The United Kingdom

Placing the UK in an European context

Maastricht University

European Studies - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

31st of March 2009

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Preface

The curriculum of the European Studies Bachelor at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University very much emphasises an interdisciplinary as well as interactive approach. Whereas the former implies that history, politics, economics, law and social sciences are mostly looked at simultaneously in order to understand the link between most relevant developments, the latter demands strong discipline from all students in order to succeed in the numerous group works. This book – accomplished in the course 2D Area Studies – is the result of a project combining the interdisciplinary and interactive elements to the highest degree. Over a period of eight weeks, our group, consisting of ten students, indulged in the United Kingdom in all possible fields of study, trying to get as deep an insight into British culture as possible. Hereby the choice of country was due to the personal interest of all group members, as was the overall formulated research question – "What are the factors for British reluctance towards the project of the European Union".

Our acknowledgement goes to Dr. P. Stephenson who supported us during these eight weeks with detailed knowledge and advise, as well as an ever continuous patience towards our linguistic inefficiencies. We thank C. Müller for her hospitality and generosity during the final editing of this paper.

UK Group 1

Maastricht, 1st of April 2009

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Introduction

Arguably, the United Kingdom is one of the world's, and certainly one of Europe's, most prominent and influential nations. The UK has the longest standing parliamentary democracy in the world, and was the first nation to industrialize. A little over hundred years ago, the British Empire was the largest the world has ever seen until today – stretched over approximately 25% of the planet's land. Consequently, the UK has played a major role in the development and spread of democracy, capitalism, language and less tangible developments such as cultural and societal traits – although the role of other nations should not be neglected in these respects.

This book concerns the UK's historical and contemporary relationship to Europe – more specifically, the EU. Many times, developments on the continent, most notably the western part, were influenced by actions taken by the UK. Conversely, developments within the UK were at the same time the result of events or decisions taken within the EU. A vast amount of books, academic articles, theories and media publications suggest that the UK – EU relationship is mostly constrained by the UK's public discourse to demand a special place in European (and world) affairs – especially when placed in its historical context of the British Empire. Others argue that the UK's pursuance of political, military and economic interests are less dependent on cooperation on a EU level than compared to, for instance, France and Germany. Moreover, a popular perception of continental European and British people alike is that the UK is a staunch opponent of Europe and blocks every attempt for integration on a European level unless it benefits from it or gains something.

Our research, however, departed from a neutral vantage point. Hence, the central theme throughout the book is: What explains the UK's reluctance, or the perception thereof, towards the project of European integration? On the one hand, this book will bring forward arguments that at least partially oppose the credibility of the claim of a presumed incompatible relationship between the UK and the EU on certain policy areas. On the other hand, this book strives to enhance the reader's understanding of the existence of some valid reasons for the UK's reluctance towards deeper integration.

The first chapter is an introductory chapter. It provides a brief outlook on the historical development from the beginning of the British Empire to its slow, but continuous decline. The chapter will elaborate on most of the important and relevant institutions and actors in the

UK's governmental system. These have been placed in the historical framework of post-war consensus, Thatcherism and post-Thatcherism. Furthermore, the UK's regions and the process of devolution are scrutinised.

Chapter two discusses the development of the British economy and its economical position vis-à-vis Europe. The industrial revolution, as well as its transformation into a post-World War II economy is given much attention, as British historical economic development is of major importance for understanding the British economy of today. Then, the revolution of Thatcherism will be examined as well as the impact Thatcherism has on today's New Labour policies. Furthermore, also the influence of Thatcherism on continental Europe is relevant in order to understand the current British position. Finally, the linkages between the British economy and continental European economy will be observed by asking the question why the EU – UK relationship is partially strained.

Chapter three is concerned with the differences and coherences between the U.K. and continental Europe in cultural and societal terms. The fundamental question asked throughout the chapter is why there is this perception of difference on both continental and 'island' side, although we are all share the same nomination, Europeans? This part particularly concerns the notion of Britain in terms of culture, society and also art, compared to continental Europe and why a distinction has to be made indeed. Furthermore, imperialism and immigration brought significant changes to British society. Hence, this chapter will devote a section to multiculturalism and integration. Additionally, the economic developments led to a certain degree of class distinctions and conflicts. Hence, class society will be analysed. In the final section, British popular culture will be examined in terms of art, music and sports.

The fourth chapter provides a case study which contrasts the UK with the Netherlands. More specifically, the observations from the previous chapter will be used to examine the differences or similarities between these two nations. By contrasting the UK with the Netherlands, this chapter helps to understand the UK's position vis-a-vis continental Europe – notwithstanding there are major differences between continental European nation states as well. First, the differences between institutions and actors are analysed. For instance, the British majoritarian model versus the Dutch consensus model of government. Furthermore, both countries have a rich colonial history, and the differences on impact on modern society will thus be highlighted. Moreover, class distinctions as well as the role of monarchies in each

country are discussed. Finally, Euro-scepticism in both countries is, at the time of writing, on the rise. Hence an analysis between the two will be drawn.

In our final chapter, after having examined all the different aspects and characteristics of the UK, we turn to look at the relationship between the UK and the EU. During the first part, a brief elaboration on the UK's historical relationship with the EU will be given in accordance with the observations gathered from the previous chapters. Then, the two major theoretical frameworks on European integration, namely neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism, are explained. From there, we move to the UK's political attitude towards the EU, the UK's membership in the EU and its implications for foreign policy. Finally, there is a scrutiny of the EU's perception of the UK.

The book will end by reviewing all the parts in a larger, inter-related context. In the conclusion one will find an overview of arguments that lead to an understanding of the UK's reluctance.

Chapter 1

Establishing Basic Knowledge on the United Kingdom

1.1. Introduction

The United Kingdom is – from a continental point of view – marked by several peculiar features: no written constitution; a House of Lords, until recent times made up of hereditary peers; a monarchy with an impressive media coverage all over Europe; and a clear distinctiveness of being British, meaning being different from the rest of Europe. Furthermore, looking at its history, the UK is the oldest democracy of the world as it was the first to establish the so called *Magna Carta* in 1215 and to introduce the Bill of Rights in 1689, which set permanent limitations to the crown's rule and therefore was the beginning of the Constitutional Monarchy.

In consequence, there is need for clarification of these issues as well as for an explanation of the relevant players in the UK's governmental system. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to establish a common basic knowledge of the UK as well as to act as an introduction to British society on which grounds the following chapters will build up. Additionally, throughout this chapter, the influence of the EU will be mentioned. This is meant to give an idea of the interrelation between the nation state and the supranational community. Nonetheless, this being a chapter establishing basic knowledge, there will be no major conclusions drawn on the topic of UK-EU relations. However, it is advisable to keep the findings in mind because the positioning of the UK towards and within the EU will be subject to more detailed research in later chapters.

The examination of the UK's system of government as well as its institutions and actors, will be subject to this chapter. Therefore, this chapter firstly provides a short outlook on the historical development from the beginning of the British Empire to it slow, but continuous decline. The end of the Empire is the beginning of the commonwealth, which – as Queen Elizabeth II said – is built on friendship, loyalty, and the desire for freedom and peace. Having regarded this essential period, the paper will move on to, secondly, focus on the political and institutional developments from 1945 until today. Considering the overall picture, three periods can be distinguished in the political development: post-war consensus, Thatcherism, and post-Thatcherism. These three periods allow to identify the outstanding movements and streams since 1945. However, before going into further detail about these periods, thirdly, the general political institutions have to be understood. Using Lijphart's two dimensional model of democracy, the UK can clearly be distinguished as a majoritarian

democracy with all the essential features. Thus, the role of the unwritten constitution, of the executive, of the legislative and of the judiciary will be examined. This will include an analysis of the House of Commons and House of Lords, as well as of the constitutional monarchy. Adding to this, the role of parties is particularly important in the UK. Therefore, this chapter will fourthly examine the development of Labour and Conservative Party, which are the two main parties in this majoritarian system. Nevertheless, other parties also exist on a national as well as on the regional level. Even though their media coverage might be less overwhelming, they are not only of importance for representative democracy, but also help to govern the UK more effectively. Hence, this leads, fifthly, to an examination of devolution. This feature, which has been achieved in the post-Thatcher era, occurred for several reasons of which one is the need for more effective governing. A theoretical and practical discussion on the role of new social movements will conclude this chapter. This is placed at the end of the examination of political institutions, because new social movements are a recent development whose impacts are not yet clear. Some argue it is the new chance to validate representative democracy again, others argue it to be its downfall.

1.2 From Empire to Commonwealth of Nations – a short introduction to UK's history

1.2.1 Expansion and Retreat

The British Empire has left a lasting impression on the modern world. In only one century it rapidly expanded and equally quickly lost its control over the overseas territories. In 1857 Britain faced a major uprising of 'sepoys' (native Indian troops serving the British army), this 'Indian Mutiny' was brutally put down but it convinced the British of a new policy course that was pursued for almost a century until British rule in India ended. The British East India Company was dissolved, and India came under direct control of the British government. In 1877 the Conservative prime minister Benjamin Disraeli suggested to Queen Victoria that she should be proclaimed Empress of India. The power of the British Empire was unmatched (Palmer, 2007, p. 660-661). To turn even further to the east, Hong Kong is also a former colony of the British Empire. By the late 1970s it developed into the world's third most important financial centre after New York and London, a major economic power under British rule. Under the Anglo-Chinese agreement of 1898 in Nanking the Chinese approved

the lease of Hong Kong by Britain. This lease would end in 1997 and thus in the same year the British handed over the control of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China. These two events mark the expansion and the retreat of the British Empire, which in 1884 the British politician Lord Rosebery in 1884, called "a Commonwealth of nations" (Darwin, 1988, p. 310-311 and Palmer, 2007, p. 915).

The expansion of the British Empire since 1800 can be divided into three phases. The start of the British Empire is marked by the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. The substantial commercial and economic growth in Britain that followed leading to the Industrial Revolution supported and strengthened the effort for colonial expansion. This lasted until 1914 when WW I and the Great Depression emptied the financial resources of the Empire. The former naval supremacy was abandoned and the aggressive Victorian expansion was over. Furthermore, the Empire was losing influence, wealth and territory. The final phase that truly marked the end of the British Empire was from 1945. Britain could, by no means, keep control on the overseas territories any longer and finally decolonialization set in (Darwin, 1988, p. 5-6).

Colonial rule depended on a number of factors at the international, the metropolitan (or urban) and the colonial or local level. On the international level, the colonial system was sustained by a pattern of world trade by the European colonial powers, their reluctance to engage each other in colonial conflicts, by the differences in military technology which secured their control and finally by an international culture that justified their control over non-European countries. On the metropolitan and local level the colonial system needed to be sustained by an economic and military capacity, a friendly political climate and an economy able to shift the focus between the motherland and the colony. An economy with the sole purpose of the economic prosperity of the motherland would eventually lead to public unrest because of lesser economic gain in the colony itself. Any change in a favourable condition on any level, was bound to change the relationship between the motherland and the colonial territories. A rupture such as WW II changed the conditions for colonial rule to an extent that the British needed to change their colonial policy and management of the colonial resources during WW II. This created new political conditions in the colonial territories which made their colonial rule harder to maintain. At the international and metropolitan level, the effects of WW II ignited resistance against the former European powers, and Britain did not have the resources to retain its colonial power. Ultimately, the European colonial powers depended on

each others support, which, however, dissolved after WW II (Darwin, 1988, p.17-25). The support of the colonial powers to each other depended on the world trade and the economic gain they could extract from the colonies. The colonial powers would not condemn each other as long they all could retain their power overseas. This balance of power was disrupted by the events of the Second World War.

1.2.2 The White Dominions and Decolonisation

British imperial policy was not a political or constitutional unity. Overall the imperial policy implied greater self-determination or self-control by the colonies, although self-determination was greater for some territories than for others. Canada obtained self-government around the 1840s and in 1867 Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were united to form 'One Dominion under the Name of Canada'. This dominion status comprehended self-government by a common federal parliament and independence in external affairs such as tariffs and foreign affairs. This dominion status was later granted to Australia (1901), New Zealand (1907), the Union of South Africa (1910) and Ireland in the 1920s (Palmer, 2007, p. 552-553). In 1926 the Balfour Report on Imperial Relations redefined the characteristics of the dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status and in no way subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, united by a common allegiance to the crown" (Ferguson, 2004, p.326). The Balfour Report was adopted in the 1931 Statute of Westminster the Act by Parliament that finally legislated the dominion status. The dominions would be unified under the British Commonwealth of Nations, from which they were free to withdraw at any time (Ferguson, 2004)

The decolonialisation of the 'white dominions' did not go unnoticed, and the Indian Empire (including Pakistan and Bangladesh) increased pressure on Britain for independence. During the Second World War the Indian Empire supported the British, but to retain this support Britain pledged to grant independence to the Indian Empire after the war. The British promise for independence was not unexpected. Imperial policy recognized early on (especially after the 'Indian Mutiny') that the participation of Indians was essential and very efficient for governing India. In 1919 the reform act granted an Indian share in the government of provinces and set up a Legislative Assembly in New Delhi. After 1930 the British granted complete control of the provincial government to elected Indians, but British control of the central government, the currency, the military and foreign affaires was

preserved. Eventually, in 1947 India and Pakistan achieved independence as dominions and members of the Commonwealth, shortly after Sri Lanka followed in 1948. (Darwin, 1988, p. 79-81 and Palmer, 2007, p. 917-918)

1.2.3 The Commonwealth and the Constitutional Crisis

Before 1939 the dominions, as members of the Commonwealth, were obliged to recognize the British monarch as their head of state. A republican constitution was therefore incompatible with a membership of the Commonwealth. The British monarch as head of state of the dominions was very important to the British although there was no direct control. The constitutional link between the dominions ensured the British of a unity in a decentralized imperial system. In 1949, however, after India adopted a republican constitution, Britain was forced to change the legal construction of the Commonwealth. From then on former British territories could join the Commonwealth with a republican constitution as long as they recognized the British monarch as the head of the Commonwealth (Darwin, 1988, p. 149-151).

Although the British Empire is dissolved, the Commonwealth remains albeit without the word 'British'. When Queen Elizabeth II was crowned, she became the head of the modern Commonwealth, stating that "[t]he Commonwealth bears no resemblance to the empires of the past. It is an entirely new conception built on the highest qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty, and the desire for freedom and peace". (Queen Elizabeth II, "Head of the Commonwealth", thecommonwealth.org) Britain remained linked to the Commonwealth through trade, but after Britain entered the European Common Market British trade became focused on Europe. The Commonwealth of today consists of fifty-four members and is arguably not more than a club within a club (the United Nations) that shares the English language.

1.3 From 1945 to 2008 – A short Introduction to Political History

1.3.1 Post-War Consensus

When Nazi Germany surrendered in 1945, in the UK the successful war-coalition between Conservatives and Labour found its end and the first elections since 1935 were held. Having

observed the developments after 1945, British political history can be divided into three main eras. First, the period of post-war consensus, second, the period of Thatcher's government and third, the post-Thatcher era. These three periods will be covered and further explained in the following section.

On 5th of July 1945, the first elections after World War II were held in the UK. After the Conservative party had ruled over a period of 10 years without holding elections due to a need for unity caused by WWII, it was time to ask the people to whom they entrusted the post-war rebuilding process. The Conservative party, led by war-hero Winston Churchill was challenged by Clement Attlee, former coalition partner of the Conservatives during WW II and head of the Labour party. The outcome of these first post-war elections was surprising, stating a vast majority of 393 to 197 seats for Labour. This result can be explained by the extensive social, economic and political changes during WW II (Marsh, 1999, p.148). Johnson argues, that the "total mobilization of the war effort, […] was dependent on the establishment of a much more communitarian ethos within British society" (p.150). In order to establish this ethos, the uniting belief for a better life in the post-war period was spread. As the Labour manifesto of 1945 states, "the men and women in the Fighting service […] deserve and must be assured a happier future than so many faced after the last war. Labour regards their welfare as a sacred trust" (Kimber, 2008). Their concept of welfare incorporated social security and the introduction of a national health service, the nationalisation of key industries and strong state intervention. Johnson argues, that the communitarian ethos created during WWII could only be satisfied by an intervening state, resulting in the post-war consensus. The post-war consensus was based on the Keynesian model, proclaiming an active state, which was applied by Labour after the 1945 elections and accepted as the new political route by the Conservatives in their Industrial Charter of 1947 (Wrigley, 1997). Until 1979, the year Margaret Thatcher was elected, the post-war consensus was the main political route. In the time-period between 1945 and 1979, the UK was governed by 6 different politicians (Attlee, Churchill, Eden, Macmillan, Wilson, Heath), 17 years each by Conservatives and Labour (Marsh, 1999).

When the Bretton Woods system collapsed in 1971, the British welfare state, based on spending money on the economy stood at the brink to destruction. Between 1974 and 1979, Pound Sterling lost more than half its value and forced the current government to take loans

from the International Monetary Fund (Geppert, 2002, p.183). James Callaghan, political advisor and later head of the Labour party claimed in his speech for the party members:

> We used to think that you could spend your way out of a recession and increase employment by cutting taxes and boosting government spending. I tell you in all candour that that option no longer exists, and insofar as it ever did exist, it only worked on each occasion since the war by infecting a bigger dose of inflation into the economy, followed by a higher level of unemployment as the next step (Callaghan in Geppert, 2002, p.183).

1.3.2 Thatcherism

In 1979 Britain elected its first female prime minister, Margaret Thatcher. While the Labour party was struggling with an internal shift to the left as well as with the question of how to overcome the internal division, the 1979 elections showed the Conservatives and their new head most trusted by the people. The Conservatives opposed state intervention in the economy and the strong position of the trade unions, as well as public spending, which they called a "waste of money" (Conservative Manifesto, 1979). Their goal was to cut back state expenditures and to "restore that self-reliance and self-confidence which are the basis of personal responsibility and national success" (Conservative Manifesto, 1979). It was not only the Conservatives that were about to bring change to the UK, but rather Margaret Thatcher herself. It is argued, that her personality and style made her the most successful British politician in post-war times (Marsh, 1999, p.169). The eleven years of her government became famous as the period of Thatcherism, underlining her importance and influence. As described by Marsh (1999), many scholars describe her as a proponent of the "New Right" movement, expressing a strictly capitalistic attitude in policy making (p.168-173). One of the first steps of her government was concerned with fighting inflation and economic downfall. In accordance with monetarist doctrine, she cut back or eliminated most subsidies, privatised the state-owned industries, including steel, coal, water, electricity, radio, gas aerospace and gas supply. Furthermore, investments in health care and education were reduced. Due to these steps, she succeeded in decreasing public spendings, as well as fighting inflation. Industries had to become more efficient, consequently resulting in a reduction of jobs. While in 1979 1.3 million British were unemployed the number rose within the first two years of her government to more than 2.6 million, reaching over 3 million in 1986 (Thatcher, 2009). After three decades of welfare and social state, Thatcher's strict monetarist approach was disturbing for those who relied on the state. Also her fight against the unions, the reoccupation of the

Falklands in 1982 as well as her harsh criticism against the USSR gave her the nickname 'Iron Lady' (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 2009a.).

> Margaret Thatcher remains an intensely controversial figure in Britain. Critics claim that her economic policies were divisive socially, that she was harsh or 'uncaring' in her politics, and hostile to the institutions of the British welfare state. Defenders point to a transformation in Britain's economic performance over the course of the Thatcher Governments and those of her successors as prime minister. Trade union reforms, privatisation, deregulation, a strong anti-inflationary stance, and control of tax and spending have created better economic prospects for Britain than seemed possible when she became prime minister in 1979 (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 2009b).

1.3.3 The post-Thatcher period:

After Margaret Thatcher resigned duty in 1990 due to internal struggles in the Conservative party on her Euro-sceptic policy making, John Major became her elected successor. He had to address a number of difficulties, such as the high unemployment rate while facing lacking public support due to unpopular decisions by his predecessor (Marsh, 1999, p.191). Stuck between continuing the inherited government and putting new policies into work, Major included in his government all different types of political groups within the Conservative Party and based his decisions on consensus. According to McAnulla, it was due to his style of consensual governing, that he was not taken seriously by the British population (in Marsh, 1999). While Thatcher was able to rule with an Iron Fist, Major had to struggle with the division within his party and slowly diminishing public support, leaving him with a minority government before the 1997 elections. His political style was rather a continuation of Thatcher's free market, even though he opposed some of her political decisions such as the strict Euro-scepticism. He, for instance, signed the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Concluding it can be said, that he continued Thatcher's legacy, giving it his own touch. While in 1990 the inflation rate was still at 9.7 percent, it had dropped to 2.3 percent in 1997. Also, economic growth, which was declining by 1.5 percent in 1991 was increasing by 3.5 percent at the end of his legacy in 1997 (Major, n.d.).

In the 1997 elections, Tony Blair and his 'New Labour' movement celebrated their first victory after 18 years and gained a vast majority of 418 to 165 seats, which was the worst result for the Conservatives since the January elections of 1910 (Boothtroyd, 2009). New Labour represents a strong right shift of Labour under Kinnock and his successor Blair. While

also introducing less liberal measures, such as the Train to Gain[1] program, the movement to the right within the New Labour movement can be seen as the continuation of old Thatcher monetarism (Marsh, 1999). .

1.3.4 Summary of the Political History

The three periods of UK politics show three different approaches of government. While the post-war period concentrated on common good and full employment, Thatcher opposed any kind of welfare state. The first two periods can be seen as extremely contradictory, while the differences between Thatcherism and post-Thatcher era stay rather marginal. As McAnulla argues, "the Major period demonstrated overwhelming continuity with the Thatcher era" (in Marsh, 1999, p.207). Nevertheless, the post-Thatcher era had to cope with the consequences of the radical reforms of the Thatcher government. Concluding it can be said, that only in 1997 with the takeover by Blair's New Labour government, the repercussions of early Thatcherism finally vanished, with decreasing unemployment rates and inflation, as well as increasing economic growth.

1.4 Traditional Political Institutions

1.4.1 Towards a Parliamentary Democracy

To get an overview of the British government and its function as a whole, the categorization of democracy introduced by Lijphart, is used here. Today's Westminster model of democracy can be described as a majoritarian democracy in contrast to the consensus model. This is due to the fact, that the political power is concentrated in a single-party majority cabinet which is the dominant executive. The government is marked by its two party system which is constituted by the Conservative Party and the Labour Party. The legislative power is concentrated in the parliament which contains the powerful House of Commons as well as the less significant House of Lords. The cabinet consists of members of the party that has the majority in the House of Commons. The people elect the members of the House of Commons via a disproportional electoral system. The UK is further ruled by a centralized government on

[1] Train to gain is a state paid program to train employees and employers to increase their work efficiency and can therefore be seen as an equalizer between those who can afford good education and who can not.

which the different parts of the country are dependent. A further characteristic of the majoritarian system is the unwritten and, therefore, flexible constitutions which is amendable by a simple majority. Accordingly, only a weak judicial review exists. The legislatures are sovereign and have the final word on constitutionality (Lijphart, 1999).

Having thus identified the UK as a role model for majoritarian democracy, the individual aspects, namely the unwritten constitution, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary will be examined in the following.

1.4.2 The Unwritten Constitution

The first important source of law was the *Magna Carta* of 1215, which constituted the principle of government restriction by law granting individual liberties and setting the basis for today's parliament: a "royal government must function both through judicial processes and with the counsel of the great men of the kingdom" (Wicks, 2006, p.6).

In the turn of history, the Bill of Rights in 1689 did not only settle the conflict between monarchy and parliament that went on for decades but also established a clearer constitutional contract between the two Houses of Parliament and the Monarch's government. It restraint the power of the monarchy, which turned out to be the creation of the constitutional monarchy. Additionally, it served the individual by granting more rights and liberties (Wicks, 2006). Furthermore, the Reform Act of 1832 and the Representation of the People Act of 1867, transformed the system of representation by extending the franchise and paved the way for a modern democracy including democratic representation and legitimacy. Moreover, the Parliament Act of 1911 rearranged and consolidated the powers of the Houses whereas the House of Commons was granted the right to legislate and the House of Lords only the right to delay (Forman & Baldwin, 2007). Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that there is no written British constitution but only a set of principles, laws and court judgements. Thus, this set of rules, which make up a *de facto* constitution, are extremely flexible and object to interpretation if circumstances require to do so. Only through the EU membership, the UK's sovereign position, as well as the sovereignty of its unwritten constitution are object to discussion. The first noticeable act of this sort was the European Convention on Human Rights in 1953 which finally set legal ground for the protection of human rights. Furthermore, the European Communities Act of 1972, which established European legal supremacy over

the UK constitution, was a landmark in UK's constitutional history (Wicks, 2006). Due to these developments, it can be said that British people today live in a "[p]arliamentary democracy which is a constitutional monarchy within a partly supranational European Union" (Forman & Baldwin, 2007, p.492). This should be kept in mind throughout the book, because loss of sovereignty and the establishment of a foreign court with the power to judge upon British constitutionality are two of the main arguing points which strengthen the very Eurosceptic attitude of the British towards the EU.

1.4.3 The Executive

In a parliamentary government system, the executive is indirectly elected by the parliament and is responsible to it. This means that the parliament can dismiss the prime minister who is himself not elected by the people. Therefore, he or she must always have the majority of the votes of the current parliament (Gallagher, Laver & Mair, 2005). Theoretically, the cabinet is the main deciding institution in the British political system, however, much also depends on the individual prime minister and the support he enjoys in the House of Commons, the relation to the opposition and the pressure of interest groups and the media. Therefore, there is a big controversy concerning the extend of the prime minister's power. Besides appointing and dismissing government ministers and appointing senior civil servants, the prime minister has some significant powers within the parliament, the party, the government and on the national and international stage where he has to give a clear lead in important affairs. In the government, he has control over the agenda as well as the right to establish cabinet committees in which, as well as in the cabinet itself, he chairs the most important discussions and meetings. Additionally, he may bypass the formal meetings through informal conversations and meetings and get the best advice from outside the government as well as from the Civil Service (Forman & Baldwin, 2007). Moreover, in recent decades his power stems from the focus of media and public as well as from his leadership within the party, which has the majority in the parliament where he has the power to dismiss and appoint ministers. Therefore, one can say that the prime minister's power varies. It depends on the individual himself or herself and his/her position in the media and the public, the standing of the leading party and whether it supports the prime minister. As Forman and Baldwin (2007) put it: "The powers of the Prime Minister have varied with the personality of the Prime Minister or with the particular political circumstances of his tenure" (p.297).

The cabinet is composed of the ministers, the heads of the several departments, who are appointed by the prime minister. The cabinet is the key decision maker of the executive. However, the weekly meetings, are usually a formality and only little discussion takes place since the main decisions are already taken between the prime minister and the concerned Departmental Minister or committee. The huge network of cabinet committees plays vital role. The committees are composed out of the relevant ministers, according to the particular policy area. They have the power to take decisions in the name of the cabinet while the ballot in the ministerial meetings is only a formality. There are three main tasks to be fulfilled by the Cabinet. First of all, the Ministers take the major decisions of the government. Secondly, they are responsible for discussing key problems, such as global warming or sustainable development, and finding a common position. Thirdly, they are in charge of taking the interests of all the departments into account and coordinate the departments, since they may effect each other. The administrative body, which supports the Cabinet, by for instance scheduling and setting the agenda, is the Cabinet office (Forman & Baldwin, 2007).

Concerning the relationship between prime minister and cabinet, it can be said that their work is linked and, therefore, none can act without the cooperation of the other. Additionally, it is also "...the other actors in the political process – the political parties, pressure groups, the Civil Service, the media, the markets, foreign Governments and public opinion – which keep both Prime Minister and Cabinet in check" (Forman & Baldwin, 2007, p. 297).

A further component of the executive is the Queen. The British Monarchy is very popular and receives huge support and loyalty from the people. While the Queen formally constituted an institution, she only has a formal or representative role today, since she is expected to always act according to the views or preferences of the prime minister. Nevertheless, the Monarchy is a national symbol and is, therefore, very important for British identity and as a uniting symbol in times of crises. That is why the Queen's symbolic functions, such as opening the parliament, representing Britain abroad, visiting all parts of the UK and participating in military and religious ceremonies, are quite important. Moreover, the Queen is the head of the Church of England and thus also carries a spiritual role. Despite the fact that the Queen does not have any real political power, she still has some political functions. First of all, she chooses the elected leader of the party with the majority for prime minister and appoints peers for the House of Lords. At the request of the prime minister, she

may even dissolve the parliament and make a range of public appointments according to his decision. Moreover, she has to give her assent to the legislation, however, this is only a formality. The conclusion of treaties, declarations of war and granting civilian and military honours are some more formal actions. Though, she has more influence when a 'hung parliament' – a parliament without a party majority – is elected (Forman & Baldwin, 2007).

Although, it has no real political power, "[t]he Monarchy plays an important part in preserving the cohesion of British society and it contributes significantly to the sense of underlying national unity which helps to hold the British people together" (Forman and Baldwin, 2007, p.218).

1.4.4 The Legislative: House of Commons, House of Lords and the Committees

The Glorious Revolution had established Parliament's supremacy over the King. The democratic principle also led to the supremacy of the elected chamber over the unelected. Bicameralism was thus a core feature of British government since the early nineteenth century. The elected chamber or lower chamber is called the House of Commons and has now 659 Members of Parliament (MPs). The number of its members has varied over time as a consequence of devolution and also due to the increasing size of population The term of parliament is fixed to five years. The parliamentarians are elected on the grounds of a plurality electoral system, which is also called single-member plurality or first-past-the-post system (Jones & Moran, 2004).

The United Kingdom is divided into 659 constituencies which return each one MP to the House of Commons. The candidate who receives the largest number of votes is declared the winner. Since the winner needs no overall majority, the system cannot be said to produce a MP who is representative for the votes. Naturally, this results in a more strategic thinking of voters. The House of Commons is rather unrepresentative in general. As Jones and Moran (2004) noticed, the members of the House of Commons are likely to be male, middle-class and white, a fact that does reflect neither the British society nor the public opinion. The authors suggest that the length of time which MPs serve in the House is responsible for the persistence of the MP's profile. Given the fact that a typical member sits in the House of Commons for up to 20 years and that the number of career politicians is steady, it seems unlikely that the situation will change any time soon (Jones and Moran, 2004).

The upper house in the United Kingdom is called the House of Lords. It has its origins in the Anglo-Saxon *Witenagemot* and the *Curia Regis* (Jones and Moran, 2004, p.430). The composition of the King's curia comprised the lords spiritual (churchmen) and the lords temporal (earls and chief barons) – two terms which evolved during the curia's history. The House of Lords was based on the principle of hereditary which made it an unrepresentative body. This was the case until the House was transformed first by the Life Peerages Act in 1858 and then by the House of Lords Act in 1999. The transformation of the House of Lords resulted in the replacement of hereditary peers by life peers. Life peers are likely to be drawn from a more diverse social background as opposed to the hereditary peers who came from the upper class society.

As it is the case with most upper houses in Europe, the members of the House of Lords are appointed by regional councils. The members of the upper house are not elected because the British felt that an elected chamber represents a challenge to the superior House of Commons and would make a balance between both Houses difficult. However, the House of Lords fulfills also tasks done by the House of Commons such as scrutiny. (Jones and Moran, 2004).

Returning to the relation between government and parliament, we could ask the question in how far the parliament is able to check the government's action. As outlined by Gallagher, strong parliaments are those with committees that can do scrutiny. The importance of committees was also stressed by Strom saying that "committees are among the most significant internal organizational features of modern parliaments" (Strom, 1998, p.143). Nevertheless, the success of committees in the UK is very limited. The reason for this might be the majoritarian model which is characterized by party competition in the parliament and executive dominance (Judge, 2005, p.63). In this respect, the obstacles encountered by select committees make successful scrutiny impossible. However, recent developments show that selected committees have been increasingly effective in scrutinizing the work of government since the 1980s.

1.4.5 The Judiciary

In order to explain the British Judiciary, it is necessary to remember that there is only statute law and common law, but no written constitution. Against this background it appears logical

that the UK has no Supreme Court like the USA or the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) in Germany. In the United Kingdom the courts are bound by the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty, established by the Bill of Rights of 1689 (Jones and Moran, 2004, p.564). Thus, the judiciary lacks the power to do something against an act of parliament contradicting the constitution. However, while there is no judicial review in the traditional sense, meaning the authority of an institution to invalidate the acts of government on the grounds that these acts have violated constitutional rules, courts do have the power to review the action of ministers and other public agents and to declare them as being *ultra vires* – meaning that the decision made was not in the power of this person. Furthermore, the British judiciary is also different from other European systems because of the law-making powers of the judges. Since there are no written legal codes, the common law systems rely on the law "seen as the accumulated weight of precedent set by the decisions, definitions, and interpretations made by judges" (Gallagher, 2007, p.234). Thus, in the United Kingdom if a precedent applies to the case in question, it is the law. However, British membership of the European Union seems to have changed the British judiciary in that it allows judges to directly refer to the European Convention on Human Rights now incorporated into British law. Thus, again, the sovereignty of EU law over the British common law system should be kept in mind, when trying to understand reluctance of the UK to indulge in further European integration.

1.5 The Party Landscape

1.5.1 The Labour Party

One of the characteristics of a majoritarian democracy is the two-party system; in the UK these are namely the Labour Party and the Conservative Party. The British governmental system can be described as a "party government", thus politics and governing is predominantly done by political parties.[2] Therefore it is reasonable to take a closer look at the party landscape of the UK in this section.

[2] Definition of political parties: "an organized and relatively disciplined group of people who freely combine to advance a set of political attitudes or beliefs with a view to translating them via success at elections into administrative decisions or legislative actions" (Forman,2007, p.94)

The current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, James Gordon Brown, is also the head of the democratic socialist party, the Labour Party. His party was established in 1900, as the Labour Representation Committee (LRC). It was the result of several decades of trade union politics. As Garner and Kelly put it, "Labour is unique amongst the major British parties, since it is the only one that originated outside parliament" (Judge, 2005, p.89). Thus, in contrast to the Conservative party, Labour was created bottom-up instead of top-down. In a nutshell, it can be said that Labour supports the working class and their values as well as a strong role of the state, which also interferes with the economy in order to accomplish economic prosperity. Furthermore, the Labour party brings into action provision of social welfare. Their ideology is linked to socialism and thus also to "moral collectivism" (Forman, 2007, p.105). According to the homepage of the Labour party, the main values they represent and support are "social justice", "strong community and strong values", "reward for hard work", "decency" and "rights matched by responsibilities" (Labour Party, 2009).

When looking at the development of Labour during the post-war area it becomes obvious that it took some time and a lot of quarrel until they had transformed the party into what it is today. Clement Attlee brought the party again into British government in 1945, after it had been out of office since 1935 (Dickers, 2009). During his time of government, he initiated a social welfare system. Until 1951, Attlee introduced the national health service as well as an education act. Furthermore, he nationalized important branches of industry, which were after his time in office privatised again among others by Thatcher. India gained its independence during Attlee's time of government, which is the reason why the elections of 1945 are also known as Khaki-elections. Attlee not only released Churchill, he was also released by him. Thus, after a short period in government the Conservative Party came back into office.

Labour was re-elected in 1964 with Harold Wilson as prime minister, who governed until 1970. His time in office is remembered as an era of reform because he tried to introduce new laws of labour and to bring the national budget back into order. His government was not popular among the trade unions because they feared decreasing influence. After Wilson, James Callaghan became the next Labour prime minister in 1974. The labour party struggled within its party due to economic issues and internal tensions among trade-union allies. One of the main topics that were discussed internally were reinvention, modernisation and a new

political orientation within Labour. Consequently, the Social Democratic Party emerged from Labour in 1981 (Meyers Lexikon Online, 2008).

At least since Thatcher's term of office it became clear to Labour that they had to modernize not only their policies and their profile but also their internal structure. However, the radical programme by Michael Foot in 1983 was not successful. It rather led to the contrary and to a defeat of Labour since they lost four elections in a row. The image of the Labour party was that of an old party bound too much to "old-fashion Socialism" (Forman & Baldwin, 2007, p.105). Therefore, Labour had to reinvent itself if they wanted to get the chance to govern the UK again. It was Tony Blair, who shaped the term "New Labour".[3] The result of the transition of the Labour Party was a modern, pragmatic and voter-friendly Labour party that was not determined by ideology. One can question this development also as a development towards a party that is not standing up to its roots. However, his agenda was so successful that Labour won the parliamentary elections in 1997 and Blair became prime minister. In 2001, Labour won again and thus was re-elected for the first time in its history. In 2005, the Labour party won for the third time under the leadership of Tony Blair. He then was succeeded by Gordon Brown in 2007 (Webb, 2002).

In retrospect one can summarize that the post-war era was an era of change and recovery directed towards a tremendous regain of power for Labour in 1997. The party that had started out supporting working class candidates and was based upon strong socialist values had transformed into a mainstream party.

