, Boris Johnson ended this long partnership. These two men frame the part of the UK's history when being closely connected in the union of states with all its benefits, as well as disadvantages.

While there are doubts whether Churchill was really so pro-European as is said of him, Boris Johnson is known to be strongly against the UK's participation in the EU. As Johnson claims in his biography of Churchill: "The trouble is that he is claimed by both sides. Europhiles and Euro-sceptics: both factions believe in him. Both factions hail him as their prophet"⁷⁶. Quite problematic is also the fact that Churchill himself did not stand as the head of the country when the thought of the European Community was first introduced in 1945. Therefore Churchill put the amount of criticism on the former Prime Minister Clement Attlee. "He attacks the Attlee government for their incompetence: the French would never have been so rude as to spring this on us unawares if he had been Prime Minister, says Churchill. But on the key question, he soon makes himself clear. Yes, he thinks Britain should be there at the Schuman talks, and he lays into Attlee for his failure of leadership."⁷⁷

Another proof Johnson introduces of Churchill being a pro-European is that: "Churchill was a rampant federalist – a believer in a United States of Europe."⁷⁸ and "...Churchill was a visionary founder of the movement for a united Europe."⁷⁹ This feels like Churchill is fully in favour of the European Community, but Johnson in his book continues by claiming: "Churchill saw Britain as somehow dwelling apart from the European congeries; and in the course of one of his many bust-ups with General de Gaulle, he said that if Britain had to choose between Europe and the open sea, she would always choose the open sea."⁸⁰ Again, there arises the UK's problem, during its

⁷⁶ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 295.

⁷⁷ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 299.

⁷⁸ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 301.

⁷⁹ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 304.

⁸⁰ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 305.

membership in the EU, the conflict between its sovereignty and the feeling of being left out of the European cooperation. It is always difficult to deal with these tensions, as the UK stood between the desire of being part of bigger unit with its benefits and the fear of losing the freedom and control over its finances and borders. Churchill himself admitted that “he wants the UK to be ‘intimately associated’ but cannot conceive that Britain will be ‘an ordinary member’”.⁸¹

Churchill proved many times that he was in favour of uniting the European states, for example in his speech in 1946 in Zurich where he asked,

What is this sovereign remedy? It is to recreate the European fabric, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, safety and freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe. In this way only will hundreds of millions of toilers be able to regain the simple joys and hopes which make life worth living. The process is simple. All that is needed is the resolve of hundreds of millions of men and women to do right instead of wrong and to gain as their reward blessing instead of cursing.⁸²

What is more problematic is the position of the UK itself in this unity, as the country greatly insist on their sovereignty and cannot imagine being an ordinary member as it is already mentioned above. Also Churchill’s opinion on Germany was affected by the war. “The guilty must be punished. Germany must be deprived of the power to rearm and make another aggressive war.”⁸³ Nevertheless he is well aware that in favour of safety and prosperity, the states must re-create their relationships as quickly as possible, mainly between France and Germany.⁸⁴

Churchill was undoubtedly an extremely important person in the process of Europe’s uniting and recovery from World War II. Even though there are still doubts about whether he really wanted for the UK to join the EC, most of his claims prove that he believed that the European integration was the right choice. After Churchill gained

⁸¹ Johnson, *The Churchill Factor*, 306.

⁸² “United States of Europe,” International Churchill Society, accessed March 26, 2021, <https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1946-1963-elder-statesman/united-states-of-europe/>.

⁸³ “United States of Europe.”

⁸⁴ “United States of Europe.”

cult status, mainly in question of race and some might argue that the Great Britain is not able to see the whole truth about this politician.⁸⁵ The majority of British society view him as a very capable and determined leader.