1.5.2 The Conservative Party

On the other hand, the party governing the UK for most of the 20th century, was the Conservative Party. They originated out of the Tories in 1832, which supported the Anglican church and the monarchy (Meyers Online Lexikon 'The Conservative Party', 2008). Due to their roots the Conservatives are often simply called 'Tories' today. In 1912 the Conservatives merged with the liberal Unionists and were called "Conservative and Unionist Party" since then.[4] Looking at the financial support of the Conservative party it becomes clear who the

[3] Def. of new labour: "A movement to update Britain's Labour Party by discarding the traditional Labour platform calling for state ownership of the means of production. The movement has been led by Tony Blair" (Dictionary, 2009).
[4] In the following the author will simply use the term "Conservatives"

target group and voters of the Conservatives are: According to a data analysis by Forman and Baldwin (2007) most funds come from "business and commercial interests" (p.59). The party was always proud not to be bound by ideological ideas. Instead they claimed to support "the ideas of independent authority for the Executive, class rule by those deemed best equipped to govern, pragmatic decision […] and strong determined government" (Forman & Baldwin, 2007, p.59).

One of the most impressive and well known leaders of the Conservatives was Winston Churchill. He was not only prime minister of the UK during the Second World War, but he was also re-elected in 1951 after a short governing period of the Labour party. His major accomplishments during his second time in office were that he withdrew from nationalizations of industrial branches, which are mentioned above. He was replaced by his former foreign minister, Anthony Eden. Furthermore, Harold Macmillan, the next British Conservative prime minister put his emphasize on economy and tried to reach a high employment rate. He believed "passionately that the state had a duty to intervene in the economy in order to assist the growth of prosperity and secure the relief of hardship through a generous social security system" (Cooke, 2008). This believe is in contrast to the general thought of the Conservative, which claims that not the Government is responsible for the people instead they are responsible for themselves and need to take this responsibility, according to F. Forman (p.113). Macmillan's view point could be rather categorized as a Labour than a Conservative one. Lately, in his leadership he also tried to join the European Economic Community (EEC) but failed due to the veto of Charles de Gaulle. However, his successor, Edward Heath led the UK into the European Community in 1972. Heath was the first Conservative prime minister with lower middle-class roots. His leadership was not undisputed within the Conservative Party.

In contrast to her predecessor, the only female Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was very eurosceptic. She governed the UK from 1979 until 1990, and was thus the person with the longest stay in government during the 20th century. The "Iron Lady" and her time in government are remembered as a process towards an economic market-oriented and achievement-oriented society (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 2009a). Her disputed position concerning the commitment of the UK to the future development of the European Union was one point that separated the party since then (Forman & Baldwin, 2007).

Thatcher's successor was chosen most of all because he was believed to be different than from her, which later would become his doom. Under John Major, prime minister and head of the Conservatives from 1990 until 1997, his party did not only lose the support of the people of the UK due to the internal struggle on the EU debate, but also due to his questionable fiscal and economic policy (Meyers Lexikon Online 'The Conservative Party', 2009). Since his time as head of the Conservatives the leadership changed five times until today in order to process a reform and find back to unity within the party. For instance, the party structure was changed. For the first time in its history, the Conservative party is managed by a single-board instead of divided up between a parliamentary party, professional party and voluntary party. Another alteration is that their leader is now elected throughout a one-member-one-vote (OMVO) election, in order to let ordinary party members have some more influence (Forman & Baldwin, 2007).

They elected David Cameron as head of the Conservatives during the second round of voting at the party congress in 2005. His role is not only to find a solution concerning the struggle with the EU but also to make his party attractive for young voters. The main Conservative voter is over 60 years old. Data retrieved at the end of the last century depicts that Conservative party membership is in declined, as "a third of a million" were members of the party in contrast to the 1950s and 60s were "2 to 3 million members" could be counted (Gallagher, 2007, p.316). However, almost all European parties struggle with a decline in membership and voter volatility due to a variety of reasons such as cleavage alterations, increase of mass media, privatisation of consumption and secularisation. The latter can also be reasons for the decline in membership of the Conservative Party. Yet, they are suffering most under the fact that their members are simply passing away (Gallagher, 2007).

Concluding it can be stated that the principal role of these two parties analysed above is, according to Robert McKenzie, "to sustain competing teams of potential leaders in the House of Commons in order that the electoral as a whole may choose between them at periodic general elections" (Forman & Baldwin, 2007, p.94). The main differences that the electorates can chose, besides the different ideologies, are between the structure. Whereas the Labour party is organised democratically and bottom-up, the Conservative was created top-down and from the centre with a hierarchical structure (p.118). Yet, during the post-war area both parties have moved more towards the centre. It can be stated that New Labour is highly

centralized today. In the two-party system of the United Kingdom the two big parties presented above are the ones that are either the government party or the opposition.

1.5.3 Parties in the Shadow

Even though there is a dominant two party system government, there are a variety of other parties in the UK, a fact that even leads to infrequent occurrences of minority and coalition governments. One of these other parties is the Liberal Democratic Party, which is the third largest party and can be influential for building a parliamentary majority. This party came into being in 1988 as a result of the merger of the Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Party. Consequently, this party has made it its goal to reform the disproportionate electoral system due to which the Conservative and the Labour Party are still the two dominating parties of the country (Liberal Democrats, 2006). Thus, in general it can be said that traditionally the UK always had two parties dominating the political landscape, while more recently another party was visibly added to the political landscape. However, these parties have not always been Conservative and Labour. Previously, the Liberals and the Conservatives were dominating the political sphere of the United Kingdom. The change from the dominance of the Liberals/Conservatives to Labour/Conservative was brought about by the collapse of the Liberal Party in the early 20th century. As a consequence the Liberals replaced the Labour Party. Having discussed the parties dominating the political landscape in the United Kingdom, other parties shall be discussed throughout the remainder of this section (Jones, 2007, p.130).

1.5.4 Regional Parties

In the United Kingdom, next to the three major parties, many other smaller parties exist. Those parties are also often called minor parties. Such minor parties are known for not being able to win too many seats within the parliaments and therefore remain to a large extent weak and without remarkable influence. Notable examples of such minor parties include the “Plaid Cymru” and the “Scottish National Party”. The former has had Members of Parliament since 1973, while the latter has had Members of Parliament since 1966. Thus, the Welsh and Scottish Nationalists are definitely worth examining in this context, because they are a significant part of the political landscape. First of all, it should be mentioned that members associated to Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party work together closely and therefore are combined to a single parliamentary group. This has been the case since 1985, the year in

which a “formal pact” was signed. Hence, the Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party can be considered to be “one group”. They are currently represented with ten MPs (Jones, 2007, p.783).

The Northern Ireland parties represent another significant part of the political landscape and need to be examined. Starting with the Democratic Unionist Party, which was founded in 1971 by Paisley, it should be mentioned that this party has been the larger (of the two existing) unionist parties. After the 2005 election, it was represented with nine MPs. Also worth mentioning is the Northern Irish Social Democratic and Labour Party, which is currently represented at Westminster with three MPs. Furthermore, there is the Official Unionist Party, which is represented with only one Member of Parliament, as well as Sinn Fein being represented by five Members of Parliament. However, it might be interesting to know that the Sinn Fein Members of Parliament are not permitted to take their seats due to the fact that they collectively reject to swear the oath to the Queen (Jones, 2007, p.770).

1.5.5 Discussion

Having examined these parties, the discussion now turns to examine further parliamentary parties and non-parliamentary political parties. In this context the Respect Party should be mentioned, being represented with one MP, George Galloway. This party is a left-wing party which has originated out of an anti-war movement. Apart from having one MP, this party holds a low number of seats on local councils which are spread throughout the country.

Before turning this discussion towards British independent politicians, the British Independence Party (UKIP) shall be addressed shortly. UKIP was established in 1993 and is today widely known for having the main aim of getting the UK out of the EU (UKIP, 2009). Their leader, Nigel Farage, heavily featured in the documentary "The Real Face of the European Union", is largely known for his Euroscepticism. In the documentary he calls the European Union a "completely corrupt institution" which is "limiting the UK's sovereignty". Thus, the UKIP is one of the most aggressive parties promoting a negative attitude towards the EU and thereby largely contributes to the dominant eurosceptic public opinion. However, the topic of Euroscepticism will be elaborated on further in Chapter 4 and 5.

There are also independent politicians; such independent politicians are not associated with a specific party. However, only very few of such personalities have been elected (this

includes personalities not previously associated with major parties). Two examples (since 1949) include Dr. Richard Taylor and Martin Bell. Non-parliamentary political parties on the other hand include the Green Party of England and Wales, as well as the Scottish Green Party and Alliance Party of Northern Ireland. The former, for example, has seats in the European Parliament (EP) and the London Assembly, while the later has a number of MLAs and local councillors (Mondo Politico, 2006).

Returning to the main topic of discussing the general political landscape, it should be mentioned that party leaders have been changed amongst all main political parties. This means that in 2005 David Cameron was elected the leader of the Conservative Party, while Gordon Brown now stands as the leader of the Conservative Party. Gordon Brown is the current prime minister (he was elected unopposed in June 2007), while Nick Clegg represents the leader of the Liberal Democrats. Recently the popularity of the Conservative Party has been growing. Statistics collected in April 2008 have shown that the Conservatives are leading over the Labor Party. The London Mayoral Election has also indicated and confirmed the same trend (London Elects, 2008). With regards to the area of Scotland, the Scottish National Party has been making great advancements. This becomes apparent when considering the fact that the aforementioned party has won the Scottish general election (Jones, 2007). Ever since the Scottish National Party has been gaining support in national opinion polls. Hence, the party landscape is changed gradually and appears to be a very dynamic landscape with ever-changing variables, actors, circumstances as well as paradigm shifts (Jones, 2007, p. 539).

1.6 Devolution

1.6.1 What is Devolution?

For a long time, the Westminster Parliament was seen as the one parliament of the United Kingdom. Due to the strong unitary nature, which the British tried to keep up as long as possible, the parliament centralized its powers in London and exercised them in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The Westminster Parliament was established through the

Union of Parliaments[5] in 1707 (Dunleavy, 2003). However, in 2002 the parliament agreed on a White Paper ordering further devolution in the United Kingdom. "Where an area did want an elective assembly, however, the government would be supportive because such a regional assembly could improve accountability, bring decision making closer to the people" (Dunleavy, 2003, p.207). This acknowledgement of increasing devolution was not only applied in the regions Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, but also in England itself.[6]

The Blair government, however, was not entirely committed to the subnational character of devolution. "Thus Labour, while encouraging a greater role for local authorities as partners of central government, made it very clear that the framework of that partnership would reflect *central* values" (Dunleavy, 2003, p.210). The aim of the Labour government was it to attain more effectively working local governments. Via receiving a higher degree of authority over not only financial resources, the local civil servants would be more willing to invest effort into the achievements of their local goals.

1.6.2 Scotland

The Scottish Parliament was first elected in 1999. Generally, it approves the government which is headed by the first minister. The appointed ministers are responsible for health, education, justice, agriculture and transport (Scottish Government, 2009). The late establishment of the Scottish parliament is connected to the Conservative's reluctance towards the idea of a devolutionary process occurring in the entire United Kingdom in the 1980s. Until this point of time the United Kingdom was a rather unitary state. Historically though, this "accepted pluralism" that had originally made possible the formation of the U.K., was just brought to another level considering the striving for devolution in the 1990s (Dunleavy, 2003; Deacon, 2006).

Already in 1885 the Scottish Office was created in London which gave the Scottish a stronger say in the Westminster parliament concerning their regional matters (Dunleavy, 2003, p.163). Over a hundred years later, the Scottish fostered the establishment of a Scottish parliament which was achieved, after a difficult period in the 1980s under the British Prime

[5] The Union of Parliaments was established between the Scottish and the English parliament, following the Union of the Crowns in 1603.
[6] Apparently, the first region in England given the possibility to create its own assembly was North Est. However, they refused this option and decided to be represented continuously by the Westminster parliament (Deacon, 2006, p. 209).

Minister Margret Thatcher, in 1999. However, the conception of a Scottish parliament was issued already in the 1950s by the national party, the Scottish National Party (SNP). Their voting results, though, were weak because Scottish problems turned out to be the same as in England, Wales or Northern Ireland and therefore the administrative effort did not seem to be worth the possible benefits to the Scottish people (Dunleavy, 2003).

The situation changed, when the parliament in London failed to deal with economic and social challenges in the 1960s. Britain did not provide security and reliance anymore, therefore "Scottish nationalism" became an option (Dunleavy, 2003, p.168). Although, the SNP gained a lot in the following elections and even a debate of devolution was initiated, all support disappeared from the English side when Margaret Thatcher became prime minister in 1979 (Dunleavy, 2003). When Thatcher neglected every idea of devolution and instead claimed Scotland to be as British as every other part of the U.K., the Labour party used this issue to criticize the Conservatives and to built up an opposition. Moreover, the Scottish discovered that they were seen as a "threat for unity" and that devolution would favour a "broader progressive political coalition" for Scotland (Dunleavy, 2003, p.171). In contrast to the Conservative attitude towards devolution, the Labour party, the Liberals and "other interested parties" agreed on a Constitutional Convention in 1987, which met for the first time in 1989. It was the aim of the Scottish to receive law-making power and to be recognized by the Westminster parliament as a parliament of its kind (Scottish Parliament, 2009).

With Tony Blair being elected in 1997, he committed his domestic policies to the devolution of Scotland and Wales. The new parliament had to build up committees. Its powers were clarified as mentioned above. However, one has to note that many policy domains "overlap" in Westminster and the Scottish parliament (Dunleavy, 2003, p.176). Furthermore, the most important task and the actual reason for the Scottish parliament to exist, is that it reflects Scottish opinions. The electoral system is a "hybrid electoral system, the Additional Member System (AMS)" (Dunleavy, 2003. p.171). The AMS means that in an elecetion the voter votes twofold. The first vote is for the candidate of his or her constituemcy and the second for the party list (UK Parliament, n.d.). This system is more balanced than the plurality system that is applied in the U.K wide elections.

In conclusion one can say that the establishment of a Scottish parliament intensified the feeling of a Scottish identity. Although diversity was always considered as normal in the

U.K., the division of the parliaments gave the Scottish a more concrete conception of their region and even let them consider more independent features in the future.

1.6.3 Northern Ireland

The current political structure of Northern Ireland and its relation to the United Kingdom was largely determined by the Good Friday Agreement, formally called Belfast Agreement, which was signed in Belfast in April 1998 by both the Republic of Ireland and the UK. According to Shirlow (2001), the Good Friday Agreement constitutes a "peculiar form of devolution within the UK context", since it must be seen as a treaty between Ireland and the UK (Shirlow, 2001, p. 744). It was agreed that the constitutional status of Northern Ireland can only be altered if both parts of Ireland agree to the change. Furthermore, the Agreement established a kind of federal relation, restricting the UK from using enforcing powers in Northern Ireland which go beyond the competences granted by the Agreement. Moreover, unlike Wales and Scotland, Northern Ireland was given the possibility to extend its federal status or even leave the United Kingdom (Shirlow, 2001). In May the same year, the Agreement was adopted by referendums in both parts of Ireland with relatively high public support; in Northern Ireland, 71% voted 'yes', in the Republic of Ireland this amounted to even 94%. Therewith, the conflict between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland was finally ended officially. Moreover, it led to the establishment of several political institutions, among them a new Northern Ireland Assembly (Deacon, 2006).[7]

The Northern Ireland Assembly is a directly elected, unicameral body with devolved legislative powers. Hence, it can scrutinize and decide on a wide range of issues, the so called "transferred matters", which are not explicitly defined by the agreement but compromise all issues except those which are reserved for Westminster (Northern Ireland Assembly, n.d.). Those matters which were not transferred to the Northern Ireland Assembly, namely constitutional and security issues such as for instance law and order, policing and criminal justice, remain the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Office, a department of the United Kingdom Government which was established in 1972 (Northern Ireland Office, n.d.)

[7] The agreement furthermore led to the establishment of a north-south ministerial council, dealing with cross-border issues between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic; A British Irish Council compromising representatives of both governments for cooperation in matters of mutual interest; and a British Irish intergovernmental conference.

The assembly compromises 108 members, six members for each of the 18 constituencies, which are directly elected every four years by a system of proportional representation, namely by the Single Transferable Vote. This system, obviously opposing the plurality system used in the UK, was introduced in accordance with the principle of power sharing in order to enable both political ideologies, unionists and nationalists, to participate in the policy process. The executive of the Assembly is constituted by the Cabinet, which compromises the First Minister, the Deputy First Minister as well as ministers, a total of ten, for the political departments such as finance, health and education. The first elections took place in June 1998, and the Assembly started operating with David Trimble as the first First Minister in July. However, the continuity of their operation was disturbed several times over the years (Deacon, 2006).

The Northern Ireland Act of 2000 allows the Secretary of State, the head of the Northern Ireland Office, to suspend the Executive under certain circumstances. This power had been used four times by now. In February 2000, the Assembly was dismissed due to a report from the International Commission on Decommissioning which stated that the IRA decommissioning had not started yet. Since decommissioning was part of the Belfast Agreement, direct rule by the Northern Ireland Office was re-established until the Assembly started operating again in May. After two minor 24 hour suspensions, the Executive was dismissed for a fourth time in October 2002 as members of Sinn Féin, the second largest party in the assembly representing Irish republicanism, were suspected of being spies for the IRA. Even though elections for a new Assembly took place as planned in 2003, the Assembly remained suspended. In 2006, the Secretary of State established a non-legislative assembly, composed of those MPs elected in the 2003 elections, to prepare the restoration of the Assembly which was eventually re-established in May 2007 (Northern Ireland Assembly, n.d.).

1.6.4 Wales

In the course of Tony Blair's policy of devolution, the proposal of a decentralized government of Wales was adopted by a referendum in 1997. However, public opinion in Wales was lacking clear support for devolution, and the referendum resulted in only a minimal majority of 50.3% voting with 'yes' (Deacon, 2006). Still, the Government of Wales Act established the National Assembly of Wales in 1998.

The National Assembly of Wales is a single corporate body without the normal division of executive and legislative. It is composed of 60 members which are directly elected every four years by a system of proportional representation in which the voter has two votes; one for a local representative which wins according to the first-past-the-post system, and one for choosing a party for the region. Therefore, the system does not allow for a one party dominance as it exists in the UK government but encourages cross-party co-operations and coalitions, such as the Labour-Liberal coalition in 2000. The head of the Assembly is the Presiding Officer, who is nonpartisan and responsible for the Assembly to work in good order. The First Minister, functioning as a kind of prime minister, is appointed by the Assembly and hence normally the head of the strongest party. He is surrounded by a cabinet of ministers (National Assembly for Wales, n.d.).

When established in 1998, the Welsh Assembly had neither primary legislative powers nor the tax raising powers of the Scottish Parliament. Hence, despite administrative tasks, its main role was to enact secondary legislation; laws which were subordinated to the primary legislation originating from Westminster and defining how these laws should be implemented in Wales (Deacon, 2006). The Assembly's powers were however extended by the Government of Wales Act 2006. This Act transferred to the Assembly the competence to make primary legislation in certain cases, concerning devolved matters such as health, education and local government. Nevertheless, before taking a measure, the Assembly has to request the legislative competence to act from the UK parliament on a case to case basis (National Assembly for Wales, n.d.).

Not only legislative competences but also public support for a devolved government had grown over the years; in 2006, 65% of the Welsh population aimed for an Assembly similar to the Scottish parliament, with tax raising power and extended legislative competences. Nevertheless, the Assembly is not considered as making a big difference on Welsh politics, since the UK government is perceived as still having too much influence (Devolution and Constitutional Change, 2006).

1.6.5 England

Even though in 2002, a "Greater London Authority (GLA)" was established the devolution in London caused many problems because the responsibilities of the mayor, the GLA and the

government overlapped, as has already been observed in the devolutionary cases of the other regions (Dunleavy, 2003, p. 208). The special trait about England is seemingly its people are not at all eager to be represented by a local assembly. "In 2000 the British Social Attitudes survey showed a mere 18 percent of the population favoring regional devolution for England" (Deacon, 2006, p. 213). This leads to conclusion that the identification of English people with the common British idea of unity is very strong and that they do not see the necessity to change the current unitary system.

Nevertheless, the case of London is an exception. The capital, establishing the GLA, used the White Paper agreement and also its population voted in favour of it.[8] The GLA consists of the mayor, the assembly and the GLA agencies, all dealing with London's diverse issues, but as it is mentioned already above, there is a certain degree of overlap in responsibilities leading to disputes among the responsibles. The forerunner of the GLA was the Great London Council (GLC) which was dissolved by Margaret Thatcher because she considered it to be too powerful and claimed that it was not efficient. The real concern is said to be the fact that the majority of this council always consisted of Labour representatives which, for Thatcher, was a thorn in her eyes (London Index, n.d.).

Concluding one can say that England is still very close to the original unitary state of the United Kingdom and that its people do not see any reason why they should change toward a devolutionary system. The interchangeable use of the term English and British already indicates the central role of England in the British political system. Not only that the Westminster parliament, responsible for all regions in the U.K., was established in London, but also the identification with this parliament as the English parliament. Strangely enough, the only 'region' in England that considers it to be necessary to have a local unit of responsibility is London. However, London obtained a status of importance that is recognized in the whole world. In this respect it might be difficult to limit the growth of this mega city to the administrative capacities of either the British or the English administration.

1.7 New Social Movements

[8] A majority of 72 percent voted in favour. However, the participation in this vote was very low (only 34.6 per cent) (Deacon, 2006, p. 219).

1.7.1 Theoretical Background

Before any elaboration on new social movements in the UK can be performed, the very concept of 'new social movements' has to be explained. The term 'new social movements' was originally coined by Habermas (1981). Until the late 1960's, social movements were primarily characterized by capital-labour struggles. As such, social movements could be explained as owning-class versus working-class. The Labour Movement was the biggest social movement during the first half of the 21st century. As the Labour Movement became increasingly institutionalized, it became "integrated into the political system by way of labour parties and trade unions "(Edwards, 2004, p.114). Therefore, the Labour Movement is no longer a source of radical change. Thus, the argument is that movements of radical change must come from outside existing institutional frameworks.

Habermas notes that, those who generate a public sphere of debate are increasingly detached from capital-labour struggles and are motivated by questions about *who we are*, *how we live* and *who is accountable* (Edwards, 2004, p.115). Examples are feminists, environmentalists, anti-globalists, anti-racist etc.. These movements are a reaction to the established "economic-administrative complex" of the system (Habermas, 1981, p.33). Public and private spheres of everyday life (family, leisure, work etc.) feel threatened by "system-steering money and power" (Edwards, 2004, p.116). As a response, new social movements centred on culture, identity and lifestyle emerged. However, as Edwards argues, Habermas writes in the context of the 1980's and therefore we should ask ourselves whether this conceptual approach to new social movements is still valid. Edwards, for instance, questions the validity of the concept as a whole.

1.7.2 New Social Movements in the UK

In the UK, initially, new social movements were spurred, perhaps unintentionally, by the Thatcher government. Although Britain has always been regarded a member of the 'pluralist interest representation' groups of countries, during the 1970s many observers concluded Britain was moving towards a 'corporatists interest representation' model of government. Some came to this conclusion because of the Labour government's "Social Contract" policy. Key capitalist - Confederation of British Industry - & labour groups - Trade Union Congress-

became increasingly involved in the decision making process of political economy on an institutional level (Gallagher, 2007, p.285).

After Thatcher's election, laws restricting the power of trade unions were passed swiftly. During the heydays of Friedmanism which so much characterized the Conservative policies of the 1980s and 1990s, trade unions were left with no formal political role and thus membership sharply declined. Neither did the return of (New) Labour in 1997 readjust the role of the trade unions – Labour "made no conscious attempt to forge a new social contract between the social partners" (Gallagher, 2007, p.286). As we have seen above, Habermas argues that within unions all kinds of sub-groups existed. However, as the role of unions in political processes has gradually decreased in Britain, these sub-groups found that they were no longer sufficiently represented in the public sphere. Keen to advance new, and often very specific, ideas about people's attitudes and lifestyles, these groups could no longer find content with mainstream political parties or union movements. Single-issue politics characterizes the organization and conduct of these groups. The aim of new social movements is to change people's lifestyles and attitudes. Personal change is stressed, while at the same time action on a government level is requested. As Byrne (1997) notes, some of these movements are really new (such as 'dark green environmentalism'), while others have existed for a long time (feminism, nuclear disarmament) but "have been revived with new impetus" (p.1).

Habermas is not the only theorist on new social movements, and there are some who oppose the very existence, definition or classification of new social movements. Nevertheless, although there is ongoing debate about what new social movements are, and how to define them, we can nevertheless identify some with great assurance on the basis of Habermas' theory. A number of examples are given in the next paragraphs, though by no means does this constitute a full list of new social movements in Britain.

An environmentalist new social movement group that has been of particular importance (amongst others in this field) in the UK is Friends Of the Earth (FOE). FOE is not a traditional conservationist group. They argue that environmental problems are due to the system, and as such the system needs radical change. Environmental problems are claimed to be accountable to the "attitudes and practices of large industrial and corporate interests and the political systems which tolerate them" (Byrne, 1997, p.132). Furthermore, it calls for a

large extension of participatory democracy because they believe direct decision-making in local groups forms the key to environmental protection. The FOE raised the issue of damaging CFC's in aerosol products, resulting in a reduction of consumption of CFC products by 50%. The FOE, via media attention, made the British government establish monitoring stations on measuring car emissions, and it has successfully challenged the UK government at the European Court of Justice (ECJ), forcing it to implement EU directives.

Historically, one of the most influential, and visible, movements has been the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Their mission statement is as follows: "CND campaigns non-violently to rid the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and to create genuine security for future generations" (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 2009). During the 1980s, this single-issue movement became so big that it could no longer be ignored by political parties. Eventually, a CND supporter became Labour's new party leader. As a result, Labour pressed for unilateral nuclear disarmament – though unsuccessfully as the Conservatives were in power and were staunch proponents of nuclear weapons. By 1992, Labour realised it was not going to win any elections by proposing nuclear disarmament, and hence abolished this policy. Thus, although CND managed to lift their concerns up to the level of debate in the public sphere, their efforts were unsuccessful. The CND can also be credited to have played a vital role in the merger between the Liberals and the Social Democratic Party (Byrne, 1997, pp.101-102). Although Labour was, even when it came to power, not a proponent of extending (but also not lessening) nuclear power plants, during the first decade of the 21st century Labour gradually changed its policy in what is popular called 'the rebirth of nuclear power'. Rising oil prices and long-term energy concerns were the main reasons behind this switch (BBC, n.d.).

In recent times, other anti-war movements have emerged. Anti-war movements, naturally, tend to appear on the scene when a government has decided to declare war. Simultaneously, they tend to rapidly disappear when the war is over. Due to the temporary nature, these can be classified as new social movements. Although there is a large permanent coalition of anti-war movements in the UK, for instance the Stop The War Coalition (STWC), group members nevertheless diversify in terms of ideology and there is by no means a centralized organization or decision-making body. Some object a specific war by means of demonstrations; others undertake symbolic acts such as dance concerts. In the UK, many anti-war movements are characterized by a historical link between peace movements and

Christianity. However, during the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, Muslim anti-war activists were seen more and more in the public sphere. These groups became increasingly organized into single-issue movements, such as Muslim protests against the first and, more numerable, second Gulf War. Nowadays, the Muslim Association of Britain is a key member of the STWC. Others organize into movements for civil liberties. The Cage Prisoner group battles for closing Guantanamo Bay and its prisoners, while Stop Political Terror campaigns against "the criminalisation of the Muslim community under the anti-terror laws" (Pickerill, 2006, pp. 3-7).

In sum, new social movements have contributed to the emergence of single-issues in the public sphere. Moreover, though it should not be over-estimated, these movements have often created policy change on a governmental level. As Habermas (1981) notes, the majority of such movements revolve around conflicts and tensions of culture, lifestyle and identity – many times on the basis of morality (p.304). In the UK, the pluralist system allows for substantial participation, involvement and influence by new social movements on particular issues. Nevertheless, the temporary nature of these movements means they often disappear just as fast as they appeared.

1.8 Conclusion

Most of the important and relevant institutions and actors in the UK's governmental system have been explained during this chapter. They have been placed in the historical framework of post-war consensus, Thatcherism and post-Thatcherism, which has shown the UK's struggle to regain relevance as an international political actor after WW II. Furthermore, this has indicated the relevant role the Iron Lady, Margaret Thatcher, has played contributing to the perception of a strong and distinguished Britain with a clear distance to the emerging EU. Additionally, it has become clear how post-Thatcherism left room for new development, moving on to a more effective governing through devolution, as well as a new, more positive stand towards the EU. In the course of this chapter, also the traditional institutions have been examined, which can be categorized according to Lijphart's two-dimensional model of democracy. The UK is a perfect example of a majoritarian democracy known as the Westminster Model. The two-party parliament, dominated by the Conservative and the

Labour Party, fits into this model as well. Nevertheless, there are other parties on national and regional level, which especially in terms of devolution are important factors for effective governing. Furthermore, the development of new social movement has been shown to be a very recent feature which cannot yet be clearly assessed in its impacts.

It has been the aim of this chapter to examine and explain the system of government, the institutions and actors in the UK, and thus pave the way for a common knowledge on which further research can be build upon. Even though this has for the most part been achieved, there is naturally room for more research. Due to external limitations, many events or developments could only be touched upon swiftly, but not be explained more thoroughly. This is especially true for the relationship between the UK and the EU. There are clearly points, such as the loss of sovereign power to the EU and its legal framework, which indicate a big change in the island's perception of itself and its positioning in the international arena. However hopefully, this paper will be able to satisfactorily elaborate on this topic in the coming chapters and thus be able to place this country analysis into a European context.

CHAPTER 2

Factors shaping British Economy

2.1 Introduction

The United Kingdom is one of the leading finance and trade centres in the world. However, it is fair to say that, today, the latter sentence might be better written in past tense form. Whereas a few years ago domestic as well as foreign government representatives depicted the British economy as a role model - due to its importance and forerunner position since the times of the Industrial Revolution – in recent times those opinions have changed quickly and representatives are revising their claim. Today, Britain can no longer allege without raising doubt that they do not need to be part of the European economic and monetary union because of their good macroeconomic performance. Since the financial crisis, in particular, has hit the British economy, its abstention towards the European economic and monetary union is questioned even within the UK.

The aim of this chapter is to establish a common basic knowledge of the British economy and to describe the events and developments which have been important in shaping the contemporary British economy. Thereby, the overall topic of the book - the UK's connection or gap between the EU – will be discussed in a later chapter. As it is a current topic due to the financial crises that led some Brits to reconsider euro-sceptic attitudes, this will be analysed in the last subchapter. However, one can only speculate about the future of Britain's economy and the development of its commitment to the EU and thus also to the euro. So far since its accession in 1973, economic pressure was always one of the reasons why Britain strengthened its link to the EU.

In order to find out what makes the British economy and its development unique, especially compared to other EU Member States, this chapter will primarily analyze historically how the British economy was streamlined since the Industrial Revolution. Secondly, it will outline and examine three major aspects that make the British economy unique, focusing on London, the regional industries of the UK and finally analyzing its tense economic relationship with the EU. Unfortunately, an all-embracing British economic analysis is beyond the framework of this chapter and thus it will mainly focus on the objectives mentioned above.

2.2 British Economy during the 18th and 19th Century

2.2.1 The Beginning of the Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution brought major changes along that led *inter alia* to economic progress. Due to its sudden uprising, without immense sponsoring or investments in the industrial process, Britain can be said to experience "the first industrialization of any national economy in the world" (Mathias, 2001, p. 4). Therefore, the Industrial Revolution is one of the most influential periods for Britain's economy as well as for its society. It was not only Britain's richness of natural resources, but also the growing population which was possible due to improvements in the agricultural and medical sector. This in turn led to increasing labour force and an expanding market and therefore triggered the growth of the whole economy. Most even say, it was the large Calvinist population, known as striving and enterprising that can be considered as an important factor accelerating the industrial process as their members served as "carriers of capitalism" (p.6) since they worked according to the strict protestant work ethic. Furthermore, they assumed that hard work is a sign of grace. Later on during the industrialisation process, the government also became a strong promoting force. This was conducted through naval predominance in the oceans, imperial trade and a good transportation system which was an important precondition for trade possibilities. Lastly, the British interests in discovery led to some important key inventions, such as Watt's steam engine in the 1780s and important changes in iron, cotton and steam power. In sum, it was the combination of all factors that made the Industrial Revolution possible and Britain the forerunner of the industrial process in Europe (Mathias, 2001).

2.2.2 Economic and Technical Transformations and Innovations

The early beginning of the process took place back in the 17th century, when handicrafts shifted from being part of family work to becoming commercialized in specialized manufactories due to its higher efficiency. Innovative machinery in the agricultural sector such as the seed drill and mechanical reapers and threshers led to an increase in farm production and the related growth of the population which was also a result of the progress in the medical field. Consequently, workers moved to the city because of the diminished need for workers on the field but increased need for labour in factories. At this time, people were more engaged in trade. Britain had many advantages concerning trade due to its predominance in the sea and with its colonies serving as suppliers of raw material as well as

its outlet market (Mathias, 2001).The entire process was accelerated though the search for technical innovations which was an encouraged field for inventers that were protected by emerging patent laws. Moreover, the inventions supported each other. One can say that "the discovery of discovery itself became a commonplace and a major driving force" (Pollard, 2000, p. 49).

The new production techniques enabled British industrialists to be strong competitors in quality and price for other industrial nations and in this way offered great opportunities for the British market and society (Mathias, 2001). Products became cheaper, more available and thus strengthened the propensity to consume (Porter & Teich, 2000): "Rising demand, high wages, the shortage and inflexibility of skilled labour then created a great stimulus for innovation and mechanical advancements during the mid-decades of the century" (Mathias, 2001, p. 16).

As more and more factories developed throughout the 18th century, mass production became part of the economy. As a result, structural and cumulative changes in economic behaviour, especially in big cities, occurred. Through the increase in profit, money could also be spent on the expansion of public services and public education. Despite its many advantages, the Industrial Revolution brought about some severe problems such as mass poverty and starvation, diseases and plagues, air pollution, income inequality and bad working conditions (Mathias, 2001). The rising gap between rich and poor, and the related polarisation between employers and workers, changed socio-economic relations substantially. The employer-worker relationship became increasingly anonym. As no family bonds existed within the working environment anymore, it was only money that connected employer and worker (Pollard, 2000). The tension between bourgeoisie and working class was then a fact.

2.2.3 Class Transformation and New Class Emergence

During this important period, not only economic, but also important social changes occurred, as a new industrial society developed. As mentioned previously, a new way of life emerged. The new lifestyle was not predominated by agriculture or family bonds anymore. Instead, social mobility, capital, the changing role of women in society and, above all, a new class system and the subsequent rise of the labour force were to dominate the constant change in lifestyle. According to Thompson (1980), who was intensively engaged with the emergence of the English working class states:

> When some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs… Class-consciousness is the way in which these experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in traditions, value-systems, ideas and institutional forms" (p. 9).

In other words, class and class-consciousness have to be seen as cultural and social formations that arise from processes and common experiences within a historical period; they cannot be determined as they blur over the centuries. In the case of the English working class, the increased distance between the employer and the workers and the institutionalized exploitation provoked the class consciousness and identity of the working class. It was composed of people that worked in small industries and manufactories and who had to identify themselves against their master. This common identity was visible in the 19th century development of nascent working-class institutions such as trade unions, educational and religious movements, political and social organizations and working-class communities that are still influential today.

2.2.4 The Transformation of the British Capital – A Case Study

The many-sided face of the British society was best visible in big cities. Between 1775 and 1825, London doubled its size and "became the largest single business and industrial centre and market of the world's first modern industrial economy" (Barnett, 1998, p. 1). Next to London, cities like Bristol, Liverpool, Glasgow and Whitehaven were able to extend their economies. These 'shipping' economies became very wealthy through their ports and thus transatlantic trading possibilities (Mathias, 2001).While these and other cities rather specialised on the seaside, London offered a complexity of industry and commerce. In establishing a huge, ever growing manufacturing centre, varying numbers and sizes of companies, their capital, employees and wide ranges of products to shipbuilding and industrial chemicals, London was the place to trade. The city had to adjust to the growing population. Moreover, the wealth and population increase led to a construction and infrastructure boom. The city had to respond rapidly to changes in the market. On the one side, some authors mention smaller cities like Leeds, Birmingham or Manchester as the most important centres of the industrial process, claiming that it was only trade that made London prosperous. One the other side, their opponents held the opinion that "…the nation's industrial

economy was profoundly dependent upon the capital's imports, transport and communications, wholesale and retail networks, finance skills and its service sector…" (Barnett, 1998, p. 3).

Indeed, it can be said that due to its large population, London was partially responsible for stimulating the demand for all kinds of goods and services as well as transportation networks. Barnett (1998) is quite unambiguous when he says that it was the interrelation of all sectors like manufacturing, construction, wholesale, transportation and retail distribution that made the city to develop such a driving force. Moreover, London was of crucial importance for its financial infrastructure. The many businesses, firms and undertakings made it possible for Britain to enlarge its empire. The flexibility created by its diversity of industries and trade made it the hub of the Industrial Revolution. In addition, London was also able to "withstand the inevitable fluctuations in the trade cycle with minimum disruption to the build-up of its wealth" (Barnett, 1998, p. 224). To sum up, one can say that London was not only the centre for certain industries, trades and services that served all classes in society but also a centre for manufactures and transportation infrastructure as well as

> …a city unique in time and place during the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first 30 years or so of the nineteenth. Not only did it acquire the largest urban population the world had ever seen but it became the model for the modern city of the later years of the nineteenth century in the western world and for the entire globe in the twentieth (Barnett, 1998, p. 224).

2.3 The British Economy from 1900 until 1970

2.3.1 The Decline of the British Coal Industry

Manufacturing and also the coal export played a crucial role in the British economy not only throughout the 19th century but also in the early 20th century. In 1913, for instance, 2,500 British mines produced over 290 million tons of coal, 30% of them for the export (Supple, 1992). At the beginning of the First World War in 1914, the industry can be considered as being at its peak, occupying over a million workers. Complete towns and entire counties were dominated by coalmining and the engaged labour force. However, in the years and decades following the end of the First World War, coalfields emerged in other states competing with Britain. The general decline in world trade and growth reduced the demand for coal and hence

the industry experienced a recession. As a result, coalmining entered a period of stagnation in 1924, leading to high unemployment of its workers (about 24% of the mining workers lost their jobs). The industry never recovered (Supple, 1992).

Elaborating on the reasons for such a drastic decline, it can be said that the industry was simply too big and hence unable to meet the changing demands of the market in the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore, due to a lack of capital, the production methods as well as the whole technology were hardly modernized and hence were lacking behind the production standards of other states, leading to lower efficiency. In 1947, industry was nationalised and the government invested in restructuring it. However, this did not help to avoid the structural change in the long-run, which was demonstrated, particularly, by various strikes and pit closures in the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, Supple (1992) concludes that "coal-mining is merely the most dramatic example of the social pain and political disruption involved in the adaption of Britain's nineteenth-century staple industries to the new economic world of the 20th century" (p. 189).

2.3.2 The British Economy during the Great Depression

One other example that caused many problems in Great Britain was the economic crisis before the Second World War. In 1929, the Wall Street Crash led to a period of worldwide economic crisis called the Great Depression. However, it can be argued that in Great Britain, the crisis was marginally milder than in most of the other industrial states. Employment rates and economic output in Great Britain fell to a lesser degree than in most other countries and, even though some people certainly suffered, the majority of the British were able to maintain their standard of living. The real income[9] of the majority of the population even increased between 1929 and 1932. Furthermore, Britain exceptionally recovered quickly compared to other states and without much government interference. The crisis also did not lead to any radical political change, like it did in for instance Germany. Nevertheless, the Great Depression had its impact on the British Economy as well: there was a decline in exports, as well as unemployment rose from 1.5 million to 3.4 million (about 16% of the workforce). The industries, in particular, concentrating on export suffered, and therewith the regions hosting these industries, namely south Wales, Lancashire, and Central Scotland. However, the

[9] The income an employee receives after the consideration of inflation. (Bains, 1992)

domestic industries managed to remain relatively stable and kept on making profits, since also the demand remained (Baines, 1992).

Baines (1992) defines two main reasons for this alleviated Depression in Great Britain: Firstly, its position as the world's largest importer of food and raw materials and secondly, the absences of a financial collapse (pp. 191-192). Concerning the first point, prices for food and raw materials fell in the course of the crisis, and large stocks of both products which were previously held back were dumped on the world market. Unlike other states, however, Britain introduced no tariffs to secure domestic products since the Labour government of these days kept on favouring free trade. When it actually introduced tariffs in 1932, the amount was relatively low and increased prices only marginally. The financial collapse held off as domestic businesses kept operating almost as usual. Furthermore, Britain left the Gold Standard, therewith lowering the exchange rate and making it attractive to hold Sterling again (Baines, 1992).

2.3.3 The British Economy during the Second World War

During and the Second World War, Britain transformed from a *laissez-faire* economy into a centrally managed economy due to war mobilization**,** with a heavy increase in government spending. This transformation was partly considered necessary to curb inflation. Furthermore, for a free market system it would have taken too long to adjust to the requirements of a war economy. Finally, the government was able to control profits and rationed goods; this prevented prices from exploding due to the scarcity of goods. The production of goods was contracted by releasing raw materials, labour and capital for the munitions industries to control supply. The war- economy led to a decrease in unemployment and also to the extensive mobilisation of women as workforce in order to replace men who had to join the army. Furthermore, the working hours increased continuously, peaking at 60 hours for men and 55 hours for women (Howlett, 2004).

In the late 1930s, the British Treasury believed that the war could be financed through the selling of gold reserves and foreign exchange, and an increase in exports. However, the exports declined drastically by 71% from 1938 to 1943, whereas the costs of war exploded. Consequently, Britain made considerable losses and by 1941 its hard currency reserves had been exhausted. Therefore, the American government passed the 'Lend-Lease' Act in March 1941. This act aimed at rescuing Britain's economy by granting free access to the American

market and providing necessary war equipment to Great Britain which had not to be paid until the war ended. Even though this agreement was certainly beneficial, and necessary, for Britain to counter Nazi advancement, after the Second World War, it left the country with a deficit of 650 million dollars (Howlett, 2004).

2.3.4 Nationalisation of the British Economy 1945-51

When the Second World War was over, the British economy was seriously tarnished. The newly elected Labour government of 1945 therefore started a period of nationalisation, eventually applying the theories of Keynes who advocated the abandonment of *laissez-faire* and claimed for greater state intervention instead. Hence, the 'invisible hand' of the market was replaced by the 'visible hand' of the government as has happened recently with the banks in the UK. While other industries such as the post, telecommunications or the broadcasting agencies (BBC) had been nationalised already in the 1930s, this wave of nationalisation included a wide range of industries such as the coal industry, electricity, gas, transport, iron and steel, and increased public sector employment by two million people. The major goal of nationalisation was to improve the efficiency of the industries through managerial reorganization. Therefore, for instance coal mines and electricity providers were merged. The increase in efficiency was achieved in regard to branches such as airlines or telecommunications, since they experienced a high degree of technical progress and hence an increase in productivity. Other industries such as coal-mining and gas however profited less. Nevertheless, in general, productivity increased especially in the 1950s and 1960s (Hannah, 2004).

However, the restructuring of the economy entailed several problems: the coordination of transport was still far from perfect, as well as competent managerial staff was missing. Moreover, when government changed to the Conservatives in 1951, the steel industry as well as road haulage was denationalised again, and the new government encouraged more decentralized managerial structures. The overall success of nationalisation is hard to determine, since the concerned industries and firms, if not nationalized, would have been forced to alter their structure or would have gone bankrupt. Hence, Hannah (2004) attempts to evaluate the success of nationalisation by comparing those industries to each other. They were only partially nationalised, and partially remained operating in the private sector. He concludes that, overall, the private companies performed better since they were more

competitive and therefore gained market share compared to the nationalised companies. Also when comparing the British nationalised industries to respective industries in other states, Hannah rather evaluates the British nationalisation as negative, concluding that "while state industries can be effectively managed, the British ones in general were not" (p. 104).

2.4 The British Economy under Thatcher – 1979 until 1990

2.4.1 From Nationalization towards a Liberal Economic Policy

The policy of nationalisation of British industries was the exact opposite to Thatcher's policies, as she proved during her time in office. The Conservative Party, under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, marking the end of the post-war consensus, took office in 1979. Faced with an average inflation of over 15% per year during 1974 and 1979, stagflation, debts to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Keynesian model of state to force full employment had proved inefficient (O'Donoghue et al., 2006, fig.2). The strong trade unions owned monopoly like privileges. On the other hand, most state owned enterprises worked inefficiently and with too much labour as being able make profit. While being a world and colonial power during the previous centuries, Britain's economy had declined in the late 20th century, lacking behind in comparison to other EU countries (Evans, 2004, p.10).

With her election in 1979, Margaret Thatcher introduced a new economic era. She broke with the Keynesian school and reintroduced a liberal economic policy, according to the monetarist teachings of Milton Friedman (1979). According to his theory, any kind of state intervention in the market creates a so called deadweight loss by means of either artificially increased wages or employment rates which means that the market does not work efficiently (Evans, 2004, p.11). This new political era is often referred to as the time of Thatcherism, due to the unique "personality and [political] style of Mrs Thatcher" (Marsh, 1998, p.169). As Marsh elaborates, to many scholars, Thatcherism is the "national response to wider international crises in capitalist profitability brought about by the exhaustion of Fordism[10]" (Marsh, 1998). An important role of the New Right movement and its liberal connotation was privatization of the state owned businesses as well as cutting back the rights and influence of the influential trade unions (Evans, 2004, p. 12).

[10] Referring to the former Prime Minister Ford.

2.4.2 Thatcherism – Changing the UK's Economic Structure after the Post-War Consensus

After the Post-war consensus had failed due to unbearable expenditures of the welfare state as well as the 'Winter of discontent'[11], the election of the Conservative party and her leader Mrs Thatcher set a new beginning for the British economy (Evans, 2004). Thatcher believed in the liberal market and the *laissez faire* state described by Friedman, in contrast to the Keynesian model of the Post-war consensus. While during her first period of government a strict deflationary policy was adopted to "squeeze inflation out of the system" (Evans, 2004, p.21), increasing taxes and cutting back public spending to a minimum, the monetarism in terms of privatization of public owned businesses was the central goal of the second period of government.

First attempts towards privatization had already been started during the first years of Thatcher's government, selling local authority houses to sitting tenants[12]. Furthermore, British Petroleum, British Aerospace and the British Sugar Corporation were sold to private owners by 1982 (Evans, 2004, p. 21). In addition the British Telecom was privatized in 1984 after it had lost its monopoly due to giving license to other competitors, as well as British Gas in 1986.

2.4.3 Causes for the Turnaround in British Economic Politics – Privatization

The reasons for the extensive privatization of public goods were complex. On the one hand, it helped the British government to refill its treasures because it helped cutting public spending and enabled Thatcher to dismiss unprofitable businesses. Due to privatization 19 billion pounds sterling were raised between 1979 and 1987 (Holmes, 1989; Evans, 2004). On the other hand, it created a new moral dimension as she stated in her memoirs:

> Privatization, no less than the lax structure, was fundamental to improving Britain's economic performance. But for me it was also far more than that: It was one of the

[11] The 'Winter of discontent' describes the winter of 1978-1979 in which a wave of strikes against the new proposed pay restraint to a 5 per cent limit hit the UK. The Callaghan government, which based its power on the influence of the Unions, lost most of its influence and popularity due to this incident, leading to new elections in 1979 (Evans, 2004, pp.10-17),

[12] In the first year 55,000 public-sector houses had been sold, increasing to 204,000 in 1982-3 (Edgell and Duke, 1991, p.140).

> central means of reversing the corrosive and corrupting effects of socialism. Ownership by the state is just that – ownership by an impersonal legal entity: It amounts to control by politicians and civil servants. Through privatization – particularly the kind of privatization which leads to state's power is reduced and the power of the people enhanced. Privatization is at the centre of any programme of reclaiming territory for freedom (Thatcher, 1993, p.676).

In order to enhance the success of privatizing public property stocks were offered under favourable conditions (such as low stock prices), offering "quick and easy rewards" (Evans, 2004, p. 53).

2.4.4 Evaluation of Thatcherism

Although Thatcher's strong belief in the freedom of choice and the positive effects of privatisation, it was less successful than she had initially anticipated. While the number of private shareholders had increased during her time of government, from 3 million to 11 million, most shareholders kept their stocks only long enough to raise quick profit (Evans, 2004). This was due to the fact that stocks were sold at a price far below its original value. As a result, people bought stocks cheap and resold them as soon as their commercial value had reached a profitable level. Ironically, for those who kept their stocks longer "the stock market crash of 1987 provided a harsh lesson in financial realities" (p. 37). The real winners were the pension funds, who served the need for long-term pension plans, taking more than 20 years to mature. After making quick profit out of cheap stocks, most people invested in pension funds in order to secure their future. Nevertheless, the 1001 stock market decline on pension funds created "very low-yielding annuities", resulting in a "spectacular downside" of popular capitalism (Evans, 2004, p. 37). Evans also argues, that the quick profit gained by most shareholders lead to the transformation of former public-owned monopolies into privately owned monopolies, not offering any better service than their predecessors. It was not unusual that those politicians who paved the way for privatizations became the new CEO's after their retirement (p.38).

Due to the New Right movement and its liberal policies, manufacturing production fell by 25 per cent and kept declining during the 1980s, leaving more than 2.7 million British workers unemployed (Evans, 2004). Strikes already arose all over the country during the government of Prime Minister Callaghan, proclaimed by the strong Trade Unions. Before the Trade Union Act of 1984 and the Trade Union and Employment Acts of 1988, trade unions

had the right to discipline workers not participating in a strike. Furthermore, they could proclaim strikes without a referendum of its members and workers had to be member of a trade union in order to ensure employment. Participation in strikes, moreover, out of sympathy with strikes in other economic fields was allowed. Opposing this, the state also provided high reparations for workers who were dismissed due to non-membership in a union. Although these new laws drastically decreased the trade unions' power, it is argued that these decisions were "generally popular", liberalizing the workers from the oppressive trade unions and paving the way for the introduction of new technologies to the British market, which was stopped by the unions before (Evans, 2004, p.39).

2.4.5 The Coal Miner Strike Caused by Thatcher's Economic Politics – A Case Study

The elite of the trade unions were the coal miners, being the driving industrial force and attached with a long history of successful strikes. Mrs Thatcher was well aware of the fact, that it was a coal miners' strike that caused the Heath government to hold new elections in 1974 (Evans, 2004). Therefore, she appointed Ian MacGregor, the former chairman of British Steel to become the new chairman of the National Coal Board, in 1983. MacGregor had succeeded in increasing the productivity of British Steel by discarding half of the labour force. In May 1984 he announced the closure of 20 mine pits within a matter of weeks, cutting 20,000 jobs, due to inefficiency of the pits. This provoked country wide strikes, lead by University of Manchester Union (UMU) president Arthur Scargill (Campbell, 2003). The Thatcher government was already preparing for such a case and thus stockpiling coal reserves and preparing coal supply from abroad (Evans, 2004).

Because the strike hit the British economy by causing blackouts and energy cuts, it was outlawed by the Trade Union Act in July 1984. Due to the fact, that in most pits no ballots were held, the strike was deemed illegal, withdrawing the miners' rights for payment and substitution by the state. Furthermore, the UMU was charged 5 million pound sterling by 1985 for illegal striking. The striking miners were forced to contract debts, after the UMU became unable to pay further wages in spring 1985, forcing the miners' defeat (Thatcher, 1993, p.39-40). Throughout the strike, several clashes between striking miners and police forces took place (BBC Miners Strike). Finally, the strike resulted in the closure of the pits. The UMU had lost 72 per cent of its members between 1979 and 1986, stating a great victory for Mrs Thatcher in her fight against the trade unions (Evans, 2004). Concerning the end of

the strike in March 1985 she stated: “The strike has established the truth that the British coal industry could not remain immune to the economic forces which applied elsewhere in both the public and the private sectors” (Evans, 2004, p.40).

2.4.6 Thatcherism – Good or Evil for the British Economy?

The New Right movement with its liberal approach, as well as the introduction of monetarism to the British market in the late 1970s to the beginning of the 1990s under Mrs. Thatcher had a great impact on the British economy. Not only was Mrs. Thatcher able to cut back state spending to a minimum, but also to decrease the influence of the Trade Unions. Further, her concept of “increasing self-responsibility” as mentioned in the 'Sermon on the Mound’[13] was successfully implemented by privatizing most of the state owned businesses, including aerospace, utilities supply, health care and heavy industry. The fight against inflation was finally won by her successor John Major, who followed her political and economic approach (Marsh, 1998, p. 217). Although this is an obvious success, the newly introduced and strictly enforced monetarism had its price, as the miners’ strike between 1988 and 1989 showed. A great deal of households were left ruined after one year of strike without payment, and many faced unemployment after the fast closure of most of Britain's pits. Nonetheless, it can be said that the victory of Mrs Thatcher over the Trade Unions can be seen as an important step towards a liberal and free market, away from the Post-war consensus welfare state and towards monetarist capitalism as proposed by Friedman.

2.5 The British Economy during the ‘New Growth’ in 1997 until Today

2.5.1 Economic Policy and Development in the New Labour Era

After almost two decades of Conservatist rule, Labour came back to power in 1997. In order to win the elections, Labour felt it had to fundamentally change some of its policies. Whereas previous Labour governments generally pursued a Keynesian approach to government intervention in the economy, New Labour emphasized on avoiding ‘tax and spend’ policies.

[13] The original title was *Speech to General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* and was nicknamed Sermon on the Mound as a parody to the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus from the Bible (Margaret Thatcher Association, 1988).

In essence, New Labour shifted the focus of macro-economic policy from fiscal policy (Keynesianism) to monetary policy (Monetarism). Nevertheless, as we will see, fiscal policy has been put into practice to a substantial extent.

New Labour, by contrast to the previous Labour, was now in favour of a much more flexible labour market. Therefore Labour emphasized on bringing long-term unemployed people back to the labour market, as it was written down in their 1997 party program. They believed that a more flexible labour market would reduce unemployment rate while at the same time keep inflation at a low rate. By reforming taxes and benefits, the sustainable rate of unemployment, Labour argued, could be lowered. Instead of using large fiscal spending, flexible labour markets were held to be the key to higher employment rates. In other words, government does not need to give much assistance to increase the level of demand when there is an economic slowdown. Whereas former Labour governments used to relocate industry and capacity to regions with the aim of distributing employment opportunities, New Labour completely disbanded this policy (Labour Party, 1997).

As for economic performance, British GDP increased by an average of 2.9% since 1997. This is slightly higher than that of the early 1990s. Inflation has also been at low levels. Labour's target has been 2%, and the actual inflation level has never differed more than 1% from this target (Sawyer, 2006, p. 3). The OECD also reported that: macroeconomic performance over the last decade has been a paragon of stability. This performance is ascribed to the strength of the institutional arrangements for setting monetary and fiscal policy as well as to the flexibility of labour and product markets (OECD, 2005, p. 24). The IMF stressed as well that "Macroeconomic stability in the United Kingdom remains remarkable" (IMF, 2005).

2.5.2 Analysis and Evaluation of the Causes and Policies that led to the New Growth

The paragraph above gives the impression that the UK has done quite good on economic performance since Labour came to power again, but how did Britain achieve this and what side-effects occurred?

Concerning Labour's fiscal policy, the so-called 'golden rule' has been of particular importance. This holds that the government will only borrow for investments and not to increase spending to fuel the economy. The Labour government strived for a 40% debt to GDP ratio. This is significantly less stringent than that of the Euro-area; its members are subject to the Stability and Growth Pact. Within the Euro-area, the budget deficit may not

reach below 3%. The UK has sometimes passed this 3%, and although it is not a member of the Euro-area it has been criticized by the EC for exceeding this number. British deficit has been more than 3% from 2003 until 2008 (Sawyer, 2006). As a result, the Commission "no longer believes the government's excessive spending and borrowing is temporary" (p. 5).

An interesting shift that can be observed when contrasting New Labour versus Old Labour is the belief in privatization. Whereas Old Labour was much in favour of public institutions, New Labour seems to have taken at least part of the Conservatist stand that sometimes the market offers better solutions. For instance, via the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), 100 new hospitals were built or are in the process of building. All have been substantially financed by the private sector. Private financing, Sawyer argues, has had the effect of "replacing financed debt with the consequent future interest payments by expenditure undertaken by private firms for which they are repaid over a period of up the 30 years" (Sawyer, 2006, p. 9). As a result, this public expenditure can be spread over the course of time and hence reduces short-term budget deficits. If one would include the full spending in the annual budget, then the debt to GDP ratio would increase to more than 50% (p. 10). So the question is if New Labour is just artificially spreading the costs over time in order to 'hide' the real deficit.

Concerning Labour's monetary policy, the most important decision was that the power of determining the interest rate was moved to an independent institution – similar to the ECB. Nevertheless, low inflation targets were still largely set by the government in order gain confidence amongst financial markets. This is something that New Labour won votes with during the election, as they had to appeal to the business class one way or another in order to win the election from the conservative party. Labour has been quite successful at keeping inflation below or around the target - something that cannot be said of the Euro-area. In particular this mean that from 1997 - until today there have been several ECB countries that breached the limit of 3%, so the Bank of England (the monetary institution of Britain) has been more successful in that respect. Nonetheless, the question remains if Labour's monetary policy can be accredited for low inflation or if this was just due to low global inflation levels (Sawyer, 2006, pp. 6-12).

2.5.3 The British Economy Nowadays – The Financial Crisis

In order to find out why the British economy is in steep decline today, despite its recent period of 'new growth', the financial crisis and its impacts on the UK shall be discussed in the following. The financial crisis can be said to have "officially" begun in July 2007, and is still having its impacts on most outward oriented economies up until today. Depending on geographic location and language, the financial crisis is sometimes also called "credit crisis" or "credit crunch" (Guardian UK, 2008).

One of the major causes of this financial turmoil is generally stated to be the loss of confidence by investors in the value of securitized mortgages in the US. The result of this loss of confidence by investors was a liquidity crisis which in turn led to a significant amount of capital injections into the financial markets. Actors involved in such actions included the European Central Bank and the Bank of England (Norris, 2008). The Treasury Bill to Eurodollar[14] spread remains extremely unstable in the periods between the beginning of the crisis, and today (Barkley, 2007). A heavy fluctuation of this value indicates a high credit risk. In late 2008 the Treasury Bill to Eurodollar spread rose to another peak point, indicating the worsening financial situation. During this worsening of the crisis, stock markets began to crash on an international scale. This marked the beginning of a period of extremely unpredictable financial instability while in the days after entering this period the first insurance firms, banks as well as mortgage lenders started to go bankrupt – the numbers of banks failing increased over time as the situation worsened gradually (Elliott, 2008). After the crisis had spread to the entire United States' financial market, it began to expand and finally also reached the UK, as one of the first EU countries.

2.5.4 Actions Taken to Solve the Crisis – State Program Funds

Due to the interconnectedness of today's global financial markets the financial crisis did not confine itself to the borders of the USA. Instead it quickly found its way to the EU and into the UK. Thus while many argue the financial crisis is a product of the USA, it did not stay there. Some even argue today's financial crisis has its origin in the 1980s due to the Thatcher reforms, as will be analyzed later. However, it is definite that the financial crisis does impact the UK on large scale, as the government already undertook actions involving the acquisition

[14]A United States dollar deposited in a European bank and used as an international currency to finance trade (Princeton, 2008)

of banks – some of them only partially. Those actions have taken up about $88 billion (USD) (Havemann, 2009).

Additionally the government of the United Kingdom has bound itself to provide another $438 billion in bank loans to certain sectors of the British economy. The remarkable amount of $64 billion was spent by the British government in order to buy up shares belonging to the Lloyds TSB Group and Royal Bank of Scotland. This only happened after brokering Lloyds' acquisition of the struggling HBOS bank group. At this point it is interesting to mention that Barclays refused to accept the British government's offer and instead turned to investors abroad, including investors from the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Those investments from abroad added up to approximately $12 billion – mostly coming from private investors (Havemann, 2009).

However, the banks mentioned above were by no means the first banks from within the United Kingdom to fail. In fact, the Northern Rock bank can be counted to one of the first victims of the financial crisis in the UK. This bank was a medium-sized bank, operating on the leverage-system – which caused the bank to appeal for security from the Bank of England (HM Treasury, 2008). In late 2007 the move by Northern Rock to appeal for security from the Bank of England finally led to a massive outbreak of alarm amongst investors. There were numerous calls from within the British government to nationalize Northern Rock – however those calls were initially ignored until the government had realized that they failed to find a buyer from the private sector. At this point they did not have much choice but to change their mind and take the institution to the public level of ownership (Havemann, 2009). It is interesting to note that the problems Northern Rock was experiencing were soon to be experienced by dozens of other banks across the United Kingdom. Hence, the failure of the Northern Rock can be interpreted as an early sign of a failure of the British financial sector.

2.5.5 Who is responsible for the financial crises?

The question whether American sub-prime mortgages infected UK markets or whether the UK is responsible for its very own financial crisis is debated heavily today. In the United States defaults on sub-prime mortgages suddenly peaked as lenders extended mortgages to people with deficient credit ratings. It was hoped that the steadily rising housing prices would allow for easy remortgaging of property to meet eventual repayments (Duncan, 2007)

However, with regards to the UK, looking back in history one quickly notices Thatcher's approach and how it might be identified as one of the reasons for the United Kingdom being in crisis today. Back in the 1980s Margaret Thatcher (as well as Ronald Reagan) opted for a broad *laissez-faire* strategy, barely interfering into the economy with demand and supply-side policies to correct imbalances in the equilibrium. The climate created in the 1980s may be seen as starting point for the current housing bubble which contributed towards the larger crisis known today. *Laissez-faire,* as was hoped by Thatcher, did not work out as the self-correcting mechanisms of the economy did not kick in. In the 1980s enormous amounts of money were borrowed from banks in order to finance home-ownership – a policy heavily promoted by Thatcher. She envisaged that if prices get out of line "they will eventually revert to historical norms" - which plainly did not happen, seizing up the credit markets and leading to today's crisis (Jameson, 2008)

2.5.6 The EU as Saviour in Distress?

After the financial crises spread throughout Europe, hitting Eastern Europe particularly hard, EU governments decided to work to together in order to mitigate the impact. As part of this, agreements were made to harmonize interested rates, adopting strict policies to get out of the financial crisis. Thus Europe found itself in panic and disarray before governments settled down and started working out a plan to get out of the recession.

In addition to the harmonization of the interest rates throughout the European nations the European Central Bank worked out additional steps to mitigate the impact of the financial crisis. This included the move conducted by late December 2008 causing synchronous rate cuts with Sweden's Riksbank as well as the Bank of England (HM Treasury, 2008). The European Union has put numerous measures in place trying to stop the financial crisis and its harmful effects on the economy. As part of this the EU is hoping to improve conditions by a list drawn up which includes 259 billion dollar worth of public spending (Havemann, 2009).

2.6 What makes the British Economy *Sui generis*?

After having outlined and analyzed the most important transformations in the British economic history of the last 200 years, it is essential to point out what distinguishes the British economy from others, especially from other EU Members. Therefore, this part will first elaborate on London and its position in the world economy. After that the main economic regions and products of Britain will be analyzed. Finally, the impact of the EU on the British economy will be examined, which will be accomplished in chapter 4 of the book.

2.6.1 London, a "Global City"?

London's geographical position in the centre of the UK is conferrable to its relevance for the British economy as a whole. It is the financial centre of the country and aims for superlatives in many senses. Therefore, this section focuses on the distinctiveness of London in terms of its role in the British economy. In this respect the concept of a 'global city' will be applied. It is often applied to the megacities such as New York and Tokyo but also to London. According to Sassen (1995) these cities "function as command points in the organization of the world economy" (p. 3). Additionally, they "emerge as transnational locations for investment, for firms, for the production of services and financial instruments, for various international markets" (p. 3). Hence, in the following it will be elaborated on the different features of a "global city" in the particular case of London and in the end it will be discussed if London is a "global city".

In general, one can say that the financial and service sector grew significantly over the traditional industries, like manufacturing and producing industries in particular, during the last decades[15]. The proportions were different in the 1970s, when most of the employees worked in the manufacturing industry until this was outsourced to low income countries. At that time Britain needed new sections of the economy to satisfy the demand for jobs in the capital. Hence, the financial sector was one of the branches that provided a lot of new jobs. From 2000 onwards the financial sector even extended its impact on the city's appearance and the job market. In 2001 one third of all jobs in London were provided by the financial and business sector. These "high productivity service sectors" work so efficient because of the

[15] Producing industries decreased importance in recent decades, only 10% employees (Gordan et al, 2006).

high competitiveness concentrated in the city of London[16] (Gordan et al, 2006, p. 3). However, since the terror attacks in 2005, the tourism sector is a sensitive topic. Although the number of tourists declined after the attacks, the overall performance in this sector is still convincing and will recover from the decline, as the statistics from the Oxford Economic Forecast (Gordan et al, 2006).

Despite being part of the manufacturing sector, the printing industry is still a relatively big employer in London, as almost all national newspapers have their headquarters there. Additionally, the broadcasting companies, like BBC, are situated in London and provide also a significant amount of jobs.

The immense capital flows, which at least for some seconds are placed on the London Stock exchange and Metal Exchange, concern amounts average employees would never think of. Furthermore, one may also not underrate the capital that stays in London. Foreign investors from United States, China and Russia own companies, real estate and also parts of the stock exchange. This capital makes the city wealthy but also gives away a lot of independence. With foreign investors settling in the capital London is indeed an international owned property. However, the government itself also contributes a fair part to the infrastructural systems and cultural institutions in the capital, being roughly 14 per cent of the spending in the entire U.K. [17]. The government regards this as a reasonable investment, as London is the figurehead of the country and has to increase its attractiveness not only for tourist but for foreign investment as well (ibid.). However, without the money from within the country there would not have been investment from outside. Its competitive advantage is displayed in the capital markets, the significance of its airports and the host for national and international media (Gordan et al, 2006).

London alone receives in total 37 per cent of foreign investments into the UK in total (Gordon et al., 2006). Even though, property or rent alone is extremely expensive in London, the city is not afraid of moving away of companies or also private households because London is attractive and sells a certain lifestyle. The infrastructure, on the other hand, is a disaster: "[p]ublic expenditure in London is low in relation both to economic activity and to the taxes it generates" (Gordon et al., 2004, p. 104). Additionally, it has to be mentioned that

[16] The difference in productivity in a nationwide comparison sums up to a 27 per cent higher gross added value in London which in turn shows the accumulation of high-skilled labour centred in London (Gordan at al, 2006).
[17] To express this percentage in absolute numbers, the government spends annually 63 billion pounds in average to support the region (Gordan at al, 2006, p. 50).

underinvestment concerning transportation infrastructure is low for decades already, as particularly Thatcher did not see the necessity to invest in London's future development. Furthermore, the improvement of its infrastructure is indispensable, as "the sustainability of London's economy and its taxable capacity depend on adequate infrastructure and public services" (Gordon et al., 2004, p. 7).

Concerning the Labour market, unemployment rates for the region of London are, surprisingly, quite high[18]. The expected increase of people who move to the capital calls for further job creation. Even though, living in the melting pot of London is relatively expensive compared to other British cities and compared to the salaries most of the Londoners receive[19]. That leads to a movement of many workers to the suburbs of the city, which in turn requires extra investments in public transportation which is a privatized industry in Britain. Although the Forecasting Report predicted further jobs to be offered by 2008, this goal might not have been reached due to the financial crisis in the end of 2008, on which it will be elaborated further in later section. To give an overview of the distribution of employment in the capital, this table is provided. It describes the specializations of industries and the percentage of its employees respectively, also in terms of its competitiveness (Oxford Economic Forecast London, 2006).

Considering the analysis in the former paragraphs about London, the conclusion is yes, London is a “global city” in economic terms, but also culturally. It succeeded in incorporating an international financial market that is attractive to the other megacities (New York, Paris, Los Angeles, Hong Kong) and makes it competitive. It competes with them about investments, image and the ability to act quickly and smoothly in terms of capital flows. Furthermore, over 50% of British companies have their headquarters in London and over 100 from 500 multinational corporations, too (Gordan et al, 2006).

In 2012, the City of London will host the Olympic Games as well. This event shall improve not only the city’s image, but also the inclusion of weaker districts that are problematic in London. This could also be a way to foster the cultural mix of this ‘global melting pot’. On the other hand one has to mention, and this will also be shown in the next chapter, the problem of integration especially of average workers, is still a challenge for the claimed globalized city. Another point of criticism concerning the Olympic Games is money.

[18] The numbers of 2005 are around 7 per cent (Gordan at al, 2006).
[19] The prices for property or renting may also harm the establishment of new companies in London because they are very high. The West End is, internationally, the most expensive area to rent an office (Gordan at al, 2006, p. 33).

The construction of new Olympic sport facilities that comply with the security standards required today is expensive and even is in an area of London where people live and who have to move now (Payne, 2007).

2.6.2 Regional Industries and Economies

England

As the latter section already examines some of the major branches of London, this part will examine the whole region – England – in order to give a complete analysis' of UK's main industries and their location. England is highly industrialized and is home to the largest economy of the four regions in the United Kingdom. The English income is, as mentioned above, mostly generated by the City of London, one of the largest financial centres in the world. The primary industries in England are in decline. Of the secondary industries manufacturing is in decline while the construction industry grows. This growth is fuelled by the growth in the services, administrative and financial sector. The service sector is the largest sector of the economy in England (Britannica, 2009).

Until the 18th century wool trade (primarily the export to the European continent), along with agricultural, was the largest industry in England. The growth of wool trade was only limited due to the lack of an efficient infrastructure. Eventually, in the late 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th century the infrastructure rapidly improved when canals and railways were created. During the Industrial Revolution the English region rapidly became the first highly industrialized and urbanized region in the world. During this time of economic growth the English manufacturing industry processed raw materials like cotton, sugar and tobacco from the British overseas possessions. These English products were then exported and sold on the growing domestic market. Another important drive for the Industrial Revolution in England was the advantage of natural resources found in north-eastern England like coal, iron and ore. These in turn fuelled the English heavy industries like the steel production and shipbuilding. The economic growth during the Industrial Revolution established large industrial centres in the Midlands and North England (Britannica, 2009).

The English economic growth declined during the Great Depression in the 1930s. One of the reasons was foreign competition on the production and manufacturing market, which contributed to the decrease of the production rate and increase of the unemployment rate. This decline in economic growth hit the heavy industries in the north first, and the unemployed

moved to the south of England. The southeast became in turn highly urbanized and industrialized wit automotive, chemical, electrical, and machine tool manufactures as the leading industries. The heavy industries in the north and the Midlands further declined like during the second half of the 20th century and were subsequently replaced by service industries and hi-tech industries. South-eastern England maintained its economically strong position. Today the service sector dominates the English economy and England is not only the wealthiest of the four nations of the United Kingdom but it also contributed to the fact that the UK is one of the wealthiest countries in the world (Britannica, 2009).

Scotland

The Scottish economy is a mixed economy which combines the aspects of the free market with government control and economic planning. The Scottish economy is small but it does have the third largest GDP (gross domestic product) per capita of any region in the United Kingdom after the South East of England and Greater London, as whole it is lower than the average in the UK. It also contributes one eight of the United Kingdom export revenue.

During the Industrial Revolution the Scottish heavy industries excelled in manufacturing and shipbuilding like England. The British Empire served as the major market for export. Similar as the English heavy industries, the Scottish manufacturing and heavy industries suffered a decline in growth. During the 1980s the Scottish governments made efforts to keep the industries running, and the exploitation of natural resources in the North Sea like gas and oil helped the Scottish economy to cope with the loss of growth in the manufacturing and heavy industries. The Scottish economy subsequently shifted towards hi-tech industries and services industries, and like in England the service sector is now the largest sector of economy in Scotland. The shift to hi-tech industries was primarily concentrated in the Silicon Glen corridor between Glasgow and Edinburgh, with today employing 41,000 people.

Scotland has the advantage of a large abundance of natural resources, from coal, oil and gas to fertile grounds (Britannica, 2009)

The economic development of Scotland started after the Union with England in 1707, Scotland thereby gained access to the expanding market of England and its colonies. The Scottish economy became more dynamic but also less stable, although this was not the case for the agricultural endeavours. Due to the rawness of the soil, the Scottish farmer in comparison to the English farmer could not specialize in grain crops, which was more instable

then the mixed farming of livestock and small scale crop harvesting. The Scottish industry on the other hand was not without trade , The Scottish trade and industry limited it's focus namely on particular products or markets, for example whisky or tobacco trade. The tobacco trade boomed until it collapsed during the American Revolution. It was the same case for the cotton trade. It boomed only until after the Napoleonic wars because it could compete with the new markets monopolized by Britain in South America. The Scottish economy luckily could count on its natural resources (coal and iron) when the Industrial Revolution started. Again the coal and iron mining industries lost the competition with the north eastern English mining industries. Finally the Scottish economy opened up to a new field of expertise, shipbuilding and related industries like steelmaking. Although the Scottish industries were flexible and able to cope with collapsing markets , in the end Scotland itself made little economical prosperity with expertise before the markets collapsed. After the two World Wars the Scottish industries revived, but not with the confidence they had after other economical downfalls. (Hobsbawn, 1968; Hudson, 1989).