On the other hand the current Prime Minister Boris Johnson seems very clear in his attitudes and opinions, mainly towards the EU. It might seem to somebody that he is even obsessed with the idea of leaving the EU, under any circumstances and mainly because of his strong and firm rhetoric.⁸⁶ Some might say that Johnson used his biography of Churchill to achieve his own goals and become the Prime Minister himself.⁸⁷ Whether it is true or not, Johnson managed to get the place he wants and climb the ladder to the highest position with keeping his views and distinctive character. Johnson can sometimes be seen likening himself to Churchill, which is considered controversial by many. Johnson with his pragmatic and straightforward behaviour can be called rude and according to Churchill's grandson even "nothing like Winston Churchill. I don't think anyone has called Boris a diplomatic or statesman."⁸⁸ It is important not to forget that Churchill himself often shocked people and it can be almost seen as necessary to have an extremely strong and eccentric personality as the head of the country in such difficult times.

What also connects them is that both politicians stood as the head of the Conservative party and the United Kingdom in hard times and it seem they both managed successfully vindicate their position.

⁸⁵ Priyamvada Gopal, "Why can't Britain handle the truth about Winston Churchill?," *The Guardian*, March 17, 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/mar/17/why-cant-britain-handle-the-truth-about-winston-churchill?utm_source=instagramstories&utm_campaign=Churchill.

⁸⁶ Paul Dallison, "'Boris Johnson is nothing like Winston Churchill,' says wartime PM's grandson," *POLITICO*, September 7, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/boris-johnson-is-nothing-like-winston-churchill-says-wartime-pms-grandson-nicholas-soames/>.

⁸⁷ Steven Fielding, "Boris Johnson makes a bid to appropriate the 'Churchill brand'," *The Conversation*, October 27, 2014, <https://theconversation.com/boris-johnson-makes-a-bid-to-appropriate-the-churchill-brand-33377>.

⁸⁸ Dallison, "'Boris Johnson is nothing like Winston Churchill,' says wartime PM's grandson."

6. The Reflection of Brexit in Literature

As Brexit is the topic that affected the whole British society in all varieties, it has also reflected in literature. Apart from literature, for example National holidays with the deliveries depended on them are also vastly influenced by Brexit. Nowadays people have to adjust to long delays of their goods and due to extra paperwork sometimes late arrivals like on 2021 Easter holiday.⁸⁹

When it comes to literature, the influence of Brexit can be seen in two areas. Firstly, it has become a topic of interest and studies that brought to life many publications and broadened the British book market. Second, it is important to see Brexit in the economic way and how it influenced book industry in terms of trade and tariffs.

It is well known that “literature responds to and comments on the cultural climates of its time. ...Brexit is no exception.”⁹⁰ The Financial Times introduced the two paths that British literature followed after Brexit. One of them is the popularity of the dystopian fiction, from older works it is *1984* or *Fahrenheit 451*. Among the current authors succeeded Scottish novel *Autumn*, by Ali Smith, a symphony that embodied European values.⁹¹ Another part between the novels represents the one exploring the contrastive social groups with their backgrounds and opinions in this socially tensed topic. There are works such as *The Cut* by Anthony Cartwright or Amanda Craig’s *The Lie of the Land*.⁹² These works vastly benefit from the use of irony, sarcasm and humour lacking in nonfiction. Therefore its potential to catch the reader’s attention is much bigger. The topic also supports novels taking place in the future and predicting the development and effect on society with the freedom of an artistic intention. The Brexit referendum created space for expressing other social feelings such as the divided kingdom, multiculturalism and uncertainty.⁹³

⁸⁹ David Segal, “How Brexit Ruined Easter for Britain’s Chocolate Makers,” *The New York Times*, April 3, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/03/business/brexit-easter-chocolate.html>.

⁹⁰ Allie@Lulu, “Brexlit: The Impact Of Brexit On UK Literature,” lulublog, May 30, 2019, <https://blog.lulu.com/brexlit-the-impact-of-brexit-on-uk-literature/>.

⁹¹ Jon Day, “Brexlit: the new landscape of British fiction,” *Financial Times*, July 28, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/30ec47b4-7204-11e7-93ff-99f383b09ff9>.