Wales

The United Kingdom has not only an economically interesting capital to offer but also regional industries that contributed to the rise of the UK as an economic role model. One example is the economy of pre-industrial Wales which was characterized by gentry's estates. After the conquest by the Normans the land was mainly in the hands of the Norman Lords, the Church and the native Wales (Jones, 1994). The native Welsh freeman had a cooperative structure called *kinsmen* holding land collectively. However, crises such as the Black Death and the Glyndwr revolt transformed the land market and the kinsmen system. The land market became more fluid and by the end of the fifteenth century many gentry estates were in existence. Thus, in the time between union and industrialization Wales' economy was dominated by the gentry. Furthermore, farming was also part of the economy but since extensive areas of the country were infertile farming was mainly concentrated in upland Wales. Farming was based on animal husbandry or mixed farming. Additionally, Wales had wool and leather industries located largely in the boroughs (Cardiff, Carmarthen). Their products were sold locally and internationally to France, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands (Jones, 1994). The eighteenth century was also marked by a large-scale iron industry as well as by the coal industry, especially in North Wales, which was overshadowed by miserable conditions of coal mining.

With the growing population of the nineteenth century came the urbanization of the counties of south Wales. As observed by Jenkins (2007), Wales was changing and as the producer of iron, steel, copper, coal and slate Wales was turning into one of the big workshops of the world (p.174). The iron industry is worth mentioning because it was the most obvious evidence of industrialization. It involved large fusions of capital, extensive works and a large labour force. The demand for cannon stimulated large scale productions in order to supply the Russo-Turkish War and the American War of Independence (Jones, 1994, p.161). In turn, these industries contributed much to the transport industry, most importantly to the building of the railway that facilitated not only trade but also enhanced economic relations to London (Jenkins, 2007, p. 177).

Nevertheless, the Second World War contributed to the decline of basic industries: tinplate and coal productions fell by over a third (Jones, 1994, p190). However, after the war the demand for coal and steel revived again along with the birth of new industries. Advance factories were built on trading estates and the nationalization of the gas industry brought investment and jobs. Modern Wales can be said to have given a way to new industrial sectors, at the same time the heavy industry experienced a huge decline since it has been now replaced by tourism, public services and light manufacturing, for instance, electronics and technology (Britannica, 2009)

Ireland

Ireland was an overwhelmingly rural country since the early middle ages and remained so also until the twentieth century. The reason for the persistence of rural areas is obviously to be found not only in Ireland's geographic structure but also in the mentality of its people. Rural traditions were opposed to the English urbanism (Hoppen, 1999, p.36). In 1841 less than 14 per cent of Ireland's population lived in towns and almost three-quarters of males were engaged in farming. Although agriculture was the main producing sector, the Irish made few benefits due to falling prices of agricultural products. Thus, Ireland, before its partition, did not provide an industrial expansion compared to that of Britain (Hollis, 2001, p.94).

After the Great Famine people began to settle into towns. In 1851 the percentage of people living in cities was about 13 per cent compared to 33 per cent in 1911.With growing urbanism came also the transition of manufacturing from the homes into factories. The most important industry was the textile industry, comprising the linen and cotton industry (Hollis,

2001, p.95). Shipbuilding and engineering were new developing industries especially in Belfast.

Ireland as a whole remained nevertheless an agricultural country, although it was said to be industrialized in international terms. Still, the production was limited on industries of linen, brewing, distilling, shipbuilding and engineering. The division of South- and Northern Ireland might also have its roots in the uneven concentration of industries in North and South. The six counties that later became Northern Ireland recorded 35 per cent of industrial labour force. However, this number approached the British level in 1911. Labour force in industry in the southern counties reached only a percentage of 13 (Hoppen, 1999, p.112). Compared to other Western European countries this was of course a low figure. Consequently, unionism and labour politics were established in the North.

As mentioned above the partition of Ireland in 1921 resulted in a more industrial North and a rather agricultural South. Nevertheless, partition provided benefits for both countries. Northern Ireland received subsidies towards its agriculture and social security system. Furthermore, Northern Ireland remained unaffected by rising British tariffs. On the other side, the Free State was liberated from supporting the North's unemployed population and from making any contribution towards the national debt of the UK (Hoppen, 1999, p. 226).

Regarding Northern Ireland's industrial sector one has to say that the time following partition was marked by a decline of many industries. The linen industry experienced a period of decline after 1920 as the demand decreased, and also the shipbuilding industry experienced an enormous decline in production. Nevertheless, in the 1990s Northern Ireland experienced an economic boom and was nicknamed 'Celtic Tiger'. This was due to foreign investment and the transition from the heavy industry to tourism and public services. However, Northern Ireland experienced an economic recession as a result of the global financial crisis (Britannica, 2009)

2.6.3 The British Economic Relationship with the EU and its impact

Having regarded the UK's history of industrial and economic development, the importance of London as one of the major financial centre as well as the different economic characteristics of the regions, it is left to examine its relationship to one of its major economic partners, the EU. Taking into account that the UK successfully negotiated for a special position within the EU, made clear by its decision to abstain from the Euro, the question of economic relation is

of high importance when trying to understand why the UK keeps – to a certain extent - apart from the EU.

From the early beginnings of the EEC, starting with the Treaty of Rome in 1958, the UK embarked upon a different path than the six founding countries. Together with Norway, Austria, Denmark, Portugal, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Sweden, it founded the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), which lasts until today with a changed and very much reduced membership. Being regarded as a beneficial alternative to the newly emerged EEC it fulfilled its purposes while the Breton Woods system of fixed exchange rates was stable. However, in 1973, the UK finally – on second attempt – joined the EEC thus leaving the EFTA. Unlucky though, "within a year of its joining the European Economic Community the first oil shock had occurred…and the fundamental differences in economic strategy between the United Kingdom and its European trading partners reappeared" (Hitiris, 2005, p. 259). In the end, the German strategy led by its rigid central bank proved to be more successful than the British one.

While economic integration continued, another controversial question appeared on the British agenda. With the fall of Breton Woods, the so-called "snake in the tunnel" was established, which describes the linkage of currencies around the Deutsche Mark allowing for a plus or minus 1.5 % of fluctuation. Nonetheless, soon it became clear that there was a need for a better system of currency control, which led to the European Monetary System (EMS) introduced in 1979, proceeding in three stages and having the European Monetary Union (EMU) as its goal. For various reasons – the first major economic cooperation with the EEC in 1973 being one of them - the UK originally did not join the EMS because they were speculating on a better economic stand outside of it. However, in October 1990 Margaret Thatcher had to acknowledge that inflation would continue to disturb British economy. Hence she agreed on joining the EMS, thus stepping into stage one. Yet, unfortunate for Britain, Germans reunification in 1990 posed more financial strains than expected leading the EC into a recession. In order to recover from this, the UK had to step out of the EMS in 1992 - a position in which it remains until today (Hitiris, 2005, pp. 258-262).

2.6.4 Reasons for the Strained EU/UK Relationship

Apart from the British withdrawal of EMS, two other major issues strained the economic cooperation between the UK and the EU from the beginning onwards: the Common

Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the British rebate. As Margaret Thatcher (1993) recalls from the Brussels Agreement of 1988:

> I was right to settle when I did…effective and legally binding controls on expenditure, measures to reduce agricultural surpluses…Britain's rebate which had saved us some [three billion pound sterling] in the past three years [were] secure[d]….None of that, of course, changed the fundamental direction or defects of the Community. The CAP was still wasteful and costly. Britain was still making a financial contribution which I considered too high. The bureaucratic and centralizing tendencies remained (pp. 82-83).

This reflects precisely the two issues. The CAP – which has been under severe critique by many for a long time – is an extremely costly Community instrument which mainly serves for the benefit of the big agricultural countries such as France and Spain. When joining the EEC, the UK would have had to pay the biggest net amount of contribution of all MS without being a proportional beneficiary. Thus, in 1984 Margaret Thatcher negotiated the so-called "rebate", which lightened the burden of contribution to the CAP through a reimbursement (Cini, 2007). Even though this compromise has been found, neither the UK nor the other MS were and still are not content with it.

In the UK, the discussion on its membership in the EU is largely influenced by the presumed economic benefits or costs. From a formal perspective, the UK would fulfil the Maastricht criteria allowing it to be part of the EMU. Yet, Gordon Brown, Prime Minister and former Chancellor of the Exchequer, imposed five barriers making membership of the EMU possible only when the following points should be met: creation of better investment conditions for firms in the UK, increasing the competitiveness of financial services, increasing the compatibility of business cycles and economic structure, allowing for enough flexibility in case of problems, promotion of growth, stability and employment (Hitiris, 2005, p. 265). These points however, have been examined leading to following conclusion: "In essence the reasons reduce to a combination of cyclical divergence and structural divergence between the UK economy and the other European economies, specifically the German and French economies, as opposed to the US economy" (Lloyd, 1998, p. 33). It could also be claimed that these structural differences in economics find their roots in the opposition between the majoritarian system of the UK as well as partly of the US and the mostly consensus oriented governmental systems in continental Europe.

Whether there is a practical debate existent of joining the Euro-zone or not, Lloyd (1998) doubts the actual intention of the UK to be regarded as a "pre-in"[20] (p.7). Since the public debate in the UK is characterized by a more fundamental question: should the UK be part of the EU at all? While it is impossible for this paper to give an economically founded answer to this question, also taking into account that the available statistics can be interpreted in many ways, it is possible to report on the euro-sceptic movement and its counterpart.

2.6.5 Analysis of the British Euro-scepticism

The main argument of Euro-sceptics is that EU membership is too costly: "[t]he balances of the costs and benefits of UK membership of the EU is unequivocally negative. The net costs are substantial" (Milne, 2004, p.14). Having said this, Milne sets out to explain that approximately four percent of the British GDP – or 40 billion pound sterling in 2004 – is the net costs of which 15 billion pound sterling are expenses for the CAP. Moreover, he states that these costs will not decline in the upcoming years. Additionally he calculates the opportunity costs "growth foregone through not being able to pursue opportunities outside the EU "due to accepting the *acquis communautaire* and the economic borders and regulations set by the EU (p.14). Furthermore, one argument is that the UK initiates more jobs and economic opportunities for Europe than the other way around. "[N]early 6 ½ million jobs depend on their [EU MS] trade with the UK, whilst just 4 ½ million British jobs depend on its trade with the rest of the EU" (Lea, 2008, p.3). Last but not least, Milne argues that Free Trade Agreements are superior to customs unions in their economic performance and that the UK's position as a member of WTO and one of the main trading-nations would enable it to stand outside the EU successfully (Milne, 2004). While – as said before – these numbers and claims cannot be proven right or wrong in this paper, a certain impressive logic can be attributed to them. Why should a country with a stand claimed to be so special in the world, load the negative, limiting and costly attributes of the EU onto itself if it could have most of the benefits of a preferred economic relation without suffering from them?

Considering that these claims are widely known in Britain, it does not seem surprising anymore, that a consistent and steady movement of Euro-scepticism persists in the UK. However, there are always several sides to a story. One reason for this alienation from the EU

[20] Pre-in: A country with the general plan to join the Euro, but without precise definition of dates.

could also lie in the remembrance of the economic shocks from 1973 and 1990 which are associated with the increased cooperation with the EU. Interesting enough, the economic situation in the world has changed again. The global financial crisis has swept over to Europe from the USA hitting its closest partner UK heavily. Thus public discussion about stepping into the assumed security of being in the Euro-zone arises again. The outcome remains to be seen.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the British economy can satisfactorily be described as a unique economy. Not only was the UK the first country to industrialize, but it continued to play a crucial role in the global economy for over 300 years – albeit it's role is not as central anymore as it used to be. During this time the amount of state interference changed immensely. During the industrial revolution the government actively pursued and safeguarded economic interests. On a domestic level, laissez-faire gradually become the norm, while on a foreign level conquering, protecting and, arguably, exploiting new colonies were the major policy areas. Moreover, naval predominance in imperial trade and the oceans gave Britain a military advantage over its European competitors. Additionally, we have seen that the government provided for a good infrastructure with a well working transportation system and thus provided the basis for a successful development of the economy. The early evolvement the Industrial Revolution set Britain apart from the rest of Europe and gave them a head-start in economic power for years to come.

During the Great Depression in the 1930's Britain could take advantage of their economic structure which is illustrated by the fact that they did not suffer as much as most European countries. Two of the reasons for the latter are that Britain's Labour government was in favour of free trade during this time. Britain was the largest importer of raw materials and foods but did not introduce tariffs in order to secure domestic products. Nevertheless, Britain maintained exclusive trading rights with its colonies or protectorates.

After the Second World War, the British economy – and the world economy as a whole – went through nearly three decades of unprecedented growth. However, during the 1970's the Keynesian model of economics failed and stagflation occurred for the first time. When Thatcher came to power in 1979, British industry was largely operating inefficient. She

managed to impose massive reforms which were generally in line with Milton Friedman's monetarism. Amongst others, the privatization of State Owned Enterprises, cutting public expenditure and reforming the capital market had the largest impact. Thus, her liberal policies favoured less state intervention in the market. Nevertheless, during the Thatcher, and also Major, years the British economy still had some problems – albeit near the end of Conservative rule in 1997 it was certainly stronger than before. Consequently, in 1997, New Labour simply inherited a strong economy. After one and a half decade of non-interrupted Conservative government, New Labour's only chance for a re-election was to reshape their policy more towards the centre of the political spectrum. As a result, one can conclude that Britain is left without a major leftist party.

Ever since the establishment of the ECSC, Britain's attitude towards a European Community is dominated by euro-scepticism. Apart from identification issues, in the UK the discussion on its membership of the EU is largely influenced by the presumed economic benefits or costs. One often heard argument is that the UK initiates more jobs and economic opportunities for Europe than the other way around. Another is that the UK pays more for the CAP than it receives. However, at this point of time it is not totally implausible anymore to forecast that this attitude may change as a result of current economic instability and Britain's increasing trade dependence with its European partners. Interestingly, the current financial crisis gives rise to public debate in whether Britain should join the EU or not.

It has been the aim of this chapter to examine and explain the economy of the UK during the last 300 years, its major changes and its economic relation to the EU. Even though this has been done for the most part it needs to be mentioned that due to time and space limits this chapter focused on the developments and issues that are most crucial. Certainly, more research and in-depth analysis is possible but the objective of this chapter was to give an overview of Britain's economy. However, the nature and the specifics of the relationship between the UK and the EU – as it is the underlining topic of the whole book – will be analyzed further in the following chapters. So far, it can be concluded that Britain's economic path is arguably different compared to EU (or better, EU-15) economic developments and thus also its commitment towards the EU.

CHAPTER 3

What is the difference between the U.K. and continental Europe in cultural and societal terms?

3.1. Introduction

When continental Europeans speak about people from the UK they often refer to "the guys from the island" or "islander". According to French, Germans or Italians, the British are somehow different. But why? Why is there this perception of difference, although we are all called Europeans? According to Said (2003), we need the perception of the otherness of different cultures and identities to identify ourselves. Although Said refers in his analysis to the otherness of mainly different religious groups, this chapter will analyse if there is such an otherness within Europe itself. It concerns, in particular, the special notion of Britain in terms of culture, society and also art, compared to continental Europe and why a distinction has to be made indeed. To start with a rather straight forward feature of British history, the first section deals with the colonial history of the British Empire and the emergence of the Commonwealth. The imperial rule directly leads to the second part, the multicultural nature of UK's population. Different concepts will be introduced in this context, namely multiculturalism and integration (part three). One cannot examine this issue without taking into account the perception of immigrants before and after the terror attacks of 2001 (U.S.) and 2005 (London). The second section concerns the concept of class society. The British society was always claimed to be a typical class society. The education system and the importance of societal standing determined the wealth and reputation of a family. In this section it will be analysed if the notion of class is still relevant in British society and in how far monarchical structures favoured the mere emergence of the classes in the first place.

In the last section, the popular culture of Britain is of importance. The first part deals with sports, by analysing football and cricket and its supporters and fans. A case study is provided that shows how deep the membership in a football club is rooted in everyday life. The second part concerns music. Here the Beatles are of major importance as they shaped music history in the 1970s. Furthermore, the recent re-emergence of Britpop is examined. In the last part of this section, the art history is outlined. The establishment of British art, particularly, by detaching itself from the continental schools, mainly from Italy and France, is a breakthrough in terms of independence also in expressing a nation’s sentiments in its own way. Moreover, the significant role of the art centre London in the second half of the 20th century, with its galleries and studios brimming with creativity and originality.

The conclusion will give a short summary of the findings in this chapter and will then elaborate on the question, if the UK indeed differs significantly from continental Europe. Particularly, if it is only, as a first possibility, an artificial creation of differences or, being the second answer, if Europe is only a imagined community (Anderson, 1983)

3.2. Multiculturalism

3.2.1 Colonialism

There is little hesitation that the British Empire was the largest the world has ever seen. Overseas resources, labour and trade had made Britain the most powerful and influential actor during the 19th century. This had an impact on the societies and cultures of indigenous civilizations. But there was also a reverse, and generally much less publicly debated, effect: colonialism also changed the society and culture of Britain itself (BritishEmpire.co.uk, 2009). Porter (2006) argues that colonialism

> brought burdens and responsibilities, as well as opportunities for most Britons… [t]his is bound to be reflected in their societal structure, which will have had to adapt to cope with it; and in their culture, which could hardly fail to be affected by so ubiquities a project… (p. 2).

Based on the assumption that colonialism has indeed shaped British societal structures and cultural characteristics over the course of time, this chapter scrutinizes in what possible ways a link can be made between contemporary British society, multiculturalism and colonialism.

Although Porter (2006) recognizes such connections, he stresses that it is important to understand that as far as public and political debate goes, this debate has hardly ever been shaped by colonial issues: "for most of the nineteenth century, British culture at all levels avoided colonial subjects... the empire had no everyday relevance" (p. 3). Although Britain ruled the largest empire on earth, to British people the empire had a rather underlying significance (Porter, 2006, p. 3). Thus, there is a dichotomy between the outside perceived 'greatness' of the British Empire and the internal perception.

The presumed power of the British Empire is constantly debated by historians, but also by politicians. Porter describes two 'extremes'. Some, such as the Conservatist Enoch Powell in the 1960's, even went so far as to claim that the British Empire was a myth and a

deception. Power was a strong proponent of nationalism. Moreover, he believed that if there had never been a British Empire, the loss of it would not have reduced British nationalism. The other extreme is that the Empire had a devastating impact on British society. Porter (2006) holds that this one should be taken more seriously. However, this end of the spectrum has been given little attention during the first four decades after the Second World War. Due to the negative connotations of imperialism, historians mostly avoided this during that time. Only since the late 1980's there has been increased research in this field. (pp. 4-5).

Porter's views are not that radical. The Empire, he holds, was in most cases not ruled directly. Instead, the British generally ruled through native elites and tolerated indigenous cultures. The British government attributed arms and military forces in its colonies relatively compared to what they produced. As a result, many colonies were basically not ruled and vast numbers of its subjects did not even know they were ruled externally by the British. In cases where Britain was more visibly ruling, Porter notes it was mostly "elaborate bluff" (2006, p. 15). They pretended to have vast armies, but usually a couple big mansions and elegant army suits did the trick. Precisely because of the relatively limited efforts needed to acquire and maintain colonies, the influence on British nationalism must have been small: "colonialism… was not the result of national initiatives, involved few British people, and needed little government support… [colonialism was] marginal to the mainstreams of British society in nearly every way" (p. 16).

This is not to say that colonialism had no impact on British society as a whole. In fact, quite many authors disagree with Porter's views. Hinz (2006) notes that British culture as a whole was "perceived to morally correct, appropriately civilized and Christianized, while non-Western people were considered to be barbarians" (p. 7). She argues that indeed there was a national effort to maintain the empire, and that this national effort translated into "loyalty to the crown" (p. 8). Porter holds, however that this is nothing more than an illusion created by British propagandists from the end of the 19th century onwards. British society was strongly divided before the twentieth century between urban-rural and regional between English, Irish, Scots and Welsh. Many of these classes and areas could "literally not understand one another" (Porter, 2006, p. 20). Nevertheless, for the sake of argument, this chapter assumes that a small ruling class with strong links to the colonial world would eventually have an impact on British society and culture. Hence we can continue to analyze

how the attitudes of these people towards immigrants and colonialism as a whole developed, and their link to present-day multiculturalism in Britain.

What both scholars agree on, however, is that Britain, unlike France, did not pursue a 'civilizing mission'. This can be mainly attributed to a lack of citizenship within Britain itself (Porter, 2006, p. 19). For emigrants (or colonialists), their distance to Britain as well as their discoveries of being different from colonized people, increased their perception of a British identity. For them, Africans were seen as "immoral and cruel human beings who were incapable of channelling their bestial instincts" (Hinz, 2006, p. 7). This contrast possibly led to their perception of British culture as superior in every possible way. However, this did not lead to a civilizing mission due to three reasons: The British focus on economic interests (c.f . chapter 2) rather than the political and cultural, the negative conception of native people and, third, the lack of British identity for those who stayed in the homeland (Hinz, 2006; Porter, 2006, p. 20). Assimilation was thus excluded, on the British government's assumption that different levels of civilizations are fixed. Indigenous people, so the British elite and colonialists believed for centuries, were simply incapable of functioning in a civilized world. The question arises then, how this rooted prejudice and the idea of indirect rule found its way to 20th century multiculturalism.

Edward Said (2003) notes that the British perception of indigenous people shows more about the colonizer's culture than the colonized culture. National identity develops when there is a contrast with an "other" (Said, 2003, p. 16). Still, today many people identify themselves as Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or English. Hinz argues that due to the coexistence of multiple national identities, a confrontation with "the other" "was needed to strengthen the weak national identity" (2006, p. 14). The contemporary 'other', however, lives within Britain and constitutes the immigrants. Hinz holds that, nevertheless, the conception of "historical other" to a large extent still determines and colours the attitude towards the contemporary other.

As it will be elaborated further in the next section, looking at contemporary integration policy, we can directly link multiculturalism to the way British colonialism functioned in the past. According to Modood (2007) multiculturalism can be defined as:

> the recognition of group difference within the public sphere of laws, policies, democratic discourses and the terms of a shared citizenship and national identity… while being true to one's nature or heritage (p. 2).

Thus, multiculturalism is based on the idea of dissimilar cultures; that each individual or group has the right to preserve inherent norms, values, traditions and beliefs.

Now we can identify how effects, intended as well as unintended, of British colonialism and colonial policy shaped the idea of multiculturalism. First, we have seen that during the heydays of colonialism, the common British people had little interest in the empire as they were too preoccupied with the struggle between multiple regional identities.

Also, in chapter two the section on devolution proves how strong regional identities are in Britain. This may reflect the low priority attributed to integrating immigrants into British culture, simply because it can be argued that is rather non-existent. Secondly, the British colonial policy of non-assimilation and the focus on economic interests (as opposed to, for instance, France) reflects the multiculturalist principle that every individual, immigrant or not, may maintain its cultural diversity. Thirdly, for centuries long the British government believed in levels of civilization which were static. Once again, this reflects multicultural policy in the sense that no effort is being made to upgrade immigrants' culture to the common level of British civilization. On a final note, it has to be said that since the late 1990's multiculturalism is in decline. In Britain, but also in continental Europe, the contemporary 'other' is increasingly linked, by means of social constructs, to the Islamic immigrant population. Notwithstanding, violent minority branches of Islamic fundamentalism pose security threats, the 'danger' that Islam itself poses to civilization can once again be linked to perceptions that emerged during the colonial era. Namely, that there are backward cultures and religions incompatible with civilized society.

3.2.2 Multiculturalism in the United Kingdom

The previous chapters already issued that the United Kingdom is the result of a fusion of three former independent regions and their people, including their different customs, beliefs and mentalities. Thus, even before migrants from continental Europe and the Caribbean Sea reached the coast of today's UK, the United Kingdom cannot be said to have been a

homogenous country or society. Therefore, contrary to other European countries which aimed to defend the core essence of its identity against other nations, the United Kingdom is built on a mixed society since its creation.

Also discussed in previous chapters is devolution in today's Britain, resulting in the building of parliaments separate from Westminster in particular in Northern Ireland. In this respect, 'home rule' was not only significant in order to understand the confrontations between British government in London and nationalism on the regional level as outlined by Deacon (2006). However, it marked the beginning of a policy of recognition by granting Wales, Scotland and Ireland a quasi-equal standing with England. Yet, what this paper has not discussed yet is the confrontation of the UK with migrants and ethnic groups coming from outside the British Isles dated from the 20th century onwards. In this respect this section will concentrate on the impact of mass immigration on British politics and society.

Multiculturalism will be defined here primarily in terms of equitable coexistence of different cultures in a single country. Further, the underlying assumption is that the state plays a major role by not only upholding common civil, political and social rights of citizenship but also by adopting group specific rights or policies in recognition of distinctive identities of ethno-cultural groups (Kymlicka, 2007). The responsibility of the state is crucial because multiculturalism as such regards the coexistence of distinct cultural groups in a society as a positive value that should be supported by public policy.

Consequently, multiculturalism must be based on other concepts such as dignity and recognition. Seeing these concepts also as basic elements of modern democracy, Taylor highlights their linkage with multiculturalism

> First, in the intimate sphere, where we understand the formation of identity and the self as staking place in a continuing dialogue and struggle with significant others. And then in the public sphere, where a politics of equal recognition has come to play a bigger and bigger role (1994, p.37).

According to this statement, multiculturalism must be seen in connection with politics of equal recognition. Furthermore, in the intimate sphere, the individual should embrace multiculturalism by giving equal recognition to others. Considering this approach, the next section traces back the immigration history of the United Kingdom and thereby putting

emphasis on the integration and immigration policy applied by the British government. Moreover, the role of public opinion in shaping British policy will be analysed.

3.2.3 Mass Immigration and Immigration Policy in the 20th century

The most relevant time for our analysis is the post-war period from the 1940s onwards. Labour shortages after World War II forced the government to approach immigrant workers especially for Britain's reconstruction. The first immigrants who arrived in the late 1940s were from Poland and Italy. Later, they were followed from people from the British West Indies.

Mass immigration was also characterized by further immigrants coming from what had been the British Empire and turned into the Commonwealth, namely the Indian subcontinent, Hong Kong and China and from the Asian communities of East Africa. In other words, the Commonwealth countries "provided a ready-made source of recruitment" (Mason, 2000, p.23). In this respect, the 1948 British Nationality Act was adopted which gave citizens of Commonwealth countries the right to freely enter the United Kingdom.

The immigrants arrived in numbers the British government did not expect. Therefore, in the 1960s the situation changed as the government took measures against the waves of immigration by introducing a set of restricting immigration laws. The Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 made citizens of Commonwealth countries subject to immigration control. Further, restrictions even increased when the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1968 was introduced. It incorporated entry restrictions also to persons who were citizens of the United Kingdom and the Colonies "either by birth in a colony or by registration in a Commonwealth country before it became independent" (Home Office, 2009).

Moreover, the Immigration Act from 1971 made immigration of coloured people from the Commonwealth more difficult. The act distinguished between partials that were free to enter the United Kingdom and non-partials who were excluded from free movement. Most notably is that all partials where white. Finally, the Nationality Act from 1981 even deepened the discrepancy to its forerunners in 1948 by stating that only British Citizens and European Citizens were free of immigration control (Atkinson, 2003, p. 4).

The change from a rather liberal attitude in the late 1940s until the 1960s to a more strict regulation of immigration might have economic reasons. As the demand for unskilled labour decreased so did the need for immigrant workers. Furthermore, the influx of coloured workers might have led to social strain. Since the labour force of the immigrants were needed largely in towns (with already serious shortages), their every existence might have promoted the ground for racial tension. This assumption may be proven right if we consider the populist reaction among some British groups.

The strain of populism which emerged in the United Kingdom is known as *Powellism* (Messina, 2007). Enoch Powell was member of the Conservative Party until he held his contested speech "the rivers of blood' which was characteristic for his illiberal racial sentiments. Surprisingly, a fifth of the British public wanted to see him becoming prime minister (ibid, p.112).

When Powell vanished from the public scene in the early 1970s, the vacuum he left was filled by the NF, a neo-fascist group created in the 1964, which sought support by those who saw British society threatened by post-war immigration (NF, 2009). It is interesting to observe that France, also confronted with a wave of immigrants from former colonies, most of them coming from North Africa, produced as well populists such as Jean-Marie Le Pen who made the second place in the presidential election 2002 by demanding a 'national preference welfare system that favours indigenous French over those with immigrant backgrounds' (NPR, 2009).

A survey conducted in 1978 showed that public opinion in Britain was rather hostile in the time following mass immigration: one-quarter of all respondents thought that NF did express the views of 'ordinary working people' and that it would be 'good' if members of the NF could get a seat in the House of Commons (Messina, 2007, 113). Thus, by introducing immigration laws the government aimed to stop the entry of unskilled labour and responded at the same time to public opinion.

3.2.4 Towards multiculturalism

It seems that when the situation of immigrants got worse especially due to the political expression of public hostility towards immigrants, the government adopted the Race Relation Act of 1965 which is worth mentioning since it aimed to reduce racism by outlawing

discrimination in several areas such as public institutions. Nevertheless, it was the Race Relation Act of 1976 that made an end of discrimination in employment and the provision of goods and services (Race Relations, 2009).

Although this new law was welcomed by the immigrants and also by other European States, some argue that it was far too technically and did not go far enough (Lester, 1998, p.25). In 2000 the Race Relations Act was amended to provide further protection for immigrants. Further, a non-governmental body responsible to tackle racial discrimination was established, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The CRE was replaced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2007.

Concluding on the question whether the United Kingdom is a multicultural society or not, it seems difficult to find an answer due to the inconsistencies of British policies. Concerning the immigration policy in the 1970s, one gets the impression that the United Kingdom is strictly against coloured immigrants. However, if we take a look at the efforts to reduce racism and to give immigrants equal standing in British society in the last two decades, we might think that the UK is a multicultural state in that it applies recognition politics.

Furthermore, public opinion seems to have undergone a major change since the 1970s. A poll inducted by BBC clearly demonstrates that the majority in the United Kingdom backs multiculturalism.

	Nationals % (Base: 1,004)	**Muslim immigrants** % (Base:229)
Multiculturalism makes Britain a better place	**62**	**82**
Multiculturalism threatens the British way of life	32	13
Don't know, refused	7	6

Source: BBC poll, 2005

Nevertheless, since the assertion and the negotiation of difference is central to multiculturalism, the starting point of effective politics seeking to create multiculturalism

> ...is that of negative differences and that the politics consists in seeking to turn the negative into a positive, not the erasure of difference but its transformation into something for which civic respect can be won. When we begin to talk of positive difference, it is common to talk of identities...The concept of identity ...allows the 'inside' more space, more agency (Modood, 2007, p.41).

This approach leads to the next concept that will be introduced in the next section, namely integration. In order to fully assess in how far the United Kingdom can be seen as multicultural we will now compare it with integration of immigrants in the United Kingdom.

3.2.5 Integration

Having analysed the contributions past colonialism made to today's multicultural society of the United Kingdom, the discussion in this section turns to examine if there is integration of migrants into the British society. This shall be done within the previously established the concept of "multiculturalism" earlier defined as the "equitable coexistence of different cultures in a single country". As a first step the main keyword of this subchapter shall be defined: Integration is best defined by the "action of incorporating a racial or religious group into a community" (Princeton University, 2004).

The multicultural demographics present in the United Kingdom today date back many decades – the debate surrounding their integration being equally old. However, due to the unfortunate events of 9/11, the 7 July 2005 London bombings and other terrorist attacks the topic of integration has gained momentum again. This time British authorities are alarmed, in particular, about the terrorists that grew up in Britain itself, such as the ones involved in the 7/7 bombings in London. As the Intelligence and Security Committee stated in 2006, integration is supposed to prevent such terrorism as it prevents radicalisation and isolation (Intelligence and Security Committee, 2006).

However, the transformation of this statement into British integration policy looks quite odd: it seems to be more about the "need to integrate diverse cultural and religious identities into a common set of values" (Keith, 2002). It almost appears as if the public discourse is moving away from celebrating a multicultural society, while moving towards a political rhetoric preoccupation with what has been mentioned in the quote above. The opinion that multiculturalism in itself is a failed project is growing, from this impression

negative and rather pessimistic opinions on the integration of foreigners is emerging. Pillarization of the population is often used as a parade example of how integration failed and how multiculturalism was a policy followed by the politicians – nothing more than a vision.

Such a statement can be underlined by analyzing government's white papers, such as "Safe Haven: Integration and Diversity in Modern Britain". In this white paper from 2002, Blunkett, the person responsible for research in immigration and demographics, makes a statement confirming above mentioned suspicions:

> To enable integration to take place and to value the diversity it brings, we need to be secure within our sense of belonging and identity and therefore to be able to reach out and to embrace those who come to the UK [...] Having a clear, workable and robust nationality and asylum system is the pre-requisite to building the security and trust that is needed. Without it, we cannot defeat those who would seek to stir up hate, intolerance and prejudice (Home Office, 2001).

Analyzing this quote quickly reveals a clear pattern which can be identified looking at keywords mentioned within the quote. Terms such as *security* and *robust* are signalling words which may hint upon the emergence of a possible conflict. Reading further it reveals the fact that the white paper mainly lists what immigrants must do in order to be regarded as integrated: they must develop a sense of shared identity with the native majority of the community. However, discrimination and racism on the other hand are only mentioned sparingly and in a very superficial manner (Keith, 2002).

Having analyzed the governmental policy background and its general stance on integration, this subchapter turns to describe and interpret quantitative data related to the contemporary integration process taking place within the United Kingdom. First of all, in this context, it should be mentioned that a study published by the British Council and the Migration Policy Group on the 15th of October 2007 has revealed that the United Kingdom ranks high when it comes to "allowing migrants to live and stay in the country" compared to other countries within the European Union. However, the United Kingdom performs rather weak with regards to daily life integration, while migrants entering the UK generally face "more challenges integrating and participating in democracy" (British Council, 2007). In this context the term "more" is measured using an established index amongst European countries. Thus, "more" compared to other European countries with similar demographic characteristics.

The United Kingdom has historically been strong in the area of written laws regarding the protection of migrants from discrimination. In fact, the UK is ranked high (5^{th}) with regards to this specific aspect. However, while scoring high in terms of the presence of laws, the UK is relatively slow when it comes to putting those laws into practice (actual enforcement). Associating this with the fact that in the 1970s discrimination was soaring leaves us with the conclusion that while numerous laws existed to protect immigrants from discrimination, those laws were only poorly put into practice. In fact the UK was placed 11^{th} within a table that only includes the 15 older EU states. Analyzing this fact leads to the conclusion that there must be a large gap between implementation and practice. Going further into detail has proven this claim to be valid: today migrants face long-winded administrative and civil processes in addition to a deficit of applicable sanctions. Those and many more factors are responsible for placing the UK 11^{th} (British Council, 2007).

According to the Migrant Policy Index the UK was ranked 5^{th} with regards to "access to long-term residence and becoming a National". However, only scoring 12^{th} in the areas of access to work and family reunion while scoring 15^{th} when it comes to "the right to vote and participate in Britain's politics" (British Council, 2007). Family reunion has been seen by the British government as a source of uncontrollable influx responsible for the immigration of enormous numbers of migrants. Hence, to limit the number of immigrants coming in through family reunion, laws have been tightened and are stricter now – only allowing family reunion in exceptional cases. The reason for the UK scoring low on "access to work" is on one hand discrimination from employers and on the other hand the lack of education of the immigrants (British Council, 2007). It should be mentioned that the Migrant Policy Index takes into account 25 EU Member States as well as three non-EU countries, which are all listed in the following paragraph.

Comparing the United Kingdom to other Migrant Policy Index countries for simplicity of integration leaves it at the 9^{th} place. In this comparison Sweden comes 1^{st} "followed in order by Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, Canada, Italy, Norway, UK, Spain, Slovenia, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Denmark, Malta, Slovakia, Greece, Austria, Cyprus, and Latvia at 28^{th}". Such statistics indicate that there is still a lot of work to be done for the United Kingdom to compare to countries such as Sweden when it comes to the ease of integration (British Council, 2007).

3.3. Great Britain, still a Society driven by Class?

3.3.1 The development and relevance of Social Classes in Britain

Certainly, the division of society into social classes looks quite different today than it did about 100 years ago. However, have classes lost their relevance and did modern Britain become a classless society of equal opportunities? Or did the classification of people into certain groups only become more complex and the boundaries distinguishing them more blurred while class still matters? To reveal which role social classes played and still play in British society, this subchapter will, after providing a theoretical approach to define class, examine the historic development of the British class order. Thereafter, it will focus on the question to what extend class, determined either by pedigree or by wealth, is relevant in Britain today and to which extend there is social mobility. To further approach this question, particularly the educational system as providing the basis for equal opportunities will be focused on. Moreover, the current role of the aristocracy in general and the monarchy in particular will be discussed, in order to reveal if their influence is still 'real'. Finally, a short conclusion will be drawn, stating that class indeed still matters in modern British society.