⁹² Day, “Brexlit: the new landscape of British fiction.”

⁹³ John Self, “How Brexit has reshaped the British novel,” Penguin, accessed April 6, 2021, <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2020/jan/how-writers-responded-to-brexit-in-novels.html>.

The fiction that is the most mentioned in connection with Brexit and also called the first novel referred to Brexit⁹⁴ is *Autumn* by Ali Smith. This book stands as the first one in the series of four seasonal novels and despite its name is set in summer 2016 right after the Brexit referendum. Against the backdrop of this political disarray is told the story of two friends, Elizabeth and Daniel. Daniel is on his death bed and this balance between life and death goes through the whole book. This time of massive change and decay author compares to Brexit as the after death experience. Daniel also embodies old European values. The process of leaving the EU is linked to the loss of life along with these good old principles. In Smith's novel, Brexit is seen as something negative which weakens the country, the same way the coming death weakens Daniel. The novel mainly focuses on the love and friendship between the characters, but the inevitability of death is always present. The beginning, when Daniel still has some hope to find the energy to live, is an analogy to the feelings after the referendum that everything still could turn out well. Smith also managed to capture the contradictory feelings that the referendum ignited in Britons, along with the tensions, hatred and polarization in society. "All across the country, people felt like they'd done the right thing and other people had done the wrong thing. All across the country, people looked up Google: *what is EU?* All across the country, people looked up Google: *move to Scotland*. All across the country, people looked up Google: *Irish passport applications*."⁹⁵ The fact, that the author skips the chronology gives the novel a much more dynamic character, however, as Smith suggest, it is still the time that heals everything including British society.

The opposite part of the spectrum naturally focused on the political and sociological nonfiction concerning the introductive and descriptive studies of the Brexit problematic. These works, packed with facts, serve mainly to develop scientific research and possibly inform society. There are very often also several predictions, opposite to those in fiction, based on data and research. Even though it is more difficult for these works to find popularity among wider society, in the case of such a broad topic that affected lives of millions individually, the interest in it might be bigger. To mention

⁹⁴ Day, "Brexlit: the new landscape of British fiction."

⁹⁵ Ali Smith, *Autumn* (London: Penguin Books, 2017), 59.

some of these nonfictions, there are works like *Brexit: How Britain Left Europe*, *The Future of Brexit Britain*, *Brexit and the Future of the European Union* or *Understanding Brexit: A Concise Introduction*.

Another aspect that affected British literature is in its distribution. British literature has nowadays a huge benefit as the English language is the most widely spoken one and many foreign groups especially African authors write in English in order to reach a wider audience. For this reason, the “English speaking” book market is the first one to publish new authors, is in the centre of all trends and rules the book industry. Nevertheless after the referendum, publishers stayed in uncertainty about the future development of their business. In the current time of still growing digitalization, it is extremely important for the UK’s publishers to be able to sell in Europe. The eyes of British publishers are focused on the trade deal and try to keep their business running on the European market without new restrictions as long as possible.⁹⁶ While Brexit created new topics for the writing of both fiction and non-fiction, it might actually damage the publishing industry instead of enriching it.

⁹⁶ “Brexit: all eyes are now on the trade deals,” Publishers Association, accessed April 6, 2021, <https://www.publishers.org.uk/brexit-all-eyes-are-now-on-the-trade-deals/>.

Conclusion

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to analyse the phenomenon of Brexit and introduce what led to this step as well as the events that followed after the UK began the process of leaving the EU. In its first part, this work introduces the development of the long-lasting partnership between the United Kingdom and other European countries, which tend to unite together and create closer connections. There is also the description of Brexit as a whole and how it influenced several aspects of life in the UK.

The second chapter describes the negotiating process and shows the difficulty of making compromises and reaching agreements. Both sides in this relationship tried to gain as much as possible and end up as the winning side. Such as negotiations were a clear example of current diplomacy and how it is problematic to make some kind of deal. As the United Kingdom negotiated over its future under two Prime Ministers, the society could witness two different styles of political communication and leading of the country.

The third chapter introduces individual problems that arose after the Brexit referendum, concerning mainly the border controls, tariffs, foreign workers and fishery policy. After that follows the analysis of the Brexit campaigns with the focus on the two main opposing ones, 'Vote Leave' and 'Britain Stronger in Europe'. The fifth chapter compares the two UK Prime Ministers Winston Churchill and Boris Johnson. Churchill led the country in times, when the UK was trying to join the former European Community, whereas Johnson managed to bring out his nation from this long-lasting membership. Their personalities frame the period, when their country was in the close connection with other European nations. They embodied the sovereignty, strength and uniqueness of this great nation. Along with that their strong attitudes confirm the difficulty of cooperation with such a proud country as the Great Britain. The last chapter reflects the Brexit in the literature and the UK's book market.

As the first hypothesis of this work I claimed that Brexit brought many problems and Britons were highly unprepared for them. It is undoubted that after Brexit many issues arose, and even though the Britons were preparing a long time for leaving the EU, some consequences caught them unprepared. Mainly the border controls and trade deals were greatly questioned and in some ways the situation remains unclear. It is

certain that British citizens have to get used to new rules, additional paperwork and uneasy conditions for travel, study and work abroad.

In the second hypothesis I stated that in case some voters could vote again in the second referendum knowing what to expect they would vote differently. I believe this hypothesis has not been confirmed. Even though Britons did not have chance to participate in a new referendum and vote in the same matter for the second time, in the 2019 Parliamentary elections when voters could prioritize more pro-European parties, which wanted to postpone or re-negotiated Brexit. The majority clearly expressed their loyalty to the Conservative party, lead by Boris Johnson, who against the majority of parties openly supported leaving the EU under any circumstances in the shortest possible time. After long years of unclear negotiating, British voters prioritized the choice of finally ending it and becoming independent.

Now, when the UK is fully free and independent starts the new chapter in its history and it depend on the Britons, where they decide to lead their country and whether they could take back their former power and remain an open and multicultural, modern country.

Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce je představit fenomén Brexitu a jeho vliv na britskou společnost a literaturu. Práce popisuje jak události, které vedly roku 2016 k vypsaní referenda o vystoupení Velké Británie z Evropské unie, tak i jejich vzájemné vztahy během britského členství nejdříve v Evropském společenství, později unii. Jelikož rozhovory ohledně některých problémů pokračují i poté, co Británie unii opustila, není jednoduché tento vztah uchopit a popsat. Některé obchodní dohody jsou uzavřeny pouze na několik let a po jejich vypršení bude nutno opět vyjednat další vývoj britsko-evropských vztahů. Vystoupením z Evropské unie se Spojené království rozhodlo uzavřít světu a chránit si svou suverenitu. Ve stále více otevřeném a multikulturním světě se tento krok může zdát poněkud zvláštním. Velká Británie je nicméně země založena na tradici a neměnných hodnotách, svou jedinečnost si vždy velice vysoko cenila a je tudíž pochopitelné, že být pouze jedním z členských států velké unie je pro Británii nedostačující. V dobách největšího rozkvětu Commonwealthu Británie ovládala značnou část světa a ztráta velkého množství moci není pro žádnou zemi jednoduchá. Spojené Království vždy stálo na hraně mezi uchováním své vlastní suverenity a jedinečnosti a pocitem nebytí vynecháno z evropského dění.

První část práce se zabývá jak vztahy mezi Británií a zbytkem evropských zemí před vstupem do Evropského společenství, tak i po vstupu. Dále zachycuje konkrétněji vládu a politiku Davida Camerona a kroky, jež vedly k referendu. Druhá část je soustředěna na proces vyjednávání mezi Británií a Evropskou unií, nejprve pod vedením Theresy May a poté Borise Johnsona.