3.3.2 A theoretical approach to the Class System and Classifications

Classes are commonly determined according to the economic status of the groups of society, and hence most definitions of the class system are "primarily concerned with economic and occupational relationships", aiming at structuring the society into dominant and subordinated groups according to their powers. (Crouch, 1977, p.3). However, a social class accounted for more than only the objective criterion of occupation; it also was source of a feeling of common and shared identity among its members (Cannadine, 1999). Therefore, Bédarida (1990) outlines three criteria characterizing a social class: Firstly, the economic position, secondly a collective consciousness and thirdly the sharing of common values due to a similar way of life, educational background and social status.

Throughout the last centuries, the most common division of classes was probably the one introduced by Karl Marx in the 19th century which saw the society divided into three groups; landlords, bourgeois capitalists and proletarian workers (Cannadine, 1999). This rather simplistic classification perhaps applied in the past, even though even in the 19th century members of a social class could not have been considered as completely homogeneous; other dividing lines, such as 'nationality' (Welsh, Scot, Irish, etc.) or religion have always played a role (Bédarida, 1990). Nevertheless, during the 20th century, it became impossible to draw such clear dividing lines between the classes, particularly due to the emergence of several new occupational branches which do not easily fit into one of the traditional classes (Cannadine, 1999). Therefore, modern classifications of social classes became more complex and gradational. In 2001, the UK Office for National Statistics introduced a new classification, dividing the society into eight overarching groups according to their occupation by completely avoiding the notions of upper, middle or lower class (Office for National Statistics, n.d.). The current classification therefore looks as follows:

Analytical Classes	**Operational Categories**
1	Employers in large organizations, higher managerial and professional occupations
2	Lower professional and managerial occupations, higher technical and supervisory occupations
3	Intermediate occupations
4	Employers in small organizations, own account workers
5	Lower supervisory and technical occupations
6	Semi-routine occupations
7	Routine occupations
8	Never worked and long-term unemployed

Source: Office for National Statistics, n.d.

As the categories in the table above illustrate, the current classification of 'classes' completely moved away from considering names or pedigree, but solely focuses on a vague description of occupational status. Furthermore, the classification is more detailed than the earlier simplistic three class system. Therefore, one could conclude that today, it is professional career and money in form of income that determines a person's social status

3.3.3 The British Class System: from the 18th to the 20th century

Even though the British society was certainly divided into groups before, the explicit notion of class became common use first in the 18th century, in particular with the emergence of the working classes (Bédarida, 1990). In that time, the society was divided into the three groups of aristocracy as the upper class, the bourgeoisie as the middle class and the lower working classes.

The aristocracy, which in the 18th century comprised about 40,000 to 50,000 people, was defined on the basis of land wealth and pedigree. They enjoyed a convenient lifestyle since members of this class were not allowed to work by definition, and obeyed a common unwritten code of conduct. Even though the British aristocracy was not as exclusive as for example the French nobility, it was still hard to become a member since not only wealth mattered but also prestige. While managing to keep their dominant position throughout the 18th century, the influence of the aristocracy in both landed property and politics started to decline in the late 19th and early 20th century. Death duties and taxation were raised, leading to the break up and selling of large estates, and the political power went into the hands of the 'plutocrats', the heads of industry (Bédarida, 1990). Particularly with the Great Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867, which extended male franchise with the latter act entitling all male householders to vote, the political power was shifted from the aristocracy and extended also to other classes (Cannedine, 1999). However, blue blood and prestige kept some importance also throughout the 20th century, as Mitford (1955) stated: "The English aristocracy may seem on the verge of decadence, but it is the only real aristocracy left in the world today" (quoted in Bédarida, 1990, p. 203).

The Bourgeoisie, constituting the middle-class, comprised about 4 million people in the 18th century, was characterized by their members' occupations in industry, commerce and higher administrative ranks. Furthermore, they shared a good educational background and a quite comfortable standard of living. In the 19th and 20th century, the middle class started to grow rapidly due to the growth of the service sector, leading a numerous increase in office workers, the so-called 'white collar workers'. However, social mobility remained rigid, since after the Second World War, still less than a quarter of middle class members were sons of working class parents (Bédarida, 1990).

Finally, there were the working classes at the bottom of social hierarchy, comprising the vast majority, namely about five-sixths, of British population. They included not only industrial workers and miners but also a good number of for example shopkeepers. The group of unskilled workers, in particular, faced bad conditions for both working and living: wages were at the minimum level for survival, working hours were long (up to 64 hours a week) and the housing normally crowded and dirty. Furthermore, their existence was characterized by dependence and there was a constant fear of unemployment due to the threat of decreasing demand of labour or other fluctuations in the economy. Even throughout the 19th century, there was little improvement in the situation of workers, even though working hours were shortened to 56.5 hours a week and urban facilities, for instance, for education and hygiene slowly emerged (Bédarida, 1990). However, in the end of the 19th century, emerging trade unions gave workers a collective voice. With the creation of the Labour party in 1900, men and women in the street also started to be represented politically (Cannedine, 1999). In the beginning of the 20th century, however, the working class faced a huge crisis. Particularly the Great Depression caused massive unemployment which devastated whole regions dependent on the steel industry or coalmining. Their situation did improved not until after the Second World War with the introduction of policies aiming for full employment and the creation of the welfare state, providing an extension of social services, increased wages as well as further shortening of working hours and paid holidays (Bédarida, 1990).

3.3.4 The relevance of Class in Modern Britain

According to Cannadine (1999), it is a "generally held belief...that class...is a peculiarly and particularly British preoccupation" up to today (p.1). Whether the British society is however

actually still characterized by classes is debatable and finds various disagreeing opinions. After the Second World War, economic changes and democratic pressure as well as the creation of the welfare state can be considered as having narrowed social differences. Moreover, from the 1950s onwards, it was widely proclaimed that the days of traditional classes, as well as ideological class conflicts ceased to exist and that the society, particularly as a result of economic growth, had become a homogeneous society of equal opportunities (Bédarida, 1990). However, Bédarida (1990) claims that class did by no means disappear but only the boundaries between the different social groups had become more blurred and overlapping. Wealth, as well as prestige and family names nevertheless remained important. According to him, classes are still characterised by a certain way of identification and behaviour, and also especially by language. "People had only to open their mouth to be identified as 'them' or 'us'...in no other country did language, pronunciation and intonation play such a role" (p.282).

According to Cannadine (1999), a classification of social classes according to wealth and occupation will remain as long as there are inequalities within a society. What has changed and decreased, however, is the sense of common identity shared by the members of one class. In the 1950s, there was a shift from the collective identity of the past towards an individual identity, seeing people as individual consumers. Also Marshall (1989) claims that "[s]olidaristic forms of political consciousness have given way to the values of consumer society individualism" (p.1). Nowadays, leisure activities and other forms of belonging replace occupation as a source of identity. Hence, class membership, even though still existing, had become contingent and meaningless (Marshall, 1989).

However, the notion of class still has its place in political discourse. Margaret Thatcher, with her strong emphasis on individualism and self-responsibility, stated that "Class is a Communist concept. It groups people as bundles, and sets them against each other" (quoted in Cannadine, 1999, p.1).). However, Thatcher cannot be considered as having managed to abandon classes from the society completely. Shortly before coming into power in 1990, John Major still claimed that his aim was the creation of a classless society, what implies that he perceived classes as still existent (Cannadine, 1999). Still Gordon Brown in 2007 claimed that "a class-free society is not a slogan but in Britain can become a reality" (quoted by Glover, 2007). Hence, it is shown that these politicians still assume that class plays a role in British society. This view represented by the politicians seems to coincide with

the general public opinion in Great Britain. According to a survey conducted by the Guardian and ICM Research in 2007, the majority of the British people (89% of the respondents) think that class still matters and that class membership determines the way a person is judged by others, with especially the 'lower classes' holding this viewpoint (Glover, 2007).

3.3.5 Social Mobility

When examining the relevance of class in Great Britain, the degree of social mobility within the society is certainly a good variable to measure. A mobility survey from 1949 portrayed a British society of rather unequal opportunities. "The general picture so far is of a rather stable social structure and one in which social status has tended to operate within, so to speak, a closed circuit. Social origins have conditioned educational level, and both have conditioned achieved social status"(Glass, 1954, quoted in Heath and Payne, 1999, p.4). A similar study in 1972, noting a decrease in upward and downward mobility resulting from the expansion of professional and managerial occupations, still revealed that social mobility was rather rigid. Even though the theoretical chance for upward mobility was given to everyone, it was hardly used (Heath and Payne, 1999). Also Ramos (1999), examining social mobility in Great Britain in the early 1990s, comes to the conclusion that Great Britain is "more similar to a society where individuals are stuck in the same step"(p.3). Still in 2007, a Guardian/ICM poll revealed that the general public considers social mobility as rigid. . People considering themselves as originating from working class families largely remained in the same perceived class themselves, with only one fifth stating that they had become middle class (Glover, 2007). The British educational system certainly constitutes one explanation for this persisting low degree of social mobility.

3.3.6 The British educational system – An example for a decline of social mobility?

Can the British education system be seen as a case study for inequality and restricted social mobility? If yes, is a better education linked to money or heritage today? The Sutton Trust[21] gives one answer to this question: "The strength of the relationship between educational attainment and family income, especially for access to higher education, is at the heart of

[21] Organization dedicated to providing educational grants to students that cannot effort to pay for educational tuition fees.

Britain's low mobility culture and what sets us apart from other European and North American countries" (O'Grady, 2007).

In order to examine the validity of this statement, a short introduction of the most important terms of British educational system and its structure will be given. After the elaboration on social division in British schools an outlook will be provided on the current situation in the UK.

When analysing social mobility in the British educational system two essential terms need to be defined first, private and public schools. In general, the latter are educational institutes were a fee needs to be paid in order to be able to attend the schooling. Those schools are also known as independent schools. In contrast to 'public' schools, state schools also called private schools are financed by taxes and parents do not have to pay tuitions. Around 90 per cent of the students from Wales and England use the free education provided by the state (Barrow, n.d.). This chapter will mainly focus on the educational system in England because there are regional differences, for instance the educational system of Scotland and Northern Ireland is independent from the two other regions of Great Britain.

The following graph (*Table 3.1*) gives an overview of the English schooling system the left column showing the state- and the right column the independent system[22]:

Table 3.1: The English schooling system

Comprehensive School 11,12,13,14-16 (18/19)	Secondary Modern School Secondary Technical School Grammar School 11-16 (18/19)	Public School 13-18(19)
Middle School 8-12, 9-13, 10-14	Junior School 7-11	Preparatory School 8-13
First School 5-8	Infant School 5-7	Pre-Prep. School 5-8
Nursery School (2) 3-5		Private Nursery School (2) 3-5
State System		Independent System

Table 3.1 Retrieved March 9, 2009 from http://www.exilclub.de/groups/schoolsystem/

[22] Graph retrieved on 9 March 2009, from http://www.exilclub.de/groups/schoolsystem/.

As seen above the separation due to income already occurs at the early age of 3 when parents decide that their children should attend the state or independent educational system, starting at the nursery level.

The origin of the British education system can be dated back to 1870 when the 'Elementary Education Act' was established (Know-Britain, n.d.). According to this act, elementary schools were set up in the name of the state. It was the beginning of access to education for all children regardless the income of their parents. However, the 'public' or so-called independent schools were not affected by this law. Therefore, the British school system was divided into two classes. There was on the one hand the privileged ruling class, which could effort the independent school education which was based on the premise to qualify the students for "future leadership" positions (Bédarida, 1990, p.236). On the other hand, there was the working class for which only a very basic level of education was provided because the British state believed they did not need more for their future working live.

Yet, after the First World War the situation changed inter alia because the feminist realized that a well-educated young generation of women is important and thus pushed for a more gender equal educational system. Further did other parents started to support the slogan of Labour "Secondary education for all" (Bédarida, 1990, p.236). These thoughts were reflected in the ideas of enlightened thinkers, such as Matthew Arnold and Stuart Mill. They believed that "school meant social even more than economic progress" (Bédarida, 1990, p.236). Thus after a while the secondary level of education was added to the state school system. This resulted in the Education Act of 1944 the so-called "Butler Act" (Bédarida, 1990, p.237). Consequently, the separation between primary and secondary school was diminished and smart children from poorer families were allowed to attend secondary schools.

Yet, education was still determined by the class system. This was due to following reasons: "firstly, the indisputable pre-eminence of the public schools; secondly the social and intellectual values inculcated by the grammar schools[23]; and thirdly the criteria for selection" (p.237) which were not as socially mobile as promised by the act. Nevertheless, the scholarships which are based on academic excellence and given to children from working class families since the 1930s were a first step into the right direction. In 1935, 250,000 full

[23] Grammar Schools are the first type of schools pupils in the UK attend. After that for a long time only pupil with a good financial background or clever children from poor families that received one of the few scholarships or free places.

and partial scholarships or so-called “special places” were assigned (p.237). Yet, when looking at these figures, it needs to be taken into account that many pupils from state schools simply do not consider the possibility to attend public schools. Thus, if they do not apply for it, no scholarship can be given to them.

According to many scholars the situation of an unequal British educational system has not changed much during the last 60 years (Bédarida, 1990). Even though there were more acts passed by different governments to ensure social mobility and equal opportunities, most acts were not very successful because the independent schools were not affected by those reforms. As an examination by the OECD depict “British independent schools achieve the best results in the world […]” (Hutton, 2002). Consequently, the educational system is described by Bédarida (1990) as “a not unkindly attitude of individuals with a strong sentiment of class and a deep reverence for wealth” (p.236). Thus, class still matters in schools and the system is rather rigid concerning social mobility because as stressed by Bédarida if one has a good socio-economic background it is still much easier to become a good education in Britain.

An almost equal situation occurs at university level. British students who want to apply to university need to have accomplished three to four A-level courses. The independent schools usually help students to prepare for university application and preparation because they have the money to afford extra staff and courses (InterStudies, n.d.). Further, a survey by Sutton Trust depicts that “although two-thirds of pupils with three A grades at A-level went to state schools, only half of them were given places in the top 13 universities. Private school pupils with the same A-level grades as state school pupils are 25 times more likely to be given a university place” (Hutton, 2002). Hence, an asymmetrical distribution between private and public schools can be discovered.

Looking at these findings, it seems that the legend of ‘Oxbridge’-students still seems to remain true. The main point of it is that the distinct elite class gets into one of the two oldest universities of the United Kingdom – Oxford or Cambridge – and later takes up the top positions in the UK. Almost 50 per cent of the undergraduates at Oxford or Cambridge had the privilege to study at independent schools (Cadwalladr, 2008). When analysing this figure one needs to take into account that 93 per cent of the British population attends state schools. Consequently, the barrier to attend one of the top universities of the country still seems to be

bound to the socially immobile school system, which does not provide equal opportunities for everyone. It can be concluded, though that the way to success in the UK today is bound to money and intelligence. If a family has enough money it can afford to send its children to independent schools and, thus, they have better chances to attend one of the top universities. The other option is to compete for a scholarship.

As the Sutton Trust revealed "81 per cent of the judiciary went to Oxford or Cambridge, 82 per cent of all barristers, 45 per cent of 'leading' journalists, and 34 per cent of front-bench ministers and shadow ministers" (Cadwalladr, 2008). Most civil servants at senior level are classical scholars that attended prestigious independent secondary schools and latter went to one of Britain's elite universities.

In comparison to continental Europe can be concluded that Britain has a special role because as the Sutton Trust states "the UK is bottom of the table of advanced countries for which there is data. Although the gap in opportunities between the rich and poor is similar in Britain and the US, in Britain those gaps are getting wider" (O'Grady, 2007). The issue is according to O'Grady not only based upon the gap between incomes, in order to prevent the UK from becoming a rigid society "intergenerational mobility" need to be promoted throughout the government as well (O'Grady, 2007). One further obstacle Britain has to overcome is that students from low-income families try to apply at public schools and the top Universities, as most are still reluctant because they think they do not have a chance anyways due to the long British tradition of social inequality. Those students need to be encouraged to apply.

3.3.7 Aristocracy as a class of British society

As has been described above, the British class model continues to evolve until it has reached a rather broad and complex state today. Definitely, one essential part of class in Britain is aristocracy, which is – in opposition to many other European countries – still growing and developing today. Moreover, this class is not only evolving, but also is given an unequalled opportunity to political influence in the House of Lords (Lancien, 2007). However, as this section will claim, instead of reforming the unelected political institution of the House of

Lords, the British system of nobility adapted throughout the centuries and, thus, allowed for the survival of this second chamber.

Going back the medieval origins of nobility in Britain, five titles evolved which are in descending order originally implying the size of owned property: Duke, Marquess, Earl, Viscount, and Baron. As Rubinstein accounts, from the beginning onwards two features distinguished British nobility from continental European nobility (in Lancien, 2007). Firstly, only the person on which the title was bestowed attained the legal status of a peer and secondly, the principle of primogeniture secured that the entire noble estate was always bequeathed to the eldest son. Also, if there was no eligible direct heir, the title went back to the royal house and could be bestowed onto somebody else. Contrary to this, in continental Europe a large "caste" of aristocrats could develop between which the inherited estates were shared and parted into ever smaller pieces (Lancien, 2007, p.246). Furthermore, the king "was expected to consult with the leading man of his realm, both clerical and lay, in order to discover and declare the law and also before the levying of any extraordinary measures of taxation" (Jones, 2004, p.365). Thus, the House of Lords and House of Commons evolved, while there were only (hereditary) peers in the former. However in due course, especially through the fundamental changes in society infringed by the industrial revolution, titles also had to be given on grounds of fortune earned through businesses. Consequently, after the acknowledgment of money, also high politicians and people in powerful positions started to be rewarded through the honours system. Problems arose in this regard though, because many of these influential people would be awarded with a hereditary title due to personal merit which was not necessarily linked to money and thus could not be passed on to the following generation. This and the fact, that many of these people were unionists and refused to accept hereditary titles on ground of principle, led to another need for reform (Lancien, 2007).

To cut a long story short, in 1958, the MacMillan Labour government did not, as expected, overthrow the overwhelmingly conservative House of Lords and end the peerage system therein. Instead it passed the Life Peerages Act 1958, "introduc[ing] the most far-reaching change in the British aristocracy…by initiating the creation of life peerages for both men and women" (Lancien, 2007, p.250). Thus, it was possible to also award leading labour unionists, women and also increasingly ethnic minorities with a peerage and thereafter appoint them to the House of Lords, which made it more representative. In 1999 the House of Lords Act, another act of reform, did not only cut down the over 1300 members of the house

to about half of this number, but also – except for 92 seats – completely abolished the right of hereditary peers to automatically be entitled to a seat. Thus today, even if still not totally representative, the House of Lords reflects the face of British society to an extent that makes it acceptable as a political institution in democracy. However, further reforms are in discussion (Judge, 2005). Table 3.2 indicates the current distribution of seats between the parties[24]

Table 3.2: Analysis of the House of Lords by party belonging

By Party Strength

Party	Life Peers	Hereditary: Elected by Party	Hereditary: Elected Office Holders	Hereditary: * Royal Office Holder	Bishops	Total
Conservative	149	39	9	0	0	**197**
Labour	212	2	2	0	0	**216**
Liberal Democrat	67	3	2	0	0	**72**
Crossbench	172	29	2	2	0	**205**
Bishops	0	0	0	0	26	**26**
Other**	13	2	0	0	0	**15**
TOTAL	**613**	**75**	**15**	**2**	**26**	**731**

NB Excludes 11 peers who are on leave of absence.

Furthermore, Table 3.3 indicates the changes in the House of Lords introduced by the reform acts[25]:

[24] Tables retrieved from the homepage of the House of Lords on 9 March 2009, from http://www.parliament.uk/directories/house_of_lords_information_office/analysis_by_composition.cfm.
[25] Ibid.

Table 3.3: Analysis of the House of Lords by type of peerage

By Type	Men	Women	Total
Archbishops and bishops	26	0	26
Life Peers under the Appellate Jurisdiction Act 1876	22	1	23
Life Peers under the Life Peerages Act 1958	456	145	601
Peers under House of Lords Act 1999	90	2	92
TOTAL	**594**	**148**	**742**

Regarding the changes observed, this paper suggests two preliminary conclusions. Firstly, instead of changing the political system, British political actors have chosen to adapt the traditional honours system to fit the contemporary standards. Secondly, when talking about class, throughout the centuries aristocracy has become more open to newcomers by basing the honour system on money and lately increasingly also on personal merit. Thus, the currently probably most well-known noblemen in Britain are Sir Sean Connery, who was knighted by the queen in 2000 and Sir David Beckham, elevated in 2007 (SeanConnery.com, 2009; MailOnline, 2006). Although this increasing openness has developed, societal structure remains divisive. To explain the roots of this, a short description of the role of the monarchy in Britain will be provided, as the queen decides who will be ennobled.

3.3.8 The Monarchy

Today, according to British public opinion polls, 85 percent of the population are satisfied with the workings of Queen Elizabeth II., who has been on the thrown for over 50 years. 64 percent even do not want her to retire at all before she is removed from office by death and 82 percent are convinced that the British monarchy will still exist in ten years time (Ipsos MORI, 2006).

These numbers can be interpreted as showing strong support for British monarchy, particularly for the current British queen, Elizabeth II. Hence, the question evolves what the

crucial factors are that allow for this pre-eminent situation in British society, in particular when assuming that an elitist royal family establishes a rather stringent, inflexible class system.

An important differentiation is drawn up by Norton, who says that "we can distinguish now between 'the crown' and the 'monarch'" whereby the former stands for the constitutionally bestowed power on the office of the monarch and the latter for the person who holds the office (in Jones, 2004, p.366-368). Despite the political powers of the crown, which have already been discussed in chapter one of this paper, the individual monarch especially incorporates symbolic powers, which are still hold to be important by the public. To be more specific, "[r]epresenting the UK at home or abroad", "[s]etting standards of citizenship and family life", "[u]niting people despite their differences", "[a]llegiance of the armed forces", "[m]aintaining continuity of British traditions" as well as "[p]reserving a Christian morality" are seen as the duties that should be fulfilled by the Queen and the royal family (Jones, 2004, p.368-375). However, these are also points of frequent public critique. For the last two decades, the royal family has been – disregarding the high approval which is evoked by the Queen – in more or less constant critique for its behaviour, which many do not regard as royal or different from ordinary people. Thus Blackburn and Plant state that "it is only by accident that the present Queen [has been] able to [sustain the credibility of the monarchy into the 21st century]" (quoted in Judge, 2005, p.77). Thus, only due to her personal integrity, high moral standards and responsibility towards her position, Queen Elizabeth II manages to uphold the role of the monarchy. Furthermore, she is also the head of the Church of England. While officially it is stated that the "Queen recognises and supports the various other faiths practised in the UK and Commonwealth" some critiques remain which doubt that the head of state of a country as multiconfessional as the UK should be so closely attached to a specific church (The British Monarchy, 2009; Jones, 2004).

It can be concluded, that British monarchy is deeply incorporated in British society due to tradition and upholding of British values. However, it is apparent, that also this institution is under constant critique for various reasons. Hence the future of the British monarchy under a new king remains to be seen.

3.3.9 Thus, does class still matter?

As this subchapter has revealed, even today social classes play a vivid role in British society. The classification of class changed and the structure of the society became more complex, and also the creation of the welfare state narrowed the social inequalities. However, it was revealed that especially the British educational system, the basis of providing equal opportunities for further generations, is still characterized by dividing students into the 'elite' and 'the rest'. This division takes place on the basis of money, since a good education, basically guaranteeing a future career, is costly. Even though some upward mobility is possible due to scholarships, the gaps between rich and poor to attain good education is getting wider.

While the examination of the British educational system has indicated that today, money is the most important criterion for determining social classes; it was also shown that pedigree and prestige still matter. The British aristocracy, even though weakened in its dominant position, is still relevant, not only in matters of image but also in executing some political power. Instead of being abolished, the honours system of Great Britain had solely been adapted to the requirements of modern society. Therewith, however, also the nobility became open to people of wealth and personal merit. Hence, one can conclude that the major criterion determining social status in today's Britain is wealth, instead of origin. However, this factor still results in a rather rigid British society. The low degree of social mobility is not only supported by data, but is also present in the perception of the people. One symbol for this is the remaining importance of the monarchy, which is however largely bound to the highly respected current Queen Elizabeth II. Nevertheless, a 'classless' British society is still an aim rather than reality, with inequalities remaining on all levels of society. However, it still has to be analysed in the next chapter, in how far other European countries are more successful in approaching class existence and its narrowing

.

3.4. Arts and Culture

This section is about the different expressions of the British culture, concerning sports, music and art. This subchapter will focus on the important role British culture and society played in

influencing cultures around the world, and in turn how these cultures have influenced the British culture and society itself.

Football is one of the most important sports around the world and the United Kingdom is considered as its place of birth. In contrast cricket remained only attached to the (former) members of the Commonwealth, and although dating back to 1590 only ten nations participate on the international level. A comparison between these two different sports shows how both sports are perceived in the United Kingdom as well as in the world.

Further, this paper will elaborate on the British popular music, which emerged during the 1950s and 1960s as an alternative to the American popular music. Since then the British music industry has become one of the most successful in the world until this day, with a wide range of artists, characters, genres and styles (British Music, 2009)

Finally, the chapter will look at the more traditional British arts, while the most British cultural expressions have influenced others. Most of the British painters and styles were influenced by continental European and American schools. The traditional British arts are less known around the world and therefore it is interesting to see how they were influenced and how they eventually developed their own characteristics.

3.4.1 Sports

Football in Great Britain

For the first time a sport, based on kicking an object over a line, in order to score points, played by two opposing teams, was mentioned by the ancient Greeks 200 BC, called 'Episkyros'. During the same time period, on the other side of the globe in China, the game 'Tsu' Chu' was popular for military training, based on the same principle (FIFA History 1, 2009). After the fall of the Greek city states, the game was adopted by the Romans, enjoying high popularity, played with a not closer described number of players, called 'Harpastum'. After the occupation of the British island, the sport became also popular in Britain, while the playing the ball with all parts of the body was considered more effective, also increasing the use of violence against the opposite team (FIFA History 2, 2009). But until the creation of football it took until 1863, when the British rugby football and association football divided

into two different sports, the first based on carrying the ball by hand, including violent behaviour towards the opponent team, the second based on less body contact emphatic rules, allowing the ball only to be played by foot (Moore, 2006). The creation of the Football Association (FA) laid down a first framework of set rules, unifying and reconciling the different types of football, played throughout the British Isles (Green, 1953). The rules of the sport changed throughout the following years and are still slightly changing, while the basic rule of playing the ball with every body part except hands and arms in order to place the ball in the opponents goal continued (FIFA History of the Laws of the Game, 2009). These rules set the basis for "a game that would in the following century break its little England origins to become the most played, watched and talked about activity on the planet"(History of the FA, 2004). Already in 1872, the first international game was held between England and Scotland, watched by 4,000 fans (History of the FA, 2004). Today, the FA counts 7 million participants for this sport, plus 5 million in public schools. 37,500 clubs are registered in the UK, playing on 45,000 pitches, of which 21,000 are facilitated, in 2,000 competitions on a weekly basis (The Football Association, 2007). After officially being the second strongest league for the past 5 years, the English Premier League is now claimed the strongest league in the World, in front of Spain and Italy (UEFA 5 year league ranking 2009/10, 2008). Remark: The UEFA creates a ranking of all European Football associations based on the results of the respective teams participating in the UEFA competitions such as the Champions League, the UEFA Cup and the UI Cup. Due to the fact, that the financial volume for a professional level to this extend only exists in Europe, the leader of this ranking can be considered strongest league in the World) The high level of competition within the British league is also shown by record transfer (attempts), such as the attempt of Manchester City to buy Brazilian superstar Kaka, paying 130,000,000 Euro to his current club AC Milan, as well as offering an annual wage of 18,000,000 Euro to the player (Birkner, 2009).

With the formation of other football associations throughout Europe, such as in France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland around the beginning of the 20th century, first official international games were held in 1904 between Belgium and France. In the aftermath of this game, the presidents of the mentioned associations decided to create an international umbrella organisation. While the British Football association had already existed for over 40 years, the heads of the British associations were not in favour to join such an association, governing their recently found game on an international level

(History of FIFA-Foundation, 2009). After FIFA was struggling during WW I and II, 85 national associations had joined it in 1954, participating in the FIFA World Cup in Switzerland.

The sport created by the FA in 1863 became due the success of FIFA the most popular sport in the world (History of The FA, 2004). The world championships 2006 in Germany were watched by cumulated 26,29 billion people, just the final was seen by 715,1 million people worldwide (2006 FIFA World Cup in numbers, 2009). In Europe, cumulated 5,33 billion people watched the championships, showing the high popularity of the sport within Europe in comparison to the rest of the world (20,2 per cent of total viewers) (FIFA TV Data, 2009).

Cricket in Britain

Cricket was first mentioned in a court case from 1598, on a dispute over the ownership of a field around the Royal Grammar School of Guildford. The coroner John Derrick testified in this trail to have played *crecked* on the respective ground with his friends 50 years ago, stating the first reference to the game in the UK (Altham, 1962). The first reference of cricket as an adult sport was made in 1611, when two men were accused of playing cricket on holy Sunday, while not going to church (McCann, 2004). In the same year cricket was described in a British dictionary for the first time, specified as a boy's game (Altham, 1962). Although the rules of the game changed during the years, including new 'bowling' techniques, new types of bats as well as the use of defensive protection (such as gloves and helmets for the batman), the basic rules stayed intact until recent days (Rules and Regulations in Cricket, 2009). The most eye-catching part on cricket rules is the time frame in which games are held. A game, consisting of two to four Innings, lasts until a certain score is achieved by one team or until all 'batmen' are beaten. Without going in too depth, following standard rules a game lasts for three to five days, playing for at least six hours a day. The game is interrupted by a tea time and a lunch break, as well as short interruptions between the Innings. Also, a batman can take up to three minutes preparation time, until the next 'bowl' (Rules and Regulations in Cricket, 2009). The national cricket league in the UK consists of two leagues of each 9 county teams, playing on a weekly basis, one game lasting about 4 days. Although it is argued that cricket is *the* British sport, neither figures can be found neither on public participation nor on any numbers of members within the UK or worldwide. Nevertheless, due to the creation of a new form of cricket, the so called *twenty20*, which shortens a game to a matter of one day, national

competitions become increasingly popular. This is shown by record transfers such as the one of Australian pacemen Brett Lee, who signed a contract with the Indian cricket club Mohali for 900,000 Dollar. Further, the introduction of well paid tournaments especially in India, with trophy money of 1 million Dollars and more, the popularity of this sport cannot be questioned (Brett, 2008).

Due to its popularity in the UK, especially based on a wast betting scene, the sport spread all over the world, today being established in 119 countries (McCann, 2004). Despite the great number, only ten of these countries are full members of the International Cricket Council (ICC), which governs and organises international contests between these nations in the 'Ashes Cup' (ICC, 2009). These ten countries are all (former) members of the Commonwealth, namely Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies and Zimbabwe (Cricketarchive, 2009).

Concluding it can be said, that these two sport, which developed in Britain, changed sports culture all over the world, also having their own impact on British culture. While Football became the most anticipated sport in the world, especially famous in Europe, Cricket can be seen as a rather 'British' cultural good, due to its importance in the UK, as well as the Commonwealth countries. Although there are national associations for it in every country of Europe, its popularity, anticipation and financial volume cannot be compared to Football. Still, the comparison of both Sports is rather difficult, due to the variance of different types of Cricket, played all around the world. The introduction of twenty20, as well as several other forms, makes it difficult to get an overview of the extend, to which Cricket is popular around the world. Nevertheless, it can be said, that both sport play an important role in British society, as well as in the countries, they were introduced to.

3.4.2 The Development of British Music

In medieval times, church and court music was relatively similar in the whole of Europe. Most countries oriented themselves more on German or French composers, especially in the classical period. Later, Britain developed its own individual style of music that was distinct from continental Europe and an own passion about music emerged (Church, 2009). Since then, Great Britain has produced a wide range of characters, styles and artists of which many

even succeeded on international stages. British music was not only influential at one time, but inspired future generations in their music development (British Music, 2009).

Until the rise of the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century, it was folk music rural people expressed themselves and enriched their lives with. As people still lived spread over the whole country, folk music differed from region to region (Irwin, 2009). However, with the Industrial Revolution, workers moved to the cities where factories urgently needed workers. In order to forget low living standards and bad working conditions, workers joined so called 'brass bands' whose members played wind instruments. This was possible due to the innovations also made in the musical field and thus the development of new instruments. In the late Industrial Revolution, living standards rose and therefore created more leisure time for the workers in which they could meet and play music (Brass Bands, 2008). Music could finally move into the entertainment sector which was not only due to the augmented music bars but also because of the increasing supply of newspapers which served as an information source for all music freaks. These music bars were part of the working-class culture and were named 'music halls'. They did not only present singers but also dancers, jugglers and other performers (Kift, 2008).

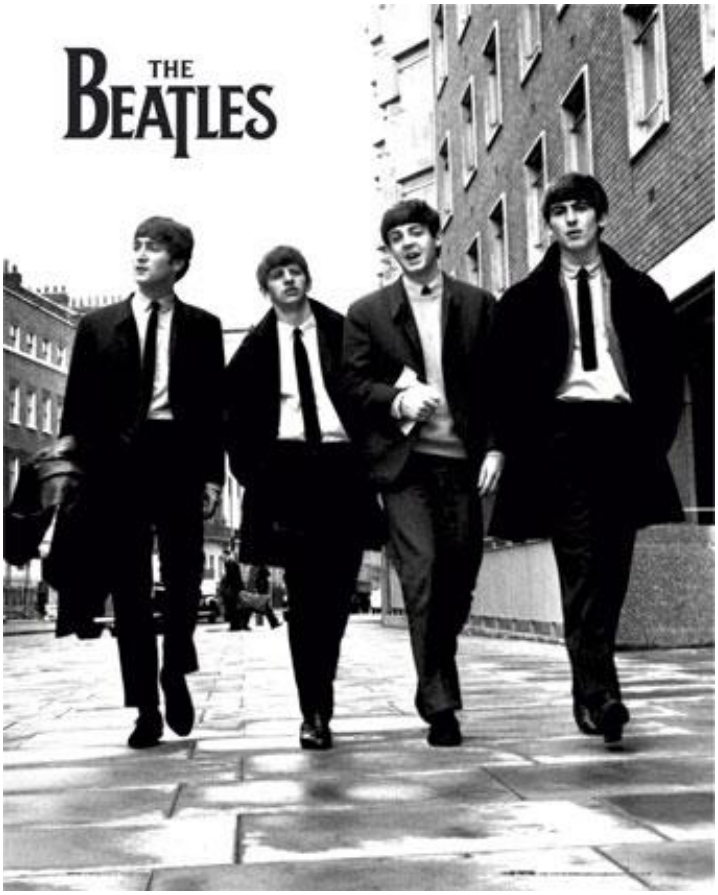
Followed up, is the revival of folk music in the beginning of the 20th century. This time, the traditional British Folk was influenced by jazz and blues imported from the United States. These were the first signs of the influences of American music that became especially strong during the 1950's with the rise of rock'n'roll. It led to a cultural interplay: Music was imported, modified and exported again. This winding up of each other's music led to the explosion of British music and the final significance all over the world (Blake, 2009).

The Beatles as leader of the 'British invasion'

The so called 'British invasion' was mainly led by the Beatles who had a huge impact on British music. With "Paul Mc Cartney's melodic ball lines, Ringo Starr's slaphappy no-rolls drumming, George Harrison's rockabilly-style guitar leads, John Lennon's assertive rhythm guitar – and their four fervent voices", they influenced the whole musical world and everything that came after them with their "…smart, idealistic, playful, irreverent, eclectic…" style.

The band from Liverpool started their career - or as one can say ‘Beatlemania’ began - in the early 1960’s with their first national tour, followed very soon by a tour through Europe. At this time it was their song “She Loves Your” which “…became the biggest-selling single in British history…” during that time. In the same year, 1963, they were invited to play for the Queen Mother at the Royal Command Variety Performance. Only a year later, the Beatles invaded the United States, not only with their music but also with their first movie, *A hard Day’s Night*, followed by tours to the Far East, Australia and North America and their second movie, *Help!* in 1965. With their enormous success, the Beatles opened the US market to other invading groups such as The Kinks and The Rolling Stones which further strengthened the British music world.

Due to the rapid individual development each member had undergone during the past years, the Beatles themselves only stayed together as a band until 1969 when they gave their last public performance. Nevertheless, throughout the 70’s, Beatles’ albums continued to sell very well. Many even urged for a reunion which, however, ended in 1980 when Lennon was murdered by a mentally ill fan. Despite the few years the Beatles actually played together, their influences and success remained far beyond their breakup while it was them who actually made British music internationally important. This was due to the fact that they approached a very broad audience with their music that included different styles as well as an audience of all ages. Not only the younger generation was fascinated by the Beatles but also older people that were rather shocked by bands such as the Rolling Stones or Elvis Presley and therefore welcomed the nice guys in suits (Simon & Schuster, 2001).



Source: http://raymondorado.files.wordpress.com/2007/07/beatles-the-the-beatles-1192706.jpg

British Music remains important throughout the world

The 1970's are mainly characterised by progressive rock and were led by bands such as Led Zeppelin, The Who, Pink Floyd, Queen and Deep Purple. However the time also "…Brought with it glam, glitter and stadium rock as well as punk, soul and the dance music that many (very) secretly loved…" (70s, 2009). On the other hand, also bands that rather produced dancefloor hits, such as the Bee Gees, or single singers like Elton john were very successful next to the rock stars. Moreover, the first traces of 'one hit wonders' and British boy-bands were found in the 70's as well. Experimental rock groups dressing up in bizarre costumes introduced the musical start of the 1980's (70s, 2009).

The 1980's were marked by a huge variety of music styles. Not only all kinds of rock and disco music, but also a wave of techno and house music swapped to Britain from the United States which was favoured by the innovations in technology. Pop music became part

of everyday life: in commercials, movies but also through the introduction of the Compact Disc (CD). This variety or music styles that influenced each other led to quick changes which eventually resulted in the emerging Britpop in the 1990's (80's, 2009).

The 90's were not all about boy- and girlbands of which Take That and The Spice Girls were probably the most popular ones. Also dance music became increasingly important as more and more music clubs opened (90's, 2009). With Oasis and Blur, this new era called Britpop emerged which strongly aimed at being "British" meaning singing about British issues and culture. It could be sometimes rather hard-rocking, sometimes more experimental. This movement was further strengthened through the opposition to the US grunge movement. As the leaders of Britpop became increasingly famous and successful, it attracted also new bands for the movement which all contributed to an upheaval in UK alternative rock (Youngs, 2005).

A revival of Britpop?

Now, at least one decade after the apex of Britpop, it seems like there is a new wave that seems to emerge, continuing the Britpop period. Today, there are bands such as Franz Ferdinand, the Kaiser Chiefs, Blocparty and Keane that take the global music world by storm and are incredibly successful. Especially Coldplay, which could be considered as a post Bripop band, is one of the most popular bands of the world these days. It seems, that again, it is British bands that lead the world's music (Dowling, 2005). Nevertheless, others argue that the bands of the first years of the 21th century cannot be compared to the old Britpop bands as they are qualitatively better and as "These bands today haven't had the phenomenal status at home, they have been more concerned about the international market" (Sutherland in Dowling, 2005). On the other hand, this could be considered "…more liberating for the bands around right now anyway - they can develop at their own speed without the weight of the nation's expectations on their output" (Hirst in Dowling, 2005). As this music period is not over yet, one might not draw a final conclusion about this, however, one thing is certain: Britpop was one of Britain's greatest unifying music scenes (Thompson in Dowling, 2005).

3.4.3 Art

British art (and art in general) is a very broad term, and the examples of British cultural expressions are numerous. British arts and culture have had a significant influence on the rest of the world, with the English language as its most important export. The plays of William Shakespeare and the music of the Beatles are profound examples of this. Because the English language is such an important bearer of British cultural expressions, the more traditional British art forms are less well-known.

The English art before the 18th century was suppressed by iconoclasm; beginning in the 1530s religious art was destroyed and monasteries were suppressed. Until the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 the iconoclasm had halted English art and any progression towards a national school. Although the English monarchs predominantly made use of Italian and Dutch painters at their courts, because of the premature state, the English art was still popular. (David Rodgers, 2001 "English art")

Until the 18th century there were few notable British painters, with one exception. Sir James Thornhill was the only British practitioner of the international Baroque style and in 1716 he won the competition for the decoration of the dome of the Saint Paul's Cathedral in London. Thornhill was one of the forerunners of English painting, although heavily influenced by the foreign Baroque style. Thornhill's son-in-law William Hogarth can be seen as the first English painter with a distinct style without any foreign influences. Hogarth started as an engraver and painter of theatre pieces. In 1730 he created the original genre of the 'modern moral subject'; this immediately set him apart from other English and European artists of his time. In the late 1730s as the self-appointment representative of the English painters Hogarth displayed a great contempt for French art depicting the rich laissez-faire French aristocracy. As spokesman for the English painters Hogarth actively promoted professional training and public exhibitions of English art. In 1760 he became the founder of the Society of Artists and one of the first members of the Royal Academy in 1768. (Harold Osborne, 2001 "Thornhill, Sir James"; Michael Kitson, 2001 "Hogarth, William")

With the establishment of the Royal Academy by George III, the English painters now could rely on a good education, good references and public exhibitions. The first president was the portrait painter Joshua Reynolds who made the studying of the Italian styles and themes for English painters a necessity. Until the mid 19th century Rome became the predominant place for English painters to develop their skills, like the landscape painter

Richard Wilson. Although Reynolds arguably superior rival Gainsborough visited Holland instead of Italy, using the 17th century Dutch painters as example for his portrays and landscapes. The history painting promoted by Reynolds never really became popular; only the portrait painter Romney had success with paintings of neo-classical depictions of Greek and Roman myths. From the 1760s owners and their animals became a favourite painting theme; George Stubbs was one of the most famous English animal painters who could provide in this demand. Stubbs preferred realism and he also made anatomical drawings. (David Rodgers, 2001 "English art"; David Rodgers, 2001 "Stubbs, George")

At the beginning of the 19th century the English art was dominated by three painters, Lawrence, Turner and Constable. Lawrence mainly painted portraits and by commission of the Prince Regent in 1815 he portrayed the leaders of the anti-Napoleonic alliance. Turner and Constable combined observation and Romanticism, and both focused on the changing misty and watery English atmosphere. They sparked the English watercolour tradition. The 19th century due to the industrial revolution changed the old traditions between the aristocracy and the middle-class and self-made industrialists the last two favouring literary and historical genre paintings and unexceptional landscapes no longer out of reach due to new transportation possibilities. (David Rodgers, 2001 "English art")

Turner was the most influential of the three, he studied at the schools of the Royal Academy. His first oil painting *Fishermen at Sea* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in1796 when he was twenty-one years old. He had success at a relatively young age and in 1799 he became a full Member of the Royal Academy in 1802 while only twenty-seven years old.("Professional Training and Career", Tate) Because of his early success Turner gained funds from wealthy patrons for studies abroad. While his watercolour paintings were admired universally, his public statements in oil paintings had some critical reviews. After his death the public learned not only to admire his finished paintings, his later works are seen as the first steps into modernism. .("Reputation", Tate)

During the 1860s classical subjects in combination with legitimized nudity made their appearance, and this inspired painters like Watts, Albert Moore, Burn-Jones, and John Waterhouse. Watts and Burn-Jones were the forerunners of Symbolism, another popular theme short after the mid-1860s was sentimental social realism from artists that were associated with the Graphic magazine. Also during this time the British art was strongly

influenced by the French, and many young British painters studied in France this became common until the First World War. One of these young British painters was Whistler (although he was American from birth), and together with the architect E.W. Godwin, the painter Albert Moore , and the writer Oscar Wilde , sparked the Aesthetic movement starting one of the first clashes between traditional and the modern English art. In 1886 the Aesthetes, realists and Symbolists formed the New English Art Club (NEAC) an exhibition society as opposition to the Royal Academy.

The NEAC shortly became dominated by one painter, a pupil from Whistler, Walter Sickert. Sickert combined the French avant-garde with the English progressive painting. Sickert had an impressionistic style and he preferred urban subjects, Sickert's style remained influential until the 1960s. From the 1960s the English painters turned to America for inspiration for the styles Cubism and Surrealism, and earlier in the 1930s Constructivism by the Dutch painter Mondrian. During the 1950s Pop art emerged later Conceptual and land art, also technological advancements like video contributed to the development of the British art after the Second World War.

Another important development for the British art was the support of the Tate Gallery for avant-garde British art. The Tate-Gallery established the Turner Prize for young artists, Charles Saatchi is also one of the few supporters for promotion of avant-garde British art.

Around the mid-1970s Conceptual art had reached its peak, and a decade later revived in the new form of Neo conceptual art. The Neo-Conceptual art fostered a new generation of British artists with an outspoken and arguably controversial style. This young artist called themselves the 'Young British Artists', rebelling against the establishment and notably Margret Thatcher. (Collings, 1997, pp.21-23)

British contemporary art or at least the movement that brought British art where it stands today emerged under numerous names; 'new British art', 'new art', 'Brit art' and 'young British artists'. The term 'young British artists' or yBas is on the whole the most accepted term for this contemporary art movement. The term yBas comes from exhibitions that were held in the Saatchi Gallery from 1992 onwards. Distinctive about the art of this new movement in relation to British art in the 1980s was according the curator of the Hayward gallery Carl Freedman; 'a matter-of-fact air when compared to the heavy reliance on

metaphor and allusion in the output of the older generation.' Furthermore; 'the younger artists combined Dadaist humour, the literal qualities of minimalist art and Situationist strategies to question the very status of art, the older lot 'engage with essences and metaphysics and, conservative in their compliance with the institution of art, depend on it to validate their illusionism and mystification.' (Stallabrass, 2001 p.1-3)

The art of the yBas has no common programme, no group statements and no shared style. However there are common characteristics to describe it by, first overtly contemporary flavor. Previous British art has a distinct provincial air, depicting and experiencing the British countryside. The yBas broke with this provincial air, at least enough to gain international appeal. This changed made British art more compatible with contemporary American and continental European art. Second the relation with the mass media, artists use material drawn from the mass media culture. The last distinctive characteristic is that the conceptual work is presented in visually accessible and spectacular form, think for example of Damien Hirst's 'For the Love of God' the platinum skull covered with diamonds. Contemporary British art is probably popular because it is more accessible to the general public, this accessibility comes from the use of material from the mass media that people are confronted with at a daily basis. This change came when during 1989 the private art market slumbered in because of the recession. The private art market was partly counting on a steady group of buyers from East Asia, with the recession this market collapsed. This turned galleries from expensive international reckoned artists to smaller, cheaper British artists. The recession was linked to two other changes that helped the yBas, the first was that financial troubles made the influential art collector Charles Saatchi to dispose of his collection, and focus on the yBas. The second change was the orientation of the Tate Gallery's Turner Prize towards younger artists, in turn caused by the bankruptcy of its sponsor. The established galleries that did show exhibitions of the yBas, were subsequently replaced by the galleries that did like, the Saatchi gallery and White Cube. To summarize the effect of the 1989 recession forced the British art scene into a creative destruction and modernization. (Stallabrass, 2001 p.4-7)

A great number of the yBas came from the fine art course at Goldsmiths College, part of the University of London, the division between the different media like; painting and sculpturing was abolished and two teachers with both different influences became very important for the future artists; Jon Thompson and Michael Craig-Martin. At the late 1980s some of the Goldsmiths students including Damien Hirst started to put exhibitions in

abandoned industrial offices and buildings, these exhibitions became very successful. Another important place for exhibition of new British art was the gallery of Charles Saatchi. With the art market revived and the success of the new art, the yBas were faced with a dilemma, how could they remain accessible on the one hand and please the elite art-buyers on the other hand? (Stallabrass, 2001 p.7-11) Again a good example is the platinum/crystal skull by Damian Hirst, on the one hand highly inaccessible for the general public because of the high price. On the other hand simple and accessible to the general public, it is what it is a 'beautiful' skull covered with platinum and diamonds. Leaving aside the deeper meaning the skull has.

3.5. Conclusion

Starting with the colonial history of the British Empire in the first subchapter, its impact is strong and still relevant in contemporary British society. Its predominance in the 19th century shaped the latter and also provided the British with possibilities to travel and to gain knowledge of different cultures. According to Said (2003) this knowledge and the assumed superiority over the indigenous people from the colonies, formed the British identity significantly. Furthermore, its interest in economic advantages rather than into direct rule and missionary demand also demonstrates the commercial intelligence of the islanders.

This imperial approach the British exercised in the 19th century, though, is not applicable in recent immigration policy anymore. The emergence of mass immigration, in particular, from former colonies challenged the British cosmopolitan approach. With very restrictive laws established in the 1970s, the different British governments tried to secure a more or less common British identity that some claim to be invented (Taylor, 1994). However, the concept of multiculturalism seems to be acknowledged as a balanced way to life side by side, as an opinion poll found out. The idea of integration, though, has not so many supporters, as it includes a living together and that appears to be more challenging in practice. Particularly, after the terror attacks from 9/11 and the public discussion of otherness of Muslims, integration seems to be farther away than ever. Although, only concerning a very tiny minority of Islamic fundamentalists, the fear of and even hatred against this minority is significant. This fear expresses itself in decreasing admissions for asylum seekers or immigrants in general. However, it has to be mentioned that the UK is quite successful in implementing integration policies issued, amongst others, by the EU.

The second subchapter examines the impact of class on British society, taking into account the history of the Industrial Revolution and the factor monarchy. The question is if class is still relevant in modern Britain. This subchapter reveals that classes are still existent, but defined differently and more vague. Whereas the classical class division was among status and inherited titles (aristocracy, bourgeoisie, and working class), the new one concerns occupation and money. According to Cannadine (1999), a class division amongst the factors wealth and occupation will exist as long as there are inequalities within a society and that in particular in Britain social mobility is very low. However, Britain might indeed have some features that indirectly support this rigid division of society. The first to mention is the educational system that fosters a separation between rich and poor families among respectively public and private school. These different school types differ not only in quality but in study fees parents have to pay. Although there are efforts to provide students from less privileged families with scholarships, the practice is still improvable. The second feature is the monarchy that is still highly respected; 85 percent of the British think that the Queen does a good job. The powers of the monarch as such have significantly decreased over the last decades, but the importance for British society is still relevant. How the future of British monarchy will look like under the next monarch remains to be seen.

The third subchapter deals with culture in terms of sports, music and art. Football shapes Brish very much, as the membership in a certain football club can determine which friend you have. The rivality between Chealse and ManU for example is national wide known and is also topic in many newspaper articles. The development of British music only becomes relevant from the 20th century onwards when the revival of folk music merged with the influences of jazz and blues. An outstanding band found in the 1960s are The Beatles, starting the Beatlemania. Their influence went beyond British borders and is still popular all over the world. In the 1980s, artists like Davis Bowie expressed what an entire felt. He experimented with different styles in every sense of the word and displayed the hip London community that emerged in the clubs, galleries and the streets. The classical art in the UK only evolved in the 19th and 20th century. Here Turner has to be mentioned explicitly. However, also Francis Bacon, who was very much hated by Margret Thatcher, came up with a very provocative style of art. As this chapter analysed, British society is indeed shaped differently compared to continental Europe.

Chapter 4

The United Kingdom in Perspective – A Comparison

4.1 Introduction

Being in the European sphere of countries, a general similarity between the MS can be assumed. Nevertheless, every country has its unique characteristics be it tradition, cultural habits or even only the weather. The question is, in how far the countries diverge, especially also when trying to understand the differing positions countries have on certain topics. In this chapter, we will compare two countries – the UK and the Netherlands – in order to grasp better the uniqueness of the former as well as its positioning within the EU. Taking into account that it is the overall aim of this paper to discover why the British are reluctant to indulge completely in the EU, this chapter helps to understand this position. Thus, we will review the essential parts of British history, society and political culture in comparison with the Netherlands. Hereby the Netherlands was chosen, because it offers some striking similarities – for instance both are constitutional monarchies, they share a colonial history and nowadays a very Eurosceptic perception of the EU.

Firstly, the political system will be compared especially with regard to Lijphart's two-dimensional model of democracy placing the two countries in either the majoritarian or consensus model. Having looked at the system of democracies, also with respect to the executive, the legislature and the judiciary, constitutional monarchies will be compared secondly. Hereby, not only the role of the monarch, but also public perception of the royal family in both countries as well as calls for reform – in Britain largely inspired by the Dutch "bicycling monarchy" – will be analysed. Thirdly, the reason for historical grandeur and one of the main conditions for the immigration policies, meaning colonial history, will be looked at. As indicated, this led, fourthly, to a picture of society that is very diverse from many other European states. Thus, an examination of British vertical class structure and Dutch Pillarisation will provide some insight. Furthermore, the UK and the Netherlands took a different path in handling immigration ranging from multiculturalism to integration. Hereby, a case study comparing recent developments in the Netherlands and the UK gives a more practical approach to the question of immigration. Fourthly, naturally class distinctions are also today still influenced by educational systems, which differ very much in the two states. Fifthly, turning to a political question, both countries indulge in a pronounced Euroscpeticism, which led to a de facto and an almost refusal of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. The factors relevant for this scepticism will be looked at. Lastly, a comparison of the

Dutch and English regions – mainly concentrating on unemployment as an indicator for prosperity will be given.

4.2 Political System

4.2.1 Majoritarian v Consensus Model

A comparison of the political systems of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands is of major importance in order to understand the difference between politics in Britain and in the Netherlands. First of all, both states share the same governmental system, both are parliamentary monarchies meaning that there exists a head of state different from the chief executive, the prime minister.

However, if we make a classification, the United Kingdom belongs to the majoritarian system and the Netherlands to the consensus model. As becomes clear from Lijphart's analysis, the distinction might relate to the social structure existing in one specific country. For example, the consensus model could be seen as suitable for the Netherlands because there "governance...has always been a matter of finding specific arrangements to suit an existing social variety, a variety determined by geographic, cultural, ideological or religious factors" (Hendriks & Tonen, 2001, p.67). We could then ask, why the United Kingdom is not based on the consensus model as well, since we have learned from the previous chapters that its society is culturally mixed. The concentration of parties gives the answer, since the image of clear-cut confrontation between distinguished parties far from reflects the reality: the two major parties which are close to the centre.

What is the major difference between the political systems? First of all, according to Lijphart (1999), democracies based on the majoritarian model typically have a two-party system and a strong cabinet due to the existence of one-party cabinets. Contrarily, countries based on the consensus model are characterized by multi-party coalitions resulting from a multi-party system (Lijphart, 1999). Secondly, the electoral system of majoritarian states is called plurality system, or first-past-the-post, which produces only one winner who then represents his constituency (Jones, 2004). The electoral system in consensus countries is called 'PR' standing for proportional representation. In this system the seats in parliament are likely to be in proportion to the votes cast by the parties. Thirdly, the structure of the

parliament is different in both systems. Majoritarian systems are said to have parliaments based on unicameralism, whereas bicameralism is a characteristic for parliaments in consensus countries. Finally, the constitution is unlikely to be flexible in consensus countries, as it is the case in majoritarian systems. Consequently, judicial review is mostly applied in consensus countries, and less in majoritarian states.

Nevertheless, the borders are not always clear as in the theoretical separation of majoritarian and consensus systems. We will, however, concentrate on these points while analysing the structure of the executive, legislature and judiciary. By doing so we will also look for differences and similarities of the political systems in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

4.2.2 The Head of State

The reason for the existence of monarchs as head of state in parliamentary governments might be the attempt "to transfer to a system in which the Head of State embodies the continuity of the State and its institutions, without holding the power or means to devise or implement policies of his or her own" (Meny & Knapp, 1998, p.222). Thus, parliamentary monarchies might be seen as the outcome of strong ties with the past. Since the issue will be addressed in detail in the following section, it suffices to say that the functions of the monarch are aimed to be of symbolic nature of uniting the country (Kingdom, 2003, p.353).

However, it is important to mention that the Dutch monarchs have much room for manoeuvres especially in government formation. This is of course facilitated by the multi-party system and the complex elections results (Ismayr, 2003, p.351). After an election the monarch typically appoints an elder statesperson to identify the person best suited to politically lead the government formation. Further, the monarch may choose to appoint the cabinet ministers building the coalition (Gallagher, 2007, p.39).

4.2.3 The Executive

Literature about British politics makes a distinction between the executive and the core executive. Although the terms are used differently, the core executive is the "heart of British government" and consists of the prime minister, the cabinet, cabinet committees, coordinating departments, the law officers and the security and intelligence services (Judge, 2005, p.118). In the following, we will concentrate on the office of the prime minister.

The British prime minister is not elected but appointed from the major party (in case of a single-party majority) or the largest party (in case of a coalition) by the monarch. However, as noticed by Meny and Knapp, the monarch's choice amounts to no more than the ratification of a double process of pre-selection: "first by the party, which chooses its own leader; then by the electorate, which gives victory to one particular party together with its leader" (1998, p.231).

The roles of the British prime minister are multi-purpose. He is head of the executive, party leader, leader of party in parliament, senior British representative overseas and government communicator (Jones, 2004). However, the multifunctional position of the British prime minister has led some scholars to conclude that the office of the prime minister is highly presidentialised. The main premise is that power within British central government is now increasingly in the hands of the prime minister (Kavanagh, Richards, Smith, Geddes, 2006).

As it has already been mentioned above, in the Netherlands the Queen has an influential role in politics since she can appoint a *formateur* or *informateur* to lead the negotiations between coalition parties. It is clear from this that the Netherlands has leadership based on collegiality, because there is no prime ministerial government as in the United Kingdom, which has been strong especially under the Thatcher government. Accordingly, the powers and functions of the Dutch prime minister are few. Although he sets the agenda and chairs all cabinet meetings, he cannot appoint or remove ministers and his staff is smaller than that of the British prime minister It is also noteworthy that the Dutch prime minister is not a member of the parliament, whereas the British prime minister is at the same time an elected MP (Wanderweg, 2002).

4.2.4 The Legislature

The structure of the parliaments in both countries is based on bicameralism, that is the existence of a lower and upper house with the lower house being the chamber with most competences. However, this is striking if we recall that according to Lijphart's analysis parliaments in majoritarian states are characterized by unicameralism.

Chapter one already informed us that bicameralism has a long tradition in the United Kingdom and that the upper house does not really play a crucial role. For the purpose here it suffices to say that the House of Lords is characterized by a 'leisurely atmosphere', meaning

that the work done in the chamber does not threaten the performance of the lower house (Kingdom, 2003, p.360). In the Netherlands the members of the upper house are elected by the twelve provincial councils and have the right to accept or reject legislation. Nevertheless, the *Eerste Kamer* cannot amend or initiate legislation (Ismayr, 2003).

While examining the structure of the parliament it is also important to take a look at the scrutiny powers of the legislature. As pointed out by Gallagher, 'many more political wars are waged in committees' (Gallagher, 2007, p.94). In the United Kingdom committees were usually not to many mostly they were not very successful in overseeing the tasks of the ministerial departments. Nevertheless, we saw that the importance of committees in the United Kingdom is growing and that they are successful in scrutinizing the work of the government. In the Netherlands a simple committee system developed between 1848 and 1953 with the function to examine the bills submitted by the government. About 20 committees are established in the Second Chamber today. Thus, each government department except of the prime minister's office is monitored by a parliamentary committee (Wanderweg, 2002).

When comparing the electoral system, the distinction made by Lijphart regarding the electoral system applies for both countries. In the United Kingdom the plurality rule dictates how many seats a party gets in the parliament (Jones, 2004). In the Netherlands, the Tweede Kamer contains 150 seats. The parties each present a list of candidates from which the electorate can then choose (Gallagher, 2007). Some argue that in the Netherlands there exists extreme proportionality. There might be a point for this claim, namely the extremely low threshold. Depending on the turnout, approximately 60,000 votes can be sufficient to gain a seat (Wanderweg, 2002). Since a low threshold may result in fragmentation, Jones (2004) is right in observing that the two systems correspond to multi-party versus two-party systems. Political participation in the Netherlands is marked by over seven parties which all used to be mass parties. This is due to the organisation of Dutch society until the 1960s "in which virtually all areas of civil and social life were organized along the principles of religion or political ideology. Three or four pillars dominated Dutch society...The Catholic, Protestant and Socialist pillar" (Wanderweg, 2002, p.69).

Thus, the underlying premise in Dutch politics is the encouragement of fragmentation and people representation due to the existence of many cleavages in the past, but also in order to handle new phenomena, such as immigration, in an a way that is fair to all citizens.

4.2.5 The Judiciary

One commonality between the UK and the Netherlands is the absence of a constitutional court. Nevertheless, in the UK we observe that judges play a big role due to their power to make law, which is a consequence of the common law system and its principle of *stare decisis*. Moreover, judges in the United Kingdom can declare the performance of public authorities invalid. The judiciary in the Netherlands constitutes of the Dutch Supreme Court and several ordinary courts. However, the role of the Supreme Court is not comparable with that of constitutional courts in most consensus countries. Contrary to what is typical for consensus democracies, the Dutch constitutional law rejects judicial policy making, in that it denies courts to investigate the constitutionality of laws (Wanderweg, 2002, p.154). However, courts might have the power to declare government measures to be *ultra vires* and annul acts of parliament which contradict treaties in which the Netherlands is a member such as the European Treaties (Gallagher, 2007, p.230)

This chapter has illustrated that the political systems of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands are very distinct from each other although they do share the similarity of being a parliamentary monarchy. The points made by Lijphart in favour of a distinction between majoritarian and consensus systems have been shown not to fit every country. Talking about the political system of the Netherlands one last point should be mentioned about the exceptional way of governance, which is typical for countries that have to provide for a coexistence of all cleavages in a democratic atmosphere. The Netherlands is based on a so-called consociational democracy, a system which should make cooperation between the Dutch elites easier by agreeing on: the business of politics, agreement to disagree, summit diplomacy, proportionality, depoliticization, secrecy and the government's right to govern (Lijphart, 1975). This was a compromise made for the sake of peaceful coexistence. However, we want to suggest that this had negative impact on the citizens by discouraging political participation as opposed to party or pillar membership. Finally, it can be concluded that European integration seems to have had a major impact especially on the judiciary since courts in both states can refer to the European Treaties.

As mentioned in the beginning of the antecedent part, monarchs play an important role in both the UK and the Netherlands. Due to the unique history of both countries, this topic has major importance when trying to understand the historical development of both states. In order to draw a greater picture, the following chapter will further elabourate on the monarchical system and its role in British and Dutch society.

4.3 Constitutional Monarchy

4.3.1 Comparison of the Systems

"God save the Queen!" "*Lang leve de koningin*!" – These are the calls that unite the British and the Dutch in their adoration for the respective monarch, meaning either Queen Elizabeth II of Windsor or Koningin Beatrix from the House of Orange. As has been examined in prior chapters, the United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy with a royal family which is at the top of the last real aristocracy in Europe (Lancien & Saint Martin, 2007). On the other hand, the Netherlands – or better the Kingdom of the Netherlands – also constitutes the same political entity. Besides the fact that the Dutch monarchy has only existed since 1815 and has thus only had seven sovereigns as opposed to the almost 1000 year old monarchical history in the UK, there are some striking similarities in terms of constitutional powers of the monarch, but also some interesting differences in terms of perception by the public. These points will be looked into in more detail.

As indicated above, the constitutional set-up between the two countries is quite comparable. Similar to the UK, the Dutch sovereign Beatrix only has a representative function as "ceremonial head of state" (Wanderweg, 2002, p.12). She has the duty to inaugurate the commencing parliamentary season as does her British counterpart. Furthermore, Beatrix also confers with the Prime Minister on a weekly basis – each Monday – and has become quite knowledgeable due to her 29 years on the throne. Interestingly, Wanderweg gives the following description: "[M]inisters have admitted that the Queen's long experience and diligent attention to public issues make her an influential sparring partner", whereas for the British side, Judge similarly reports that "he [Tony Blair] enjoyed his weekly audience with the Queen, not simply because of her experience but because she was an 'extraordinarily shrewd and perceptive observer of the world'" (p.13; Jones, 2004, p.369). Thus, the long and constant experience in political matters has been equally appreciated in both countries.

Nevertheless, Beatrix is known to keep herself and the royal family out of politics. Hence, it can be concluded, that the political and constitutional roles of the monarchy, especially of the reigning Beatrix and Elizabeth II are almost congruent. More evident differences appear when looking at the families.

4.3.2 A "Bicycling Monarchy"

A "bicycling monarchy" is a somewhat pejorative term invented by the British to describe the Dutch (and also the Danish and Scandinavian) monarchies. The BBC e-cyclopedia explains it as "royal house (esp. northern European) which shuns state coaches in favour of bikes with wicker baskets and proper mud guards (a model often suggested for the House of Windsor)" and suggests several possible creative origins for this term (BBC e-cyclopedia, 2001). Despite the mocking character of the description, this phrase probably captures best the most eminent difference between the British and the Dutch royal family: expenditures and relation to the people.

While the British monarchy is often criticised for being too costly, the House of Orange rarely faces this claim. According to the official website of the Dutch Royal House, the allowances paid by the state to members of the royal family amounted to approximately 6.1 million Euro for the year 2008 (The Dutch Royal House: Allowances, 2009). This can be explained by the fact that only Queen Beatrix, successor to the crown, Prince Willem-Alexander and his wife, Princess Máxima, receive allowances. Even though the UK also adapted its expenses, until 1993 the extensive British royal family was living of the annual parliamentary allowances, the so called Civil List (The British Monarchy: Royal Finances, 2008). However, after the by divorce and adultery scandals shattered year of 1992, the monarchy had become more and more criticised, which led to some financial reorderings initiated by the Queen. Thus since 1993 only she and the Duke of Edinburgh, her husband, receive allowances. The expenditures by the rest of the royal family is supposedly met by the Queen herself (Jones, 2004; The British Monarchy: Royal Finances, 2008). It is difficult to compare the finances of these two monarchies because they have to meet different expenditures and receive money from different sources. Nevertheless, it is now more comprehensible that the public was shocked when in 1991 all royal costs added up to 57 million Pound Sterling (currently appr. 61,7 million Euro), especially when compared to the relatively modest costs in the Netherlands (Jones, 2004).

A second attribute of a “bicycling monarchy” is the normal working life of the royals. According to the Guardian “[m]any of the [Dutch] royals hold conventional jobs and live "in obscurity"…Prince Johan Friso, 32, is a banker for Goldman Sachs in London, while his brother, Prince Constantijn, 31, has worked in Brussels for the European Commission” (Osborn, 2001). This also explains the financial independence enjoyed by the Dutch royals and further strengthens the claim of being closer to the people than their British respectives. Hence, it is not uncommon to see members of the House of Orange walking publicly in The Hague or Amsterdam. This more “down-to-earth” attitude might also help to keep this royal family out of scandals (Osborn, 2001). The last major uproar was presented by the wedding of Prince Willem-Alexander to Máxima Zorreguieta whose father had been involved in the cruel Argentinian Videla dictatorship. However, this issue could be set aside by a declaration of the father promising to stay away from the wedding (Osborn, 2001; Wanderweg, 2002). However, the scandals faced by the British monarchy over the last two decades including adultery, divorce, drugs and death outdo this story.

4.3.3 Summary

Looking at the above made observations, it does not seem surprising, that critics of the British monarchy often call for a reform in favour of the Dutch model of a bicycling monarchy. Costs, decency and placement in a democratic society seem more appealing to some than the current state of affairs. As The Independent on Sunday states:

> Stripped of any political role and free to marry "commoners" (oh, how we long to see that term fall from circulation), the European royal families seem to have been liberated from some of the more absurd behavioural constraints we place upon members of our own. There should be a further rationalisation of the Civil List. And we should be clear about which of the "royal" assets – palaces, castles, land, jewels, art, furniture and all the rest – rightly belong to the state rather than the Royal Family personally (9 April 2002).

However, there are of course also many, who do not want to see the British monarchy as “low-profile” (Osborn, 2001) and without “magic” (The Independent on Sunday, 2002) as the Dutch monarchy is perceived in the UK. Nevertheless, as has been pointed out in the earlier examination of British monarchy, it remains to be seen if a reform will be necessitated when the highly popular Queen Elizabeth II steps down from the throne. Similarly, Wanderweg (2002) questions if “the popularity of the monarchy will be affected when, eventually, the Crown Prince will succeed his mother, and after more than a century the Dutch will have a male monarch again” (p.13). However, judging by recent Dutch opinion polls, 81 percent of

the people agree that Prince Willem-Alexander is ready to ascend to the throne and 32 percent think that this should happen in the coming two years (EénVandaag, 2009). Thus it seems, that the Dutch monarchy is ready to face the future whereas the British are still divided about the question of succession to the throne with even 64 percent of the population not wanting Queen Elizabeth II to ever step down from the throne (Ipsos MORI 2006). Considering the advanced age of both sovereigns and thus the unavoidable changes ahead, the years to come will be very interesting with regard to monarchical evolution.

During the 18th century, monarchic Great Britain became one of the most extensive empires in history, reaching all around the globe. In comparison, the Dutch also created a colonial empire, although arguably not as successful as the British. The following chapter will take a closer look at the extent and the way these Empires were created, trying to find similarities and differences between these two colonial powers.

4.4 Colonial Pasts

4.4.1 The British Empire

The British colonial empire was without doubt the largest that has ever existed. During the 18th century, colonial expansion came about and Britain conquered 'new land' even though this meant going to war with its European rivals. By 1815, when the last Napoleonic war ended at the battle of Waterloo, Canada, the Caribbean, South Africa, India and Australia were all under control by London. Britain was now the biggest of all colonial empires and, as a result, felt little need to control more overseas territory (Kennedy, 2002, p. 3-4). Arguably, the British Empire was an informal empire. Although London held political control, economic control and interests "were often served through the independent enterprise of manufacturers, merchants and bankers" (p.4). The British government was quite willing to employ its military to ensure the continuity and expansion of economic interests. However, this type of colonial control all changed around 1880. The increasing political power of France and Russia, and to a lesser extent of the United States, meant that the protection of exclusive colonial territories became increasingly intensified on a geo-political level. The British government thus felt the need for active conflict intervention.

Nevertheless, the majority of British colonies were governed by indirect rule. This means that the British used tribal elites for their contact point with the indigenous population. Only those elites were educated, trained to speak English and possessed considerable power. Thus, the British mostly did not conquer their colonies by military battles; the threat of an invasion proved sufficient to convince local elites to put their population to work for the British. The power of the chiefs employed by the British was linked to their pre-colonial position and traditional authority over the local population. Daily government was in the hands of these chiefs, the British themselves did not bother with that as long as their economic interests were served. As a result, most British colonies were coined "protectorates" (Wesseling, 2003, p.63).

On a domestic level, several developments empowered the British colonial cause. First, the notion of Social Darwinism meant that the British government could legitimise its colonial policies based on the doctrine of 'survival of the fittest'. The doctrine entails an "implicit understanding of the international scene as an unforgiving struggle for survival that pitted nation against nation, race against race" (Kennedy, 2002, p.5). Secondly, the introduction of urban suffrage in 1867 and rural suffrage in 1884 brought about a significant change in the way Britain was governed. Politicians found out very quickly that public support for colonial policies could be gained by employing a nationalist discourse. The greatness of the British Empire, its power abroad and heroic stories of colonial warfare legitimised the pursuance of colonial actions. These two developments, along with the successful expansion of the British Empire during 1880-1900, "altered the very meaning of what it meant to be British" (Kennedy, 2002, p.9).

After a couple of military failures in Afghanistan, Zululand and the Balkans, foreign policy based solely on self-interest became increasingly unpopular. New politicians that came to power now often claimed that Britain should be more of a normative power. Nevertheless, in reality the British Empire kept expanding at an unprecedented rate (Kennedy, 2002, pp. 9-12).

4.4.2 The Dutch Colonial Empire

The Dutch colonial empire was much smaller than the British, and relied on the control of merely a few colonies. As a matter of fact, one single Dutch colony, Dutch-India, was by far the most important for their interests. Moreover, one can hardly speak of an empire here.

Nevertheless, during most of the 17th century, the Dutch were ahead of their European competitors (with the exception of Spain) in terms of successful trading.

In 1602 the Dutch established the United East-India Company (UEC). This was the first multinational enterprise in history, and quickly became the most powerful player in Asia. The UEC was financed by shares on the Amsterdam stock market, which partly explains the rapid growth of the company. The Dutch government granted the company monopoly rights in Asia. As a trade-off the UEC had to administer defence and justice by themselves. The British would soon, in 1648, copy this model with the establishment of the East India House in London. By the end of the 17th century virtually every Western-European colonial power used this model. Nonetheless, the UEC remained the most powerful enterprise of the 17th century (Wesseling, 2003). The UEC defeated the Portuguese, after which the Portuguese retreated from Asia. Moreover, the UEC became the centre of spice production, upon which other European powers were increasingly dependent. Indigeneous people were commanded, often by brute force, to produce spices for export. Resistance often led to extermination, as was the case in Banda. During the 18th century, as we have seen, Great Britain went into its industrial period. Industrial superiority meant that the British swiftly took over the powerful position of the Dutch. They established a massive rail network as for instance in British-India where 42.000 km of rail were laid down by 1902. The Dutch, by contrast, could not agree on plans for the construction of rail lines. As a result, Dutch-India only contained approximately 2.200 km rail (Wesseling, 2003).