Velkou měrou se tato práce zabývá problémy, jež nastaly po Brexit, a které byly po několik let tématem rozhovorů mezi oběma stranami. Novinkou pro Brity jsou především hraniční kontroly, jež zakazují převoz potravin, či velké množství administrativy a formulářů, způsobující dlouhé kolony na hranicích a zpoždění dodávek zboží. Debaty se dlouhou dobu vedly i ohledně samostatnosti Skotska, kde většina voličů hlasovala pro setrvání v EU. Problémem se rovněž ukázala být hranice mezi Severním Irskem a Irskou republikou, či území Gibraltar. Brexitem je do značné míry zasažen i rybolov a uchování území Britských vod je prioritou. Změny pocítily i zaměstnavatelé a to především v nedostatku zahraničních pracovníků, vykonávajících

sezonní sběry plodin. I samotní Britové mají nyní ztížené cestování do zemí Evropské unie a pro delší pobyty za prací či studiem budou potřebovat víza.

Čtvrtá kapitola analyzuje kampaně předcházející referendu o vystoupení Británie z Evropské unie. Zaměřuje se především na hlavní kampaň za vystoupení z EU „Vote Leave“ a na nejméně výraznější kampaň za setrvání „Britain Stronger in Europe“. Vliv těchto kampaní byl nepopíratelně velmi silný. Zejména u kampaně prosazující vystoupení z EU se ve velkém množství objevovaly dezinformace a populistická rétorika. Kampaň cílila na lidi skrze jejich sociální sítě a čelila kritice za zneužívání dat a neoznačenou reklamu.

Pátá kapitola porovnává osobnosti dvou politiků a ministerských předsedů, zásadních pro vývoj Velké Británie ve vztahu k evropským zemím, Winstona Churchilla a Borise Johnsona. Churchill stál u zrodu debat mezi Británií a Evropským společenstvím, i přesto že se polemizuje, zda byl výhradně pro myšlenku integrace mezi tyto země, evropská spolupráce byla dle něj správným krokem v revitalizaci poválečné Evropy. Johnson na druhou stranu definitivně vyvedl Británii z tohoto partnerství a svými neústupnými názory a tvrdou rétorikou obhájil pozici premiéra. Johnsonovi se splnil dlouholetý sen, vystoupení z EU a nyní vede Velkou Británii jako samostatnou a suverénní zemi.

Poslední část reflektuje otisk Brexitu v Britské literatuře a knižním průmyslu. Prostor dostala dystopická beletrie a ve společnosti vzrostl zájem o knihy typu *1984* George Orwella.

Brexit je nepopíratelně zásadním milníkem ve vývoji britských dějin a společnost je tímto krokem poznamenána naprosto zásadně. Ještě mnoho dalších let budou Britové pocítovat následky svého rozhodnutí a budou se muset sžívat s realitou samostatné země. Je otázkou zda Spojené Království ztratí v průběhu let punc multikulturní a vyspělé země, nebo naopak obnoví a naváže na dobu svého největšího rozkvětu. Po referendu z roku 2016 začala nová kapitola pro Velkou Británii, Evropskou unii, ale i celý svět.

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Annotation

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Department: Department of English and American studies

Title of the thesis: Brexit and Its Reflection in British Society and Literature

Supervisor: doc. Mgr. Pavlína Flajšarová, Ph.D.

Number of pages: 52

Number of appendices: 2

Key words: Brexit, European Union, United Kingdom, British society, campaign, David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Winston Churchill, fishery policy, immigration, referendum, literature

The purpose of this bachelor thesis is to introduce and describe Brexit and how it reflects in British society and literature. This thesis is divided into six main chapters. The first part of this text focuses on the Brexit itself and the development before the Brexit referendum, followed by the difficult negotiations between the United Kingdom and the European Union. Several issues are introduced which arose after the Brexit referendum and Britons had to deal with them such as border controls, tariffs or lack of foreigner workers for the seasonal jobs. The fourth chapter analyse the influence of the political campaigns before the referendum. This thesis also contains the comparison between Churchill's and Johnson's politics and the reflection of Brexit in literature and its influence on the publishing industry.