Both the British and the Dutch used colonial armies for their colonial battles. The British had a unique position in the sense that they employed millions of Indians for military purposes. Their Indian Army was so powerful that it could be deployed anywhere in the world. The Netherlands's colonial army was less successful. This can partly be explained by the diversity of its soldiers: personnel (or slaves) were drawn from all of their colonies. Furthermore, the Dutch lacked the industrial and economic advantages that the British had gained during the 18th and 19th century. Nevertheless, the Dutch managed to maintain its East-India colony (contemporary Indonesia) until the mid-twentieth century (Wesseling, 2003).

On a domestic level, the term 'imperialism' was highly unpopular in the Netherlands - in contrast to Great Britain. Imperialism was seen as something for the great powers and it was heavily associated with the oppression of indigenous people. Whether this can be seen as

public denial of the Dutch's own colonial human rights record is open to debate, but by 1900 the government was opposing the Dutch media's comparison between the 'Boerenoorlig' in South Africa (by the British) and the Dutch atrocities in Sumatra. Even Marxists agreed that the Netherlands was not an imperialistic country like Great Britian, mainly because there was no industrial monopoly left. Wesseling notes that, for most of its colonial history, the Netherlands was "a colonial giant, but a political dwarf" (Wesseling, 2003, p.198). It managed to keep a dominant position in the spice market, but Great Britain had acquired a much larger diversity of colonies and as a result was active, and dominant, in nearly every other market. Compared to Great Britain, the Netherlands had to pursue a careful political strategy. Thus, the main difference between Great Britain and The Netherlands was that the Dutch were too busy defending their current colonies while the British pursued a much more active colonial policy based on expansion (Wesseling, 2003).

The colonial past of both states created an increasing flood of immigrants, when the colonies were released into independence. Most immigrants were striving for a better live in the former motherland, hoping for higher wages, social security. Many immigrants also fled persecution in their newly formed countries, which often faced civil unrest, war and devastation (such as in the former British colonies in India and Africa). The impact of this flood and the measures taken in fighting it will be more closely discussed in the following section, as well as the concept of Pillarisation and the social and cultural structure in general.

4.5 Societal Structure

4.5.1 Classes versus Pillars

As revealed in the previous chapter, British society was, and partially still is, characterized by a vertical class structure. Unlike this rather hierarchical order of societal groups, Dutch society was for a long time divided horizontally in a particular structure termed Pillarisation. According to this concept, the society was composed of different pillars, defined by Lijphart (1968) as "a section of the population that bands together in a multiplicity, an integrated complex of organisations or institutions based on a common ideology" (quoted in Blom, 2000). In the 19th and 20th century Netherlands, there were hence four pillars: Roman Catholic, Protestant, liberal or neutral and socialist. Each pillar constituted kind of an own

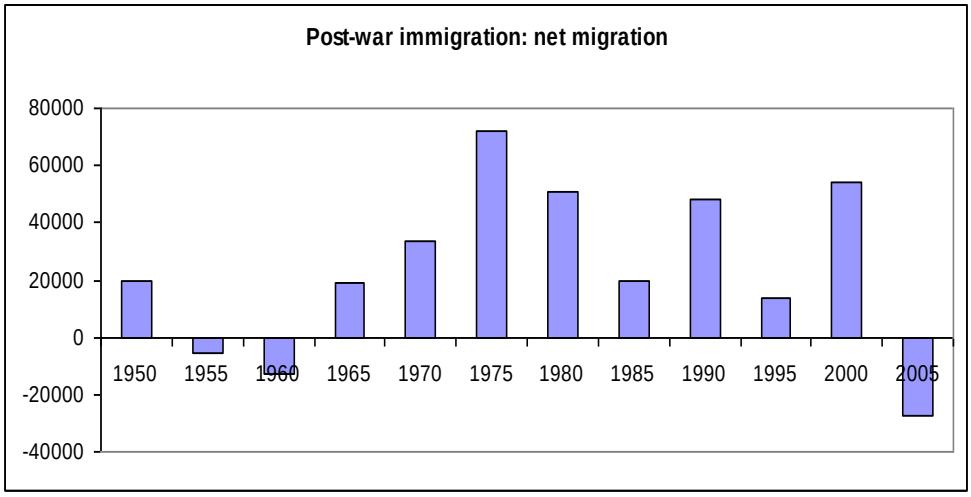
society for itself; with for instance own newspapers, broadcasts, schools, and a political party representing their interests. Interaction between members of the different pillars was rare and mainly only happened on the highest - the political - level. Hence, through this segregation, groups who were actually hostile against one another found a peaceful way of living together (Blom, 2000). Due to the secularisation of society and a growing emphasis on individualism, the pillar structure started to decline in the 1960s and largely disappeared in the following decades. However, as will be discussed later in this chapter, the concept was still used to describe and explain the (hardly existing) integration policy of the Dutch government which lasted until the 1990s.

4.5.2 Immigration

As indicated above, the United Kingdom hosts people from all kinds of origins and countries. This is not only due to its colonial history but also the attractive future prospects for job seeking immigrants that want to start a new life within the British multicultural environment. Besides leading to prosperity and cultural diversity, the inflow of immigrants of many different backgrounds leads to difficulties as well. After mass immigration flows of war refugees in the 1940s and 50s, strong immigration continued until 1973 with the recruitment of workers which were needed to meet the demand created through the economic boom. The UK increasingly recruited people from the Caribbean and India. Through the rising opposition towards immigrants and the economic recession, the door towards more labour immigration was shut during the 70s and 80s. Immigrants which were expected to leave had, however, created a new life in the new country and felt at home and therefore preferred to stay. After the breakdown of communism, a new flow of refugees and asylum seekers swept Western Europe from the mid-1980s to 2001. As a consequence, the government started to tighten its immigration policy (Stalker, 2002).

Regarding immigration and the respective policies, numerous similarities can be found between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Like Britain, also the Netherlands faced a huge wave of immigration after the Second World War. In the beginning, most migrants came from former Dutch colonies, while from the 1960s onwards, numerous guest workers started entering the country, too. These labour migrants mainly came from Mediterranean states such as Spain, Italy, Turkey and Morocco. Later on, further immigrants entered the country under special family reunification regulations (Vink, 2007). Using the definition of Multiculturalism

given in Chapter 3 of this book, one could certainly argue that the Netherlands emerged to be a multicultural state in that time. The table below illustrates the numbers of immigrants and emigrants in the Netherlands between 1950 and 2005.



Graphic from: Vink, M.P. (2008). *The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism*. Speech given at the University of Maastricht, January 24, 2009.

Nowadays, about 19% of the Dutch population has a migrational background. The biggest groups of immigrants originate from Indonesia and Germany (2.4% each), Turkey (2.2%), Surinam (2.0%) and Morocco (1.9%) (Statistics Netherlands, 2008). In the following sections, this paper will examine the approaches of the Dutch government, in comparison with the British policies, to integrate those immigrants into the society from the 1950s until today.

4.5.3 The Multiculturalistic Approach – from the 1950s to the 1990s

If one equates integration with assimilation, one can certainly say that from the 1950s until the 1980s, little effort was actually made by the Dutch government to integrate the arriving immigrants: while the people from former colonies were assumed to integrate easily into the society without any help, it was thought that the numerous guest workers should better not be integrated at all because they were supposed to return to their home countries. As already indicated above, the concept of Pillarisation was often used to describe the way the Netherlands handled their immigrants: It was assumed that immigrant groups simply incorporated into the pillarised structure of society by establishing their own pillar (Vink, 2007). As Doomernik (2005) stated, "[j]ust as previously Dutch education allowed for Roman Catholic, Protestant and neutral school types, and similar divisions in the media, hospitals, trade unions and employers, (…) it now offered Muslims and Hindus the same opportunities"

(quoted by Vink, 2008). Therefore, numerous Muslim and Hindu broadcasts, as well as religious primary schools - even though they came about mainly in the cities – were supported by public funding. Nevertheless, it can be argued that immigrants were never as fully incorporated into the pillar structure as the 'native Dutch' were (Vink, 2007). Even though the approach is certainly visible, the institutions of for example, the Muslim pillar, were never all-embracing.

In the 1980s, it became clear that immigration without any interference by the government did not function as well as once assumed. A new ethnic underclass had emerged, characterized by high criminality and unemployment rates, as well as also the educational level of immigrant children was far below average. Further, immigrants were widely discriminated against. Therefore, there was a shift from the former non-existing integration policy towards a minority policy, aiming at establishing legal equality as well as equal opportunities. Hence, especially the legal framework concerning discrimination was strengthened: For instance, Article 1 of the new Dutch constitution adopted in 1983 states that 'All persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in all circumstances'. Further, immigrants were encouraged to participate in Dutch local politics by the introduction of voting rights for non-national residents in local elections in 1985. Moreover, labour market programs were created, offering special training courses and educational programs, aiming at improving integration of immigrants into the labour market. Nevertheless, a strong focus remained on offering immigrants the possibility to develop their own cultural, religious and linguistic institutions, which underlines the focus on multiculturalism instead of assimilation (Vasta, 2007). In those days, the Netherlands were considered to be one of the most 'immigrant-friendly' countries in the world (Vink, 2007). However, in retrospect, the policy can be seen as a failure because immigrants were still hardly integrated into the labour market. Moreover, their educational level remained low and also housing segregation persisted (Vasta, 2007).

As mentioned above and explained in depth in the third chapter, also the United Kingdom started out with a very liberal attitude towards immigrants and tried to support them in keeping their own culture within the British society. Policies that aimed at reducing racism and helping immigrants were introduced. As it has been stated in the Chapter three, the UK is – theoretically – the fifth most successful in protecting immigrants from discrimination. However, the country faces the same problems as the Netherlands concerning implementing

the theoretical approach in practice. Regarding their success in this area, the UK was only placed 11th among the other EU states (British Council, 2007).

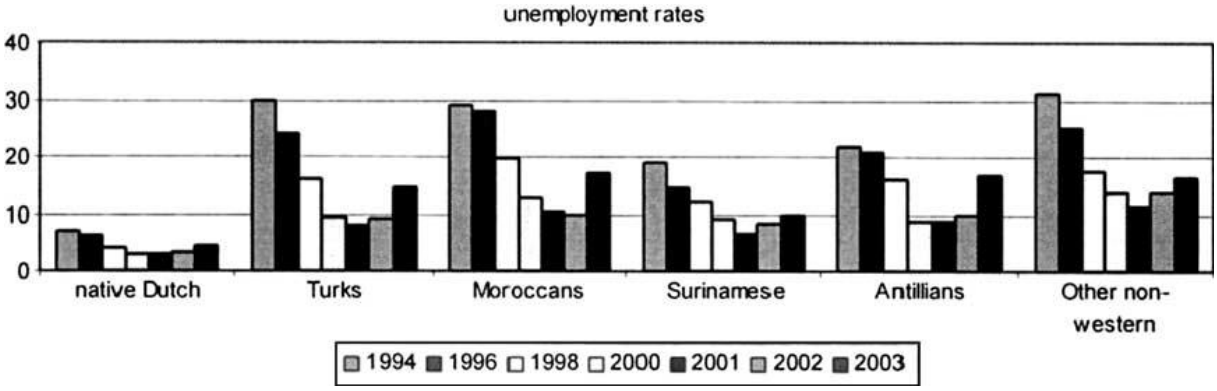
4.5.4 From Multiculturalism to Integration – from the 1990s to today

Both the UK and the Netherlands turned from quite liberal immigration policies of the post-WWII era to more restrictive policies later. However, in Britain this shift occurred considerably earlier: While the British government introduced a more restrictive immigration policy already in the 1960s, Dutch immigration policy remained liberal until the 1990s.

Britain moved away from its multiculturalist approach towards integration or even assimilation, as there seemed to be the "need to integrate diverse cultural and religious identities into a common set of values" (Keith, 2002). These new views on the integration of immigrants are most visible in important policy papers such as "Safe Haven: Integration and Diversity in Modern Britain" which is explained in detail in Chapter 3. Part of those policies is new English language requirements and new citizenship rules. Incoming migrants have to prove that they speak English sufficiently, know about English culture, customs and history. Moreover they have to take part in a citizenship ceremony in which they swear that they will respect UK law and even loyalty to the queen. These new criteria which were introduced in 2004, aim at creating a new bond between the immigrants and their new country and at making him or her feel integrated in British society (Archick, Gallis, Miko & Woehrel, 2005).

In the 1990s, the Dutch government started replacing the liberal policy of multiculturalism with a more restrictive 'mainstreaming' policy of integration and assimilation. The principle of dual citizenship, which had existed from 1992 to 1997, was abolished. Furthermore, a civic integration program for newcomers was introduced, strengthening Dutch language courses as well as other integrationist courses to give immigrants an understanding of Dutch society (Vasta, 2007). However, whether this policy was successful remains debatable. As the table below illustrates, unemployment rates among people of non-western origin still were two to three times higher than those of 'native Dutch' in the 1990s, and increased even more after 2001.

Unemployment rate by ethnic decent (1994-2003)



Graphic from: Vasta, E. (2007). *From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands*. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30(5), 713-740.

While this can partly be explained by the fact that many immigrants come to the Netherlands as unskilled workers, the remaining low educational level of immigrant's children calls for a different explanation. According to Vasta (2007), these inequalities can be explained to a large degree by discrimination, in the labour market as well as in schools. Further, the phenomenon of so-called 'black' and 'white' schools has emerged. A 'black' school compromises an above-average number of children from poor immigrant families, hence the educational level as well as the general standard of these schools is assumed to be lower. As a result, 'native Dutch' parents do not send their children to these schools anymore, in turn resulting in even further segregation (Sturm, J., Groenendijk, L., Kruithof, B. & Rens, J., 1998). Moreover, residential segregation especially in the largest Dutch cities, Amsterdam, Den Hague and Rotterdam, still remains. According to Musterd and Ostendorf (2007) the situation did not substantially changed between 1980 and 2004. Particularly immigrants from Turkey and Morocco, to a lesser degree also those from Surinam and the Antilleans, still rather live in their own neighbourhoods instead of integrating into the Dutch population.

All these factors can be seen as pointing to a rather failed integration policy. Exactly the same phenomenon of segregation or even 'ghettoisation', as Peach names them, can be observed in the United Kingdom. Immigration groups, of which the biggest ones are Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Carribean, concentrate on one part of the mostly large urban areas or cities such as London, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds and Bradford. Nevertheless, the fact that the level of segregation differs among the ethnicities in the UK is striking. While the Caribbean population is much more likely to interact with others, South Asian people contain

a high level of segregation. That is why Peach concludes "that South Asian groups were following a multicultural trajectory while the Caribbean population was following the melting pot route" (2007, p. 13), which is due to different family structures and cultural practices.

At the same time, Muslims are even the most disadvantaged minority group in the UK. They suffer from an unemployment rate at about 15% whereas the overall UK rate lies with only 5%. Still, even employed Muslims among the working population get a disproportionate salary. In schools a similar situation can be observed since the educational level of the majority of children from Muslim families is below average (Archick, Gallis, Miko & Woehrel, 2005). In 2006, Dutch Immigration policy became even stricter. In that time, shifts towards more restrictive policies occurred in all Western countries as a result of globalization and the changed security situation. However, according to Vasta (2007), the shift in the Netherlands was more extreme than elsewhere. Possible explanations for this might be the events of 9/11 and the altered perception of the Islam, especially as a result of the murders of Pim Fortuyn in 2002 and Theo Van Gogh in 2004.

In the United Kingdom, a very similar situation can be observed. The 2001 riots in northern industrial cities, 9/11 and the London bombings in July 2007, led to a change in integration policy. As explained in the previous chapter, the British government moved away from multiculturalism towards an approach focused on integration, as parallel lives or a community of communities seemed to risky. Now schemes such as 'community cohesion' or 'cohesive nation' were aimed at (Schönwälder, 2007). The changes introduced in The Netherlands in 2006, mainly focused on integrating immigrants in terms of language and knowledge about society. The Civic Integration Abroad Act introduced an exam, testing Dutch language skills and knowledge about the society, and has since to be completed by all people applying for a residence permit in the Netherlands. A second act legislated later the same year, even extended the 'civic integration duty' of completing the exam to immigrants already living in the Netherlands. In case immigrants refuse to participate, the government can impose sanctions such as cancelling welfare benefits. Hence, this clearly indicates a strong focus on assimilating immigrants into the Dutch society, even if so to say 'against their will'.

These actions, which were also taken in Great Britain, were based on the belief that 'parallel societies' rather hinder the integration process of immigrants and moreover even strengthens anti-democratic tendencies and fundamentalism. Consequently, assimilation

seemed to be a safer approach of dealing with immigration (Schönwälder, 2007). When the test is passed, however, the Netherlands still approve a large number of immigrants applying for a residence permit. Out of about 95,000 applications in 2007, 74% of the applications for provisional residence permits as well as 83% of those for regular residence permits were approved (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst, n.d.). In 2008, even the number of immigrants increased significantly in the Netherlands compared to the previous years, raising to a number of 140,000 immigrants newly entering the country. Therefore, the more restrictive immigration policy cannot be said to have led to less immigration. However, one has to admit that due to the Eastern enlargements in 2004 and 2007 also the number of labour migrants from within the European Union increased significantly. (Statistics Netherlands, 2008). Thus, this partly explains the increasing number of immigrants even though immigration policy had become more restrictive, since for these people immigration requirements do not apply.

Building upon Chapter 3 into account, it was now possible to find out that the British and Dutch history of immigration and integration is very similar. Due to the colonial history immigrants were welcomed to the country without much hindrance. Moreover, they were given the possibility to stay within their culture. This approach, however, changed through incidences such as terror attacks and riots stirred by racism. Both countries tightened their immigration policy and moved to an integrative approach.

4.5.5 Integration – Case Studies

This part will elabourate on the degree of integration in both countries. In the Netherlands, more precisely in Amsterdam, the inclusion of politicians and civil servants succeeded in the case of Ahmed Marcouch. He is the mayor in the district Slotervaart where many immigrants live and where future perspectives are desperately needed. He is seen as a modern Muslim and tries to build up a friendly relationship based on dialogue between the traditional Muslim community and the Dutch in his district. However, he is strongly criticized by Dutch right wing politicians but also by many immigrants, as being too moderate in either sense of the word. He questions, for example why the imam in Slotervaart does not speak Dutch and did not accept Marcouch's offer to pay him a Dutch course. Marcouch major aim for the coming years is to establish a firm education system that gives the youth in this district a chance to become a part of Dutch society, meaning the abolishment of the above mentioned separation of "black" and "white" schools. One of his major concerns is that many immigrants of the

first generation come from the countryside and now live in a big city. Naturally, the challenges in a city are different and the everyday life of their children looks completely different, as they know it from their country of origin (Beuselkamp, 2006).

In London there is no Marcouch. However, there is not such a strong right wing party like the *Partij voor de Vrijh* either. The British National Party exists indeed, but their electoral turnouts are rather weak. Their leader is Nick Griffin. He became known nation-wide making controversial statements such as "Britain is 'a multi-racial hellhole'" which makes him comparable to Geert Wilders, who will be subject to description in the following (TimesOnline, 2007). In the Netherlands, on the other hand, there has been a shift towards right wing populism with well-known actors like the assassinated Pim Fortuyn and Geert Wilders (Die Zeit, January 2008). In January 2008, Wilders published a short movie called *Fitna*. The term '*Fitna'* can be translated into English as 'dissension'. This is, according to Wilders himself, exactly what he wants to achieve (Spiegel, March 2008). His popularity in the last couple of years even led to the notion of "ver*wilder*ing" that Dutch liberals use to explain the populist approach that appeared to be so successful during the last elections (Die Zeit, January 2008, p. 2). Therefore, it might be dangerous to belittle Wilders to a mere 'accident' in Dutch politics, as some politicians try to claim. In 2007, he was "voted politician of the year ... by the Dutch political press, because of his 'well-timed one-liners'" (Kirby, 2008). His propaganda uses a scheme and it will probably not end after this film. In February 2009, for example, he tried to enter the UK to talk about his film in the House of Lords, but was refused. Opinions about this refusal are divided. On the one hand it is reasonable to prevent his movie from being seen in order not to offend the Muslim communities. However, on the other hand, he receives more attention by this and becomes object of public talk. The day of his refusal, over half of all British newspapers considered it to be so important to make a short article on the title page (Siddique, February 2009).

Considering the degree of integration in the UK and the Netherlands, another difference is the composition of the Parliament in each country. In Britain only two Muslims are in the House of Commons, which shows that they are underrepresented when regarding the actual number of Muslims living in Britain. In the Netherlands, however, the parliament is more diverse, as it does not only incorporate white, middle-class and educated men and women (Sagger, 1998). The composition of the parliaments is a measure to evaluate on the incorporation of migrants into the old established political system. For the UK, for sure, one

can state that the representation of migrants in the parliament does not mirror the situation at hand. Of course one cannot expect a perfectly representative picture of the population, particularly not with Britain's electoral system. However, it shows how deeply the immigrants have become involved in political reality (Sagger, 1998). In both countries, though, the differentiation between former colonial immigrants and Muslim immigrants has to be made.

Further related to the topic of social and cultural structure, the educational system plays an important role in the development of a country. The different opportunities for young people in the UK and the Netherlands are very much interlinked with this topic and will therefore be discussed more closely in the successive part of this book.

4.6 Education Systems – A Discussion

4.6.1 An Intergovernmentalist Approach?!

According to Saul, "[h]ighly sophisticated elites are the easiest and least original thing a society can produce. The most difficult and the most valuable is a well-educated populace" (in Lawrence, n.d.). This section compares inequalities attributed to education and to the level of income of pupils' parents exemplified by the Dutch and the British educational system. Thereby, we will argue in favor of Moravcsik's *liberal intergovermentalist theory*, claiming that the principle actors in the EU are the states and that, as Foucault puts it, on educational matters a "governmentality perspective" is still taken. In the Netherlands as well as in the UK educational policy still remains object to state sovereignty, as it does in all other MS. Therefore a pan-European, equal and competitive school system, as it has been partly achieved at the higher educational level due to the 'Bologna Process'[26] is not apparent in the near future. However, this incoherence puts some limitations on the comparability of the two systems.

4.6.2 School Systems in the UK and the Netherlands

[26] Bologna Process: " The Bologna Process is an intergovernmental initiative which aims to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010 and to promote the European system of higher education worldwide. It now has 46 participating countries and it is conducted outside the formal decision-making framework of the European Union. Decision-making within the Process rests on the consent of all the participating countries" (Europe Unit, n.d.).

In order to do so the two school systems are outlined shortly. Whereas attendence to nursery school is not obligatory but still widely used in Britain, infant school is obligatory for British pupils from the age of five to eight. In the Netherlands, compulsory school attendance also starts at the age of five. After infant school from age eight to twelve, British children attend to junior schools. Alternatively, first schools can be attended from years six o eleven. In contrast, the Dutch primary school is succeeded by the secondary school, which is divided in different types of schools. Secondary school has to be attended at least until the age of 16 (Erb, 2001). Additionally, in Britain different educational certificates, such as the General Certificate of Secondary Education and the A-level, can be achieved (Gieritz, 2006).

Even though the educational system of these two EU Member States seem at first glance not very different, big gaps can be highlighted through the results of different studies. Financially, the UK spends comparatively more money on the education system. However, according to Schreiber, in the Netherlands money is spent more on support programs for pupils that have difficulties catching up with the subject matter (Schreiber, 2008). Moreover, another disparity between the Dutch and the British school system is the concept of independent schools. As already described in Chapter 3, independent schools are in Britain called public schools, even though they can act mainly independent from governmental regulations. In general, these schools are educational institutes in which a fee has to be paid in order to be able to attend the classes. In contrast to public schools, state schools are financed by taxes and parents do not have to pay tuitions. Around 90 per cent of the students of Wales and England use the free education provided by the state (Barrow, n.d.). Yet, as known from Chapter 3, a survey by Sutton Trust depicts that "although two-thirds of pupils with three A grades at A-level went to state schools, only half of them were given places in the top 13 universities. Private school pupils with the same A-level grades as state school pupils are 25 times more likely to be given a university place" (Hutton, 2002). Hence, an asymmetry between private and public schools can be discovered. Contrasting, 70 per cent of Dutch pupils also attend independent schools. However, here the term 'independent' refers to the teaching philosophy, which can vary across the schools. Nonetheless, the facilities are financed by the Dutch government. Thus, certain educational standards concerning exams and curriculum are given while the philosophy is up to the schools. Therefore, pupils can choose between several methods of teaching such as bilingual and Montessori (Schreiber, 2008).

Taken together, it can be stated that in the Netherlands the choice lays rather between different styles of teaching, which are all equally financially supported and have equal standard requirements. Opposite to that, the choice in the UK lies between state schools and public schools, where the latter performs much better in educational tests as an examination by the OECD shows (Hutton, 2002). Here the choice also depends on the financial means of the families. Consequently, Dutch schools receive more money from the state the more students attend to this certain school. Therefore, in deciding on a certain school parents can influence the development of the educational system. This results in a competition for better educational performance in order to attract pupil. Additionally, the socio-economic background of pupils is more important in the UK than in the Netherlands, as the Dutch educational ministry spends significantly more money on extra tutoring, for instance for children of asylum seeking families, who are not fluent in the Dutch language. Thus, pupils with a difficult socio-economic background have a better standing in the Netherlands than in the UK (Scheiber, 2008). In general the comparison between the Dutch and the British educational system sketched out several differences but also commonalities. We cannot state that the one system is better than the other. There are many variables that need to be kept in mind when evaluating the systems. Firstly, the cultural differences, as for instance, for most middle-class Brits the idea to pay for good education is taken for granted (Gieritz, 2006). Maybe this thought makes their system more understandable. Furthermore, due to the high costs of public schools in the UK, the British scholarship system is bigger than in most of the EU Member States.

Coming back to Foucault's govermentality perspective mentioned above, some supranational pan-European educational developments can be depicted. One of the most well-known is the Bologna Agreement signed in 1999. It aims at implementing new degrees – Bachelor and Master – which are credited according to the homogeneous grading scale ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). This is supposed to promote mobility and make universities more comparative and thus also competitive (Europaeum, 2005). Yet, it needs to be kept in mind that the Bologna Agreement is part of European soft law and thus not legally binding. Due to the open-method of coordination under which it is established, educational policy is still in the control of the nation states. Nonetheless, coming back to the two countries, it has to be mentioned that both successfully participate in the agreement and that the UK can even be seen as a pioneer within it, because of its two-cycle system, existing long

before Bologna (Europe Unit, n.d.). However, when looking at the educational development in recent years it is questionable whether the huge differences between the Netherlands and the UK will diminish due to a supranational EU-wide educational system. Yet, Dale (2005) argues that "education policy can no longer be seen as the exclusive preserve of individual nation-states" (p. 133). As depicted above, even though there are huge differences between the educational system due to traditions and national politics, an international convergence can be discovered at some point. However, this does not automatically mean that the power of the nation states are in decline. They are still the principle actors. The EU as a supranational actor has only a limited influence on educational standards and agreements, thus Moravcsik's *liberal intergovermentalist theory* can be applied to education policies. Furthermore, the level of education also plays a relevant role, because convergence can be seen in higher education due to Bologna, while it is not existent in primary and secondary education. Thus, diminishing power of nation-states cannot be seen at all.

4.7 Euroscepticism throughout the European Member States

4.7.1 The Origins of Euroscepticism

As a starting point the key term "Euroscepticism" shall be defined. The intention thereby is to place the following discussion about Euroscepticism within a solid framework and appropriate context – facilitating the formation of a balanced conclusion. This section intends to highlight the similarities and differences between Dutch and British Euroscepticism. In order to do so successfully the history of Euroscepticism shall be analyzed as well as its pattern of dispersion and current status. Finally a case study analyzing the Dutch referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe shall provide an example of Euroscepticism today and how it spread.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a "Euro-sceptic" as "a person who is not enthusiastic about increasing the power of the European Union" (OED Online, 2000). Analyzing the term "Euroscepticism" from a historical point of view quickly reveals that it has its roots in English "exceptionalism" which stands for "the belief by some that their nation or other group is better than others" (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2008). English exceptionalism represented a critical stand towards the Continental project of political and

economic integration, while Euroscepticism, as it is today, can be associated with an increasingly broad questioning of institutions linked to the European Union and their policies. While the earliest reference to the term Euroscepticism dates back to June 1986, today one finds that the term and the idea of Euroscepticism has spread across the entire continent of Europe. Thus, Euroscepticism has gone from being a distinctively English phenomenon to being present in many more countries including France and the Netherlands (Harmsen & Spiering, 2005).

4.7.2 Euroscepticism in the UK…

Nowadays, UK's political landscape cannot be imagined without Euroscepticism anymore, which grew to become a very important element of UK politics – especially after the foundation of the European Economic Community. For the UK, joining the European Union has not diminished its Euroscepticism in any way; though it might have changed its nature to some extent, as shall be explored later. Is it is often rightfully argued that a major source of Euroscepticism in the UK are its newspapers and magazines. Tabloids known for their Eurosceptic publications are *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail*. In this context it should not be ignored that on a global scale Britain has one of the most influential media. According to the 'Centre for European Reform', out of the 30 million people who read newspapers on a daily basis in the UK, "three-quarters read papers that are determined to make people dislike the EU" (Centre for European Reform, 2008).

The United Kingdom's Euroscepticism, as mentioned before, did not contain itself to the UK alone but also spread across Europe – especially to France and the Netherlands. One indicator confirming this development is the outcome of the referendum on the 'Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe' of 2005. Using this referendum as a case study allows comparing the UK's Euroscepticism to Dutch Euroscepticism, while drawing lines determining similarities and establishing a conclusion. To get straight to the topic: In 2005 a referendum was to be held on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. Three days after the French declined the Treaty, also the Dutch referendum displayed a clear refusal of the Treaty establishing a European Constitution. In consequence, the referendum in the United Kingdom was postponed indefinitely. Hence, the rejection of the constitution by the French and Dutch already failed the constitution so the British did not even have to hold a referendum (Beunderman, 2005). Analysts however state that holding a referendum in Britain

would most likely also have resulted in the British "no". Public opinion polls, such as from ICM, showed what the people would have voted if the referendum was held. The result is did not leave space for doubt: 70% of the people asked were against a constitution while only 30% agreed to it (ICM, 2007).

4.7.3 …and in the Netherlands

While the Netherlands has its share of Eurosceptic newspapers, there were and are also numerous Eurosceptic parties, whose 'No campaigns' of 2005 swayed voters towards the "nee". Examples of such parties include the List Pim Fortuyn, the Group Wilders and the Socialist Party (University of Groningen, 2008). In fact, similar to France, the no camp is largely backed by Socialists, who are seeking "to turn the referendum into a vote against EU policies including the sensitive issue of immigration and Turkish EU entry". At the same time the referendum has been turned into "a vote of confidence on the troubled centre right coalition government" (Johnson, 2005). Thus, instead of the referendum really being about reforming the EU and a constitution, it was partially turned into a tool of "revenge" to show the government that the population does not back them (Johnson, 2005).

In general, we can argue that the level of education and travel frequency contributes towards appreciating the advantages the European Union brings with it. Therefore it was not wrong for Charles Grant, director of the Centre for European Reform, to claim that "[i]n most European countries, those who dislike the EU tend to be the poor and the less educated, who fear for their future and travel little." He continues by stating that "The politicians who speak for such people tend to come from the far left or far right" (Centre for European Reform, 2008). Having personally engaged in research in this field (Quantitative Data Analysis 2C) I can confirm that there appears to be a positive relationship between the acceptance of the European Union as a whole and the degree of education. This conclusion has also been confirmed by evidence provided in the ETC Annual Report of 2007 (European Travel Commission, 2007). Relating this back to the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, this data can be used to explain their reaction towards the European constitution and why e.g. the Dutch and French turned down the constitution as well as why the British would have probably refused it.

In the case of the United Kingdom there is the “myth” of national sovereignty, which is mentioned by Buller in his book “Postwar British Politics in Perspective”. He highlights that the roots of Euroscepticism may be dated back to Britain’s troubled coupling with the EEC where Britain fiercely opposed the “more consensual” style of decision making dominant on the European level. However, on the other hand the political parties within Britain were largely divided over the topics of the EEC, which put the ordinary British in a crisis of having fallen between two stools (Buller, 1999). In the Netherlands, as it is the case in the UK, Euroscepticism is largely based on false information and a lack of education. Irrational or non-related fears such as the accession of Turkey and increased immigration (from Eastern Europe) fueled the “nee”. However, not only the ordinary voters are to blame, but politicians behind the “yes campaign”; many voters were put off as they perceived the pro-constitution campaign to be forceful and ruthless. One of the grieve mistakes that damaged the image of the Treaty permanently was the television broadcast, published by the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy. The broadcast stated, that saying 'No' to the Constitutional Treaty was associated with 9/11, the Holocaust and other crimes and terrorist attacks. The television broadcast was withdrawn later (Beunderman, 2005).

Thus, based on statistical evidence and research, one may arrive at the conclusion that the Euroscepticism is often only based on false information by tabloids and a general lack of education. Hence, at this point one may ask whether the EU has become a victim of its own success. It sure seems that the EU’s progressive expanding policy competence has, correspondingly, “multiplied the potential source of friction which may give rise to forms of Euroscepticism” (Harmsen & Spiering, 2005). Thus Euroscepticism has made people in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom very critical of the European Union. Moreover, while the EU is a patchwork of different countries who joined a union of economic and arguably cultural and social cooperation, the member states are subdivided into regions, which play an important role when analysing economy, development and unemployment. While within the EU a clear division between North and South, as well as East and West can be made in all of these terms, the respective countries experience similar tendencies. The following section will further elabourate on the differences between Dutch and British regions, using the unemployment indicator.

4.8 Regions in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands

Some comparisons between British and Dutch regions are easily made. For example London, the centre of the finance and service sector, is for the UK what the Randstad conurbation is for the Netherlands. Another example is the mining industry in the West of the UK (Wales) like the mining industry in the South of the Netherlands (Limburg) and the socioeconomic consequences for these regions when it disappeared. Upon constructing this comparison of regions, several statistical indicators were used to point out regional differences or disparities. These statistics are based on and gathered by the Standard Economic Regions (SERs) for the UK and the Centraal Plan Bureau (CPB) for the Netherlands. In both studies, unemployment rates are viewed as solid indicators for overall welfare, linked to education, health and housing. Furthermore, the GDP per capita and participation in the labour force will be looked at in order to determine regional disparities.

The first conclusion that can be drawn from the statistics is that in 2005 the regional variations in unemployment rates in the UK were at least twice as high in comparison with the Netherlands. This leads to the assumption that regional disparities in the UK are more of a common problem than in the Netherlands. Since World War II there has been a distinct economic division in the United Kingdom between the North and the South. The uneven economic development, with the South and South-East being relatively prosperous in contrast to the regions in the North and West of the UK. Regional boundaries in the UK have a long political, cultural and economic history. In contrast to the Netherlands the UK has autonomous regions such as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Regional disparities in the UK during the 1950s standing out in terms of unemployment rates, were Scotland, the Northern region and Wales which unemployment rates were several times the national average. Throughout the 1950s the unemployment rates on the national level are considered low, and the unemployment rates had no further dramatic changes, except for Northern Ireland where unemployment rates were high compared to the national level and the other regions. (Floud, 2004)

From the late 1950s however unemployment rates also began to increase on a national level leading to a climax in the 1970s. With the unemployment rates rising on the national level, regional disparities began to increase and distinct regional unemployment emerged. A major cause for the sharp increase in unemployment rates was the ‘deindustrialization’, the

decline of the British manufacturing industries. Although this occurred in all the industrialized countries, the UK took more severe blows than others. Another trend that added to the higher unemployment rates was 'de-urbanization', meaning the movement of economic activity away from the cities into the smaller towns, suburbs and rural areas. A good example on how this could affect some regions more than others is the North, in the 1970s it saw a sharp decline in employment performance. The UK changed its pattern of specialization on the world market. The City of London began to specialize as worldwide financial centre and the North Sea oil industry began to expand. These are examples of regional non-manufacturing industries that had a negative impact on the regional manufacturing industries of the North. From the 1980s onwards to the 1990s the trend of higher regional disparities between the North and the South set on. In the 1990s however the recession reversed this trend, the South suffered more under the recession because of the dominant service sector. Strangely enough earlier recessions had increased the gap of regional disparities between the North and the South this recession in the early 1990s had the opposite effect (Floud, 2004. p.333-337).