Anotace

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Název práce: Reflexe Brexitu v britské společnosti a literatuře

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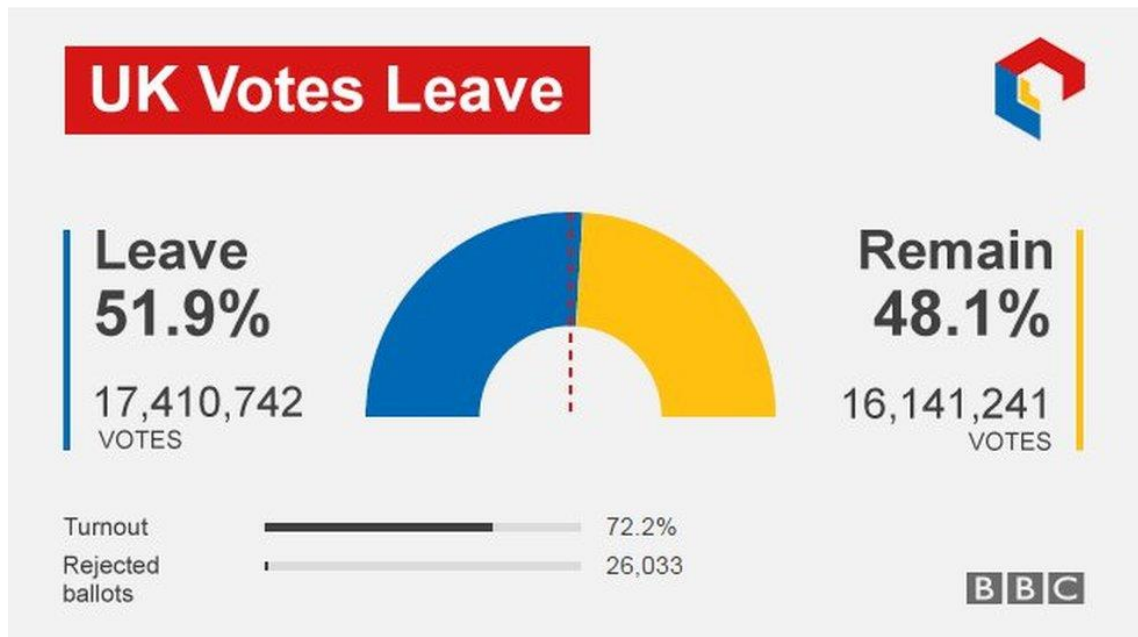
Počet stran: 52

Počet příloh: 2

Klíčová slova: Brexit, Evropská Unie, Velká Británie, britská společnost, kampaň, David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Winston Churchill, politika rybolovu, imigrace, referendum, literatura

Cílem této bakalářské práce je představit a popsat Brexit a jeho reflexi v britské společnosti a literatuře. Práce je rozdělena do šesti hlavních kapitol. První část se soustředí na samotný Brexit a na vývoj, který předcházel referendu. Následuje kapitola o obtížných vyjednáváních mezi Spojeným Královstvím a Evropskou unií. Poté jsou představeny problémy, které se po referendu objevily a s nimiž se Britové museli vyrovnat, například: hraniční kontroly, cla nebo nedostatek zahraničních pracovníků na sezónní práce. Čtvrtá kapitola analyzuje politické kampaně, které se odehrály před referendem. Práce rovněž porovnává politiku Winstona Churchilla a Borise Johnsona. V neposlední řadě je zmíněn vliv Brexitu v literatuře.

Appendices



Appendix 1

EU REFERENDUM – Results. *BBC News*.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu_referendum/results. Accessed February 28, 2021.



Appendix 2

Vote Leave's targeted Brexit ads released by Facebook. *BBC News*.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-44966969>. Accessed March 9, 2021.