Another important factor in determining regional disparities is the GDP per capita; the south-east from 1951 to 1994 had the highest GDP per capita while the North, Wales and Northern Ireland had the lowest. A region that from the early 1970s saw a decline in the GDP per capita were the West-Midlands, a region that saw the collapse of its motor vehicles manufacturing sector. Yorkshire & Humberside and the north-west like the West-Midlands saw a decline in the GDP per capita due to the collapse of their manufacturing industries. Scotland saw an increase in their GDP because of the upcoming oil industry, this increase was very much concentrated in Scotland and bordering regions could profit from Scotish oil industry (Floud, 2004. p.337-339).

In the Netherlands from 1975 until 2002, the overall trend was that there were little regional disparities. The regional disparities in terms of the unemployment rates did not deviate more than 2 percent from the national average. From the 1970s to the early 1980s the unemployment in the South dropped from one of the highest to one of the lowest in the Netherlands. During the mid-seventies the unemployment rate on a national level ranges from 2 to 4 percent. It is the highest in the south and the lowest in the west. When the economy cooled down during the eighties, the unemployment rose in all regions at the same pace. The peak of the unemployment rate was in 1983 when the rates ranged from eight to eleven percent, at this point the North took the highest rate over from the South. The South slightly

caught up with the lower unemployment rates from the west and the east, while the North remained two percent above the national level. Even during the economic rise during the 1990s, unemployment rates in the South, East and West all remained virtually equal, the North on the other hand remained even until 2003 two percent higher. Overall the unemployment rates were persistently low in the West and high in the north. Striking is that in the North the unemployment rate for higher educated people is two percent above the national level. This can be explained by the large student population that the northern city of Groningen has. Students tend to live relatively cheap while they study and move to different regions after their graduation when they found a job. Participation in the labour force does deviate much more at a regional level. This is especially the case for the youth and the women. Not participating occurs more when there are no favorable perspectives for the labour markets (Vermeulen, 2006 p.19-26).

4.9 Conclusion

Having compared the two countries some striking similarities and disparities have been found. The political systems are well comparable due to the fact that they are both constitutional monarchies with a queen as the head of state. Nonetheless, following Lijphart's two-dimensional model of democracy, the UK can be clearly recognized as the role model of a majoritarian democracy, whereas the Netherlands fit the consensus model. This is mainly due to the different electoral systems, the differing attribution of power to the prime minister as well as the shift of competences in the two parliamentary chambers. Furthermore, the main differences between the monarchical systems is not based on the power held by the monarch, which is basically congruent, but based on the financial constraints caused by the monarchy as well as the public perception. Resulting, the Dutch monarchy – very much down to earth and less expensive than the British counterpart – is often demeaningly called a "bicycling monarchy". However, in Britain many call for reform in favor of the Dutch system. Furthermore, looking at the colonial history, the British Empire was without a doubt much bigger and politically more influential, actually setting the tone in most political issues. The Dutch colonial empire on the other hand put its emphasis on only one colony, Dutch-India. Instead of taking political influence, it was much more engaged in trade and leading in this domain over the 17th century.

One result of both colonial histories surely is the development of the societal structures and the handling of immigration. The two countries take a very diverging approach on society. The British formerly and still – manifested in the school system which is very much based on financial means and thus does not leave a lot of space for social mobility – owe a vertical , hierarchical structure. This is admittedly becoming more flexible, which is illustrated by the reforms of the House of Lords and the Honours System or by the big amount of scholarships given by schools. Nonetheless, especially for the new coming immigrants it remains rather difficult to move upwards in society. On the other hand also the Dutch struggle with the challenges posed by colonial and new immigration. However, the approach taken, Pillarisation, divided society strictly in a horizontal manner. Thus in the respective pillar it was possible to freely move up- and downwards, but horizontal movements were basically impossible. Moreover, in the Netherlands, this was also manifested in the school system due to the equal financial support which the state gave to all independent schools, disregarding their religious or political profile. Strikingly, when looking at the issue of immigration itself, both states have changed their attitude of multiculturalism towards integrating immigrants into society due to the belief that the existence of parallel societies can be dangerous to the public. Lastly, Euroscepticism was found to be largely dependent on the urge to keep state sovereignty. In the UK this feeling dominated from the beginnings of involvement with the EU and has been widely strengthened through negative press on the EU. In the Netherlands, even though one of the founding countries, developments of the last few years have been looked upon resentingly culminating in the negative referendum on the Treaty establishing a European Constitution. This has especially been supported by the Eurosceptic parties developing over last few years.

Having recapitulated the main findings, this chapter offers an overview of the characteristics that make the UK particular and unique in comparison with the other European MS.

CHAPTER 5

The United Kingdom and the European Union

What explains their special relationship?

5.1 Introduction

"We in Britain are Europeans"…

This quote by Harold Macmillan who was the first British Prime Minister to apply for accession to the EC (European Community), does not really convince at first sight (Wall, 2008). There is no doubt that Britain is and since its accession always has been an important member of the EU (European Union). Nevertheless, their relationship is still rather difficult. Britain was not a founding member of the Community, nor did it join shortly afterwards. Only in 1973, after having struggled with the negative attitude by France, Britain could join the community. Although the country is a member since a long time now, the special stance it always had within Europe still exists today within the EU. That is why, the UK (United Kingdom) is considered to be rather euro-sceptic today.

Finding out why the UK is so reluctant to participate in the EU is not only the overall question in this book, but finds its focus in this chapter. After having looked closely at Britain itself, in economic, political as well as cultural terms, we can now turn towards the EU and examine relationship of the two.

In order to find an answer to that question, we have to elaborate on Britain itself, namely on its cultural and historical background as well as its relationship with continental Europe in order to find out about its identity, before turning to the EU. This background will be followed by a part which deals with the UK as a member of the EU. In this way, Britain's position within and outside the Union will be evaluated whereby the focus will lie on the relationship to the US (United States). Additionally, it will be interesting to see the actual view of the EU on the UK, since seeing this relationship from the other perspective needs observation as well. This chapter ends with a case study on the UK and its reluctance towards the Euro, which is a good example of showing the special position the UK, holds within the community.

5.2 Background

5.2.1 Cultural Background

This chapter shall discuss British identity and how it distinguishes Britain from the rest of Europe. Factors shaping the general attitude towards continental Europe include social, geographical and cultural as well as psychological elements. Certainly economic factors play a major role in this context, which is why a separate subchapter shall be dedicated to the economic factors alone. Last but not least the influence of the media upon British culture and social life shall be analyzed. After discussing the British identity issue from a historical perspective, this subchapter shall mainly take upon British identity vis-à-vis the EU.

In this context English exceptionalism compromises an essential part of the historical part of this discussion. British exceptionalism can, historically, be seen as one of sources of Brits not entirely identifying themselves with continental Europe. Exceptionalism itself was defined as "the belief by some that their nation or other group is better than others" (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2008). It should be noted that from the very beginning, as early as 1853, English exceptionalism fiercely opposed any attempt of political and economic integration (Harmsen & Spiering, 2005). English exceptionalism was a great contributor towards English nationalism, which in turn also influenced Britain's stance towards continental Europe (Schmidt, 1956). However, today Exceptionalism is often defined differently, in a less negative manner, while also the context it is used in changed. Thus today Exceptionalism refers to the fact that a country posses over a unique tradition, language, political culture or public sphere (Schmidt, 1956). For example Melton argues that English political culture is unique in fundamental ways due to its "relatively free press, party structure, and parliamentary system" (Melton, 2001, p. 19). As shall be explained later in this chapter, English exceptionalism vis-à-vis mainland Europe is said to have evolved into what is known today as British Euroscepticism. There are numerous accounts on this topic, as well as diverse scholarly opinions which range from seeing exceptionalism and Euroscepticism as two isolated, non-related and distinct phenomena. On the other hand there are scholars claiming that Exceptionalism was a predecessor of Euroscepticism, laying the founding basis for Euroscepticism. For the sake of clarity and consistency in this paper the latter scholarly view on Exceptionalism and Euroscepticism shall be tackled.

As mentioned earlier, factors shaping the general attitude towards continental Europe

include social, geographical and cultural as well as psychological elements. With regards to geography and psychology, it should not be forgotten that the UK is located on two islands. Hence, the UK is physically isolated from mainland Europe and its people. Therefore, one may argue that physical distance from mainland Europe and the EU has not exactly helped the UK identify itself with the EU. As a matter of fact Brussels, which is known to be the cockpit of the EU, is often viewed by the British people as a physically remote place from which unreasonable strict orders emerge – known for its lack of transparency and accountability (Melton, 2001). Furthermore, oftentimes the EU is seen by the British as a union dominated by the French and the Germans. An additional factor is the troublesome coupling process the EU and the UK underwent in the 1960s, where the UK was rejected after applying for membership for what is known today as the EU. In 1967 the French president De Gaulle said "non" for the second time to British membership in the EEC. De Gaulle justified his action by many arguments highlighting that the UK is and will never be compatible with the values the EEC represented at that time (BBC UK, 1967). With the creation of the EU English exceptionalism evolved into what is known today as Euroscepticism. This is another factor greatly influencing the British attitude towards continental Europe, and especially the EU today. Euroscepticism has been discussed in a rather detailed manner in the previous chapter; however it also finds its importance in this subchapter. Euroscepticism, as it is today, can be associated with an increasingly broad questioning of institutions linked to the EU and their policies. While the earliest reference to the term Euroscepticism dates back to June 1986 (where it was first mentioned in an article in The Times), today one finds that the term and the idea of Euroscepticism has spread across the entire continent of Europe (Harmsen & Spiering, 2005). Euroscepticism is also closely linked to the British "myth" of national sovereignty, which is mentioned by Buller in his book "Postwar British Politics in Perspective". It explains why Brits are naturally opposed to integration, while fearing the loss of national sovereignty (Buller, 1999). While an increasing number of competences are transferred to a European level, specifically Brussels, the fear of loss of control is growing in Britain. For example the fishing industry in England is now controlled, assessed and limited by the EU (Telegraph UK, 2009). Many Brits see this as an attack on their sovereignty and ability to act independently. As a result they seem to distance themselves from the integration process, while only being halfheartedly part of the European Union (Harmsen & Spiering, 2005). The feeling of being different from continental Europe is further strengthended by important British traditions rooted in history, such as the Common Law System or the Anglican Church which distanced

itself from the Catholic Church on mainland Europe. Moreover, it was and still is the highly valued Monarchy which finds great support in the public and stands for British uniqueness and importance (Jones, 2004).

This entire movement is supported by tabloids such as The Sun, The Telegraph and The Daily Mail, known for their Eurosceptic publications. As mentioned before, it should not be ignored that on a global scale Britain has one of the most influential media. According to the 'Centre for European Reform', out of the 30 million people who read newspapers on a daily basis in the UK, "three-quarters read papers that are determined to make people dislike the EU" (Centre for European Reform, 2008). One example is the article published by The Telegraph on November 14th 2007, with the title of "Why aren't we shocked by a corrupt EU?". The article concludes the following: "People have given up on any hope of reform: they know that Brussels will never change and, in truth, they no longer much care. Sooner or later, almost matter-of-factly, they will initiate divorce proceedings" (Hannan, 2007). Thus the media play an important role fuelling the alleged "otherness" of the UK vis-à-vis the EU; while often portraying the EU as a fundamentally corrupt organization. Thus in conclusion in can be safely argued that there are certain factors which set the UK apart from mainland Europe and thus the EU. Such factors include economic, geographic, cultural as well as psychological and social elements. In this context Euroscepticism and English Exceptionalism play an important role, while explaining those phenomena from a historical and contemporary perspective. The economic factors shall be examined in a separate, dedicated, chapter.

5.2.2 Historical Background: UK Position towards Europe and later to the EU

Having elaborated on important factors of British identity, it now needs to be focused on the historical background of GB's attitude towards Europe. Although some may argue that the term 'Europe' was not frequently used in the middle ages, we can still claim that there were ideas about a united entity composed of different political units. However, what could have united the kingdoms and regions of medieval Europe? Basically, unity was based on two pillars. First of all, the idea of a Christian community and secondly, the common inheritance of the Roman Empire (Mikkeli, 1998).

GB (Great Britain) entered the European scene relatively late because it was busy with domestic issues, such as rivalries between royal families, overpopulation and the integration of Ireland and Scotland into one union. However, the isolation of Britain from continental

Europe was first of all due to geographical reasons. Later, it was its clear opposition towards the pope and the Catholic Church that would make relations with continental Europe ambivalent (Anglican, 2009).

The religiously motivated wars of the 18th century brought the GB in the events of Europe, and provided the first impulses to find a balance of power between the newly emerged European nation states which were meant to be the foundation of a lasting peace. Nevertheless, the balance of power was challenged by the French Revolution and later on by the wars of conquest of Napoleon Bonaparte which, however, did not reach British soil. Therefore, after the Napoleonic wars, the GB alongside with Russia emerged as one of the great powers in the international system of the 19th century (Rapport, 2005).

The late 19th century and the early 20th century were marked by a power vacuum in Europe, since all attention was on the attainment of new territory far away from Europe. The era of imperialism saw the GB as the big winner, in both geographical and economic terms. However, the drive for new territory and a larger market was made at the expense of a stable international system and was often accompanied by national aspirations (Mikkeli, 1998).

If we think about British isolation in European matters, it is appropriate to look first of all at the ties of British history with 'Europe'. Obviously, early encounters with continental Europe have marked the British perception. Accordingly, in the following we will trace back the British position regarding the idea of Europe from the Middle Ages until the early 20th century.

Early Conflicts and Balance of Power

If Europe was made visible through the common belief in Christianity and loyalty to the Catholic Church, then England was not part of Europe in 1215 when King John signed the Magna Charta which indicated the independence of the English Church from Rome:

> First, that we have granted to God, and by this present charter have confirmed for us and our heirs in perpetuity, that the English Church shall be free, and shall have its rights undiminished, and its liberties unimpaired (Anglican, 2009).

This declaration was not only against the Catholic Church as an institution, but it also created a conflict between church and state administration in an age in which secular ideas were far from being the rule visible. Notably is also that the decades following the Restoration did not weaken Anglicanism. Further, all the protestant churches emerging in the 17th shared two fundamental ideas. First, they all believed in the authority of the Bible to be superior to the authority of tradition and in their own freedom to practice their faith. Second, they were all united in the fear of Roman Catholicism (O'Gorman, 1997). Thus, the Holy Roman Empire as it was established in continental Europe only provoked fears of popery in Britain.

The Thirty Years War, which broke out in 1618 and lasted until 1648, helped Britain in assert its position in an international system of states. Scholars disagree whether the war was a religious war or one shaped by political factors (Wilson, 2008). However, what counts for our purposes more than the cause is the outcome. Political scientists refer to it as the "New Order" or "International System" (Schroeder, 2004). After the Thirty Years War, the political entities in Europe met to sign the Treaty of Westphalia which produced sovereign states. Moreover, the objective of the Treaty of Westphalia was a new order based on the consensus to create a balance of power. This consensus was reached because of an

> ...initial widespread recognition that the old system has hopelessly broken down and must be replaced with something new, and ends, if it comes to fruition, with a working agreement on a new order with different rules, norms and incentives (Schroeder, 2004, p.249).

Maybe it was this agreement that created the idea of a united Europe, not only in continental Europe but also in Britain. Whereas calls for a unified Europe by Frenchmen such as l'Abbe de Saint Pierre, a philisoph, who highly favoured a European federation, in 1693 William Penn published his " Essay toward the Present and Future peace of Europe" in which he stated the need to create a unified Europe. He was followed by John Bellers with his "Some Reasons for a European State", published in 1710 (Mikkeli, 1998). However, it would be inappropriate to draw from the writings of dedicated Quakers (who were pacifists) that all Britons were of the same opinion. Nevertheless, it demonstrates a positive view regarding Europe.

This view also found expression at the outbreak of the French Revolution. In "Reflections on the Revolution in France, and Thoughts on French Affairs", Edmund Burke made the famous quotation

> ...no citizen of Europe could be altogether an exile in any part of it...When a man travelled or resided for health, pleasure, business or necessity, away from his country, he never felt himself quite abroad (quoted in Mikkeli, 1998).

The fact that this citation was written by an Englishmen might show that there was a pro-European attitude among the British people. However, what GB did not want was a united Europe dictated by Napoleon. During the Napoleonic wars it became soon clear that 'the Continental System' was a European blockade of British commerce as declared by Napoleon in 1806 (Rapport, 2005). Nevertheless, British warfare economy was in a better situation than that of France, especially due to a good fleet. Britain had a crucial role during the Napoleonic wars in that it supported continental allies in the fight against Napoleon (Rapport, 2005).

Despite the collaboration with European powers in the fight against France, the old order had to be restored, a new balance of power had to be found. This was the issue of the Vienna settlement starting in 1814 and known as the "Congress of Vienna". However, the strong position of Britain and of Russia contradicts the theory of a balance of power which envisages countries rely primarily on their own resources for the defense of their interests. For as Schroeder observed,

> "Britain and Russia where so powerful and invulnerable that even a alliance of the three other powers (France, Austria, Prussia) against them would not seriously threaten the basic serurity of either, while such a alliance would likewise not give France, Austria, and Prussia security comparable to that which Britain or Russia enjoyed on their own" (2004, p.40).

Nevertheless, disregarding the power of Britain, also the 19th century produced proponents of a united Europe in Britain. This time, however, it was not an alliance or federation of states that should guarantee peace in Europe, but an international court of justice as suggested by Jeremy Benthan in his "Plan for an Universal and Perpetual Peace", published in 1839 (Mikkeli, 1998).

Imperialism and Isolation

In the late 19th century Britain vanished from the European scene and was more concerned with its Empire while the continental states where busy with the containment of the great power Russia. The British Empire was soon the pride of the British people, demonstrating national greatness. However, other states would soon make similar claims to a grandeur related to the extent of their imperial dominions. Imperialism was accompanied by nationalism fed by social Darwinist ideas (Rapport, 2005).

In the period of imperialism not only Britain but all great powers were busy defending their overseas territories, rather than being interested in a European state. Therefore, it is surprising that it was an Englishman, J.A. Hobson, who saw Britain as the biggest obstacle to a European federation because it "was becoming an economic parasite and a power bewitched by its might" (Mikkeli, 1998, p.87).

This section aimed to show that the position of the UK towards a united Europe has always been contradictory. While British politics changed from participation in European matters to isolation and *vice versa*, we saw that public opinion was relatively pro-Europe from the middle ages until the early 20th century. This is important to keep in mind since the recent debate about UK's euroscepticism seems to create the picture of a UK which never had a relation to Europe nor to the ideas of a EU.

The UK and the EU after 1945

The history between the EU and the UK can be considered as a difficult one. The British scepticism is better understandable when one takes a closer look at how the UK and the EU have approached each other. It is even better understood if we look at the British accession and how France under de Gaulle vetoed two times against British membership.

In May 1948, the Congress of Europe was organised in The Hague in The Netherlands. This Congress was the first move towards a European unity and was chaired by Winston Churchil. The Congress agreed upon the transformation of the International Committee of the Movement for European Unity into an umbrella organisation called the European Movement. This umbrella organisation was launched in Brussels October 1948 under the joint presidency of Churchill, Leon Blum (French Socialist), Alcide de Gasperi (Italian Christian Democrat) and Paul Henri Spaak (Belgian Socialist). The general agreement was that an institution should be established to study European integration further. Although

Churchill was in favour of European unity, the official British stance was rather negative. Britain's foreign policy was twofold: the relation with the US and the relation with the Empire and Commonwealth. The British government did agree on the establishment of a Consultative Assembly. This Assembly was virtually powerless and answerable to an intergovernmental body, the Committee of Ministers. The Committee of Ministers was the institutional foundation for the Council of Europe (Dinan, 2004).

From November 1947 to December 1948 Britain took part in negotiations over to establish a European customs union. Early on in the negotiations it became clear that British concerns about sovereignty ensured that Britain would not participate in such an union. Furthermore, the British obstructed any development of the Organisation Economic for European Co-operation into a solid European institution (Dinan, 2004).

The relationship between the UK and the EC can only be described as stormy. The British accession in combination with agriculture and contending designs for the future of the EC would produce the first crisis between the member states. In August 1961 Britain applied for the membership of the EC, it needed access to the western European markets and the only way to reach this was to join the EC. The British Commonwealth or the European Free Trade Association were not sufficient enough as markets for the British manufacturing industries. To counter the British fear of the loss of their sovereignty, Macmillan called the accession as a strictly economic affair, a necessary evil so to speak. Only Britain found out soon that it had to play on a political level as well. Like Britain, the US wanted to establish a strong transatlantic relationship, but Britain also opposed like de Gaulle a fusion of Europe based on supranationalism. To the US Britain was essential to strengthen the transatlantic relationship, and they therefore strongly supported Britain when they applied for the EC. France, however, saw this support as an Anglo-Saxon conspiracy (Dinan, 2004). The reasons for the UK to join were a mixture of political and economic, the 'special relationship' with the US was no longer on equal terms because the UK was no longer a world power. The support the UK could seek with its Commonwealth was after WOII also minimal, the Commonwealth was a very loose organization and by far not capable to ensure the UK much international political support. Economically it was clear that the EC in economic terms was a success and outperforming the UK. Moreover the pattern of trade of the UK was turning from the Commonwealth to the EC (Nugent, 2006 p. 25-27).

De Gaulle subsequently made two proposals between 1952 and 1962 to promote a European political union. These proposals were linked by the Gaulle to NATO reforms. The delegations negotiating on these proposals were suspicious and felt that de Gaulle wanted to construct a German-French hegemony. Eventually the Dutch refused to negotiate any further if de Gaulle would not let Britain participate, De Gaulle refused and the negotiations for his 'Fouchet Plan' (named after the French ambassador Christian Fouchet who chaired the committee that De Gaulle had installed to design his plans) failed. The question of British accession remained very critical, Germany wanted to find a balance between France and the US who was strongly in favour of British accession. In December 1962 Macmillan and Kennedy struck a deal on supplying nuclear missiles to Britain. Again this was a sign for De Gaulle that with British accession, the US would spread their influence over the European continent. On the other hand the British could not agree fully with the Treaty of Rome like the other members did when they signed it, because of its supranational character. Furthermore the British felt committed to the Commonwealth and their agricultural system that was not compatible with the CAP. De Gaulle wanted more commitment, to ensure the loyalty of Britain to Europe and not the US. On the Council meeting of January 1963 De Gaulle formally vetoed the British accession. Britain in turn took De Gaulle's veto as a national offence (Dinan, 2004).

Since the veto of De Gaulle worsened the economic situation of Britain, so the Labour government under Prime Minster Wilson decided that a second application to become a member of the EC was needed. In May 1967 he received full parliamentary support to apply a second time. Although De Gaulle stood less sceptical towards Wilson than he did towards Macmillan, four days after the application of Britain at a press conference De Gaulle outlined the dangers for the EC if Britain were admitted. De Gaulle especially spoke of the vulnerable position of the pound sterling, which would become a European problem if Britain was admitted. The British media immediately saw this as the second veto of de Gaulle and dubbed it the 'velvet veto'. De Gaulle pretended not to have aimed at blocking the British application, he only wanted to let Britain accept the CAP and to distance itself from the US, hoping to sooth British public opinion. Wilson replied that the CAP possibly could be accepted but that the Anglo-American relations were a sensitive domestic and international issue.

The Commission issued that an obligatory opinion on the application of Britain in September 1967, and came to the conclusion that the negotiations should be opened. The

Council took over and from October to November 1967 they discussed the British application and the opinion of the Commission. It soon stranded, in a second statement in which De Gaulle now declared that the British political and economic situation could not be considered stable enough to grant EC membership due to the devaluating sterling pound. For De Gaulle this was the moment to point out the weakening British situation and to oppose its agricultural policies, and finally to put an end to the negotiations on the British accession. De Gaulle not only opposed Britain on grounds of the weak pound or its agricultural policies, but it was again a way to deny the United States a foothold in the EC. The biggest disappointment for Wilson was that Germany did not in any way try to oppose the French veto. In December 1967, Britain again had to put its application on hold (Dinan, 2004).

De Gaulle resigned in 1969 and after the British had revived their application, the Council asked the Commission to form a new opinion. They recommended reopening the negotiation as soon as possible. Even already two weeks before the the Conservative party replaced the Labour party, the negotiations were finally reopened in June 1970. The British policy of accession was continued by the Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath (Dinan, 2004).

The negotiations of the accession were twofold; Britain needed to negotiate with the six member states represented by the Council presidency and the member states had to negotiate among themselves. Throughout the negotiations it became clear that the real bargaining for the accession was between Britain and France. De Gaulle's successor, Charles Pompidou, could hardly veto British accession. Eventually it became clear that France could no longer be against a British accession and because the relation between France and Germany cooled, France agreed upon the British accession. Willy Brandt the German chancellor now had two members in the EC that were both strongly against supranationalism in the EC. (Dinan, 2004).

However, the cheers for the British entry in the EC were soon over, Wilson replaced Heath with a strong sceptical Labour party behind him. Labour made Wilson renegotiate the entry terms of the British accession. Britain wanted to contribute less to the budget and wanted to get more from it through the proposed regional development fund. The community leaders wanted to help Wilson with his demands, just enough to ensure a British 'yes' in an upcoming referendum of 1975 on staying in the EC. The result of the referendum was

positively in favour of the EC and finally the EC and Britain itself could close the chapter on the British accession (Dinan, 2004).

Throughout the negotiations and during the accession the British media had great influence on the British public opinion. This however was not always the fault of the media, during the negotiations the British media and public were skeptic on the accession. They had right to be because Prime Minister Wilson openly complained about the accession terms while on the other hand the government exaggerated the economic advantages while playing down the political costs. Finally when Britain entered the EC the British media were rather positive, the Times and the Telegraph applauded the entry. The notorious British tabloids were split, the Express targeted Brussels bureaucrats to express its displeasure while the Mirror supported entry. Later on euro skepticism broadly found its way back to the British media. (Dinan, 2004 p.137-139)

5.3 UK as a Member of the European Union

5.3.1 Theoretical Frameworks: Neofunctionalism vs. Intergovernmentalism

Seeing the UK as a member of the EU, its position as an internal actor needs closer observation. For this purpose, there is a theoretical framework provided, the neofunctionalist approach on the one hand, and on the other the intergovernmental approach. To understand the position of a member state within the EU and its attitude towards its policies, it is useful to generally allocate the state to one of the both theories. Therefore, this part will first of all briefly define both integration theories and afterwards turn to assign GB to one of them.

In general, one can say that in the neofunctionalists predict the creation of a European 'super-state' which will overcome the traditional nation state in the long-run. Since economic integration also leads to political integration, the member states of the EU will transfer more and more sovereignty to a central authority at the European level. This process is considered as happening almost automatically: so called 'spillovers' from integration in one sector enforce integration in further sectors when problems cannot be solved on the national level any longer. Hence, national governments are not the key actors anymore, but the focus lies on

non-state actors such as interest groups and trade unions which are bypassing the state and cooperating directly with the Union (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2006).

Unlike neofunctionalists, intergovernmentalists see European integration rather skeptically. The theory focuses on the nation state and sees national governments as the key actors of the process. The idea of broadly giving up sovereignty is largely rejected, and integration is not considered as happening 'accidently' through spillovers but as a result of rational and well calculated decisions by the national governments. Also in the course of integration, the nation state is seen as remaining predominant over any supranational authority, and the EU and its policies are considered a result of interstate cooperation and bargaining (Cini, 2007, Moravcsik, 1991).

Just as the EU itself and European integration cannot be generally assigned to one of both theories completely, it is certainly neither possible to assign one of its member states to either 'black' or 'white'. However, regarding Great Britain, the intergovernmental approach seems the most suitable. As already revealed in previous chapters of this book, GB was and still is largely 'eurosceptic'. This scepticism applies first of all to the public: According to a Eurobarometer survey in 2008, 32% of the British population considers EU membership a 'bad thing', a number which is among the highest ones in all member states. Moreover, 50% of the people perceive the negative effects of membership as exceeding the benefits (Eurobarometer, 2008). Whether this rather negative attitude towards the Union is caused or reflected by the British government remains debatable. Nevertheless, the people can be considered as being well represented by a government which is definitely not enthusiastic about shifting more sovereignty than necessary to any supranational authority. Rather, the government is occupied with securing national sovereignty as best as possible.The main argument to justify this position is that democratic legitimacy of the Union derives from the member states; hence they should remain the key-actors of all decisions (Ash, n.d.).

According to Jones (2007), integration in Britain is not only rejected because of the loss of political sovereignty. Moreover, it is equated with a negative interference in the British lifestyle and hence connected to the loss of national identity. As Jones puts it, integration is leading to bureaucrats in Brussels telling the Britons "to use grams and kilograms rather than pounds and ounces; to use centimetres and metres rather than inches and yards. Soon it will be kilometres rather than miles, and we will have to drive on the right hand side of the road!" (p.

105). This general portrayal of European integration as a threat is also reflected in the British print media which commonly show strong opposition to almost any kind of supranationalism and partially even appear Europhobic (Jones, 2007).

According to Hay and Smith (2005), the public discourse on European integration has nevertheless become more positive in recent years. While most governments had portrayed integration as an evil threat to national sovereignty, the Labour government under Blair had shifted to emphasise the opportunities and benefits it offers to Great Britain. However, this does not mean a shift towards a more supranational attitude: the loss of sovereignty is simply no longer mentioned, and European integration is still portrayed in intergovernmental terms. As former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw (2003) put it:

> Europe is not a threat, it is an enormous opportunity for a confident dynamic Britain to strengthen its security and its prosperity (...). The EU is not a superstate, and it is not going to become a superstate; it is the nations of Europe making the most of their common strengths whilst preserving their sovereignty and their varied identities (quoted in Hay & Smith, 2005, p. 142).

Hence, emphasis clearly remains on the dominant role of national governments maintaining their sovereignty and processing through intergovernmental bargaining. However, it also shows that adopting a rather intergovernmental attitude is not necessarily equated with negative Euroscepticism, neither with reluctance to join in European policies. Even though GB is characterized by numerous opt-outs regarding European developments, such as the absence from the monetary Union, Blair stated in a press conference that "If Britain is a member of this club, for goodness sake let's get in there, make our voice heard, win the battles and do so with confidence, let's not hang about always being half hearted about it" (Blair, 2003, quoted in Hay & Smith, 2005, p. 143). Hence, Britain is willed to engage in fulfilling its obligations resulting from EU membership, even though it sometimes seems like it tries to 'slow down' or opt out from the process of integration. The scepticism shown when negotiating further developments rather serves as pulling the EU in a certain direction, but is not connected to reluctance in realising EU policies when they once committed to them.

UK relations to other Member States

In general, GB is said to have good relations to all other member states of the EU. It is not to say that they have specific partners or allies within the Union, neither do they have a particular enemy. Neither are they engaged in any particular bilateral relation such as the 'friendship' between France and Germany. This kind of special friendship rather applies to the relation between GB and the US. What is to say at this point is, however, that Britain can be seen as a bridge between the US and Europe, or as "a seismograph on whose trembling needle you can measure the improvement or deterioration of relations between Europe and America" (Ash, 2004, quoted in Paterson, 2007, p. 1).

The position of Britain towards other EU Member States hence rather depends on the political issue which is discussed than on any kind of connective relation, as Britain primarily solely discusses in its own national interest. Since it is the second largest economy within the Union and, hence, able to also possess necessary resources for policy goals, it is in a negotiation position strong enough to do so (Blair, 2002). As Blair (2002) concludes, Britain was so far relatively successful in securing its objectives with this tactic, since the country is simply too big to be ignored. Also disputes with other member states occurred only on the basis of particular events, as for example the 'clash' with Germany and France about the participation in the Iraq War.

5.3.2 UK's political attitude towards the EU from 1996 - 2004

In 1973, the UK joined the EC, after France had turned down the British proposal to join ten years earlier. Scholars argue, that the accedence was mainly due to Britain's diminishing power after WWII, including the loss of all former colonial territories. All these factors play a role and influence the British political behaviour towards and within the EU and are necessary to be mentioned before proceeding. The following chapter will focus on the attitude of British policy making in the EU, its understanding of the Union and its goals within it. In order to explain the mentioned key aspects better, a closer look will be taken on the 'White Paper' of the British for the European Union Intergovernmental Conference in 1996, as well as the 'White Paper on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe' from 2004. These White Papers are the guidelines for the British diplomats representing their government's interests towards the EU, leaving space for bargaining and compromises (Cullen, 1996). The 1996 intergovernmental conference (IGC) tried to target questions on the capacity and

responsibility to act for the European Union, as well as to set further goals for the future development of the EU. A White Paper was given to the British politicians involved in the IGC, containing a clear concept on how the EU should develop according to the British government (George, 1998). This paper was based on five key factors, set by a memorandum of the UK's government in 1995 (White Paper, 1996), namely the shaping of the EU to a

> peaceful and beneficial power in the world, … recognizing the diversity of the Member States rather than imposing conformity" (White Paper, 1996). The five key factors were "...(1), a close relationship to the NATO and support for it (2), a better recognition of the EU by its Members in order to carry out tasks such as security and stability (3), the desire to be left sovereign in terms undertaking military action as well as to act in defence of its own national interest (4) and that the "basis for action in the field of security and defence must be intergovernmental... (White Paper, 1996).

While these key factors mostly focused on matters of security and military sovereignty as well cooperation, the memorandum further draws attention to the structure of the EU. According to it, it is Britain's desire not to set up new institutions, it argues for a clear separation of Western European Union (WEU) and EU, as well as the creation of a new body of the WEU, based only on intergovernmental talks only, separate from EU affairs (White Paper, 1996).

As described by Collens (1996), the British stand critical towards the introduction of any judicial changes and the introduction of a constitution. It is argued, that due to the Common Law system "there are no legal limits to the legislative authority of Parliament. When that authority is exercised in the form of an Act of Parliament, no court or other body has power to hold such an act to be invalid or in any respect lacking in effect" (Ziegler, Baranger & Bradley, 2007, p.116). Therefore, a binding judicial change introduced on EU level would have destructive power on the existing system and would change the old traditional system (Collens, 1996). After the European Community Act 1972, British courts had to decide according to EC law, effectively weakening the parliament's legislative powers and turning them over to the British courts (Collens, 1996). As the 'Factortame'-case shows, the parliament realized its loss of sovereignty more than 20 years later, when it tried to overrule a ECJ (European Court of Justice) decision on banning British beef exports after the BSE crises by an Order in Council. 60 members of the Conservative party voted in favour of the order, which was not enough to let it pass but showed the great scepticism towards any loss of sovereignty to the EU (Collens, 1996). In order to prevent such cases to happen again, the UK's White Paper argues in favour of a clearer definition of the tasks and rights of the ECJ and asks for measures for the Member States to intervene in cases of "unintentional"

interpretations of EC law by the ECJ (White Paper, 1996). Clearly, the White Paper shows the British unwillingness to deepen any further loss of legislative power to the EC and ECJ and rather tries on gaining back as much power as possible.

While being in favour of cooperation in military and security matters and opposing any further loss of sovereignty to the EU, a closer cooperation in economic terms is very much favoured by the UK. The White Book states, that an attitude in favour of further liberalization and deregulation of the internal market as well as increasing productivity exists. The British government further asks for an economic concept, more closely related to the USA, while opposing the social model proposed by France, Germany and the Scandinavian countries. This tendency occurs in the light of the UK being the only country with such a liberal market, low social welfare and a high level of 'self-responsibility' of its people (see chapter 2 Thatcherism). Not only a strict deregulation, but also a back cutting of EU competences in the fields such as 'working environment' and 'workers safety and security' are favoured by the UK. This shows clearly the British position in economics, trying to keep foreign intervention in their affairs to a minimum, while using the positive aspects of the internal market to a maximum (White Paper 1996; White Paper 2004).

In the White Paper of 2004 on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for the Europe, the British government had changed. John Major's Conservative Party was not in charge anymore and Tony Blair with new Labour had taken office. Nevertheless, the political change in the UK did not change the political attitude towards the EU as drastically as it might have been expected. The White Paper of 2004 stated, that the UK is still not in favour of a supranational state and wants to keep the decision making for the national states. It argues in favour of a broader involvement of national parliaments in EU affairs and opposes any political union, while pointing out the importance of strong economic cooperation. Further, the British government asks for opt-out options as well as veto power in all political shaping of the EU and still does not want to join the Schengen area (White Paper, 2004). Taking a closer look on the statements given by British politicians during the negotiations, it becomes obvious that the greatest fear of those opposing the EU constitution is the creation of a “giant ball and chain round the ankle of British business” (Bandelow, 2005). The creation of a European superstate and the consequent loss of sovereignty is most feared by British politicians opposing the Constitutional Treaty. They fear, that due to diminishing borders

between the Member States, the UK might become nothing more but a region within the 'United States of Europe' (Bandelow, 2005).

Although new Labour had taken office, changing the strict liberal approach of British politics to a certain extend, the UK's policy towards the EU did not change extensively. While the attitude towards social policies became more open, the main goal of the British participation in the Union stays the economic benefit. The 2004 negotiations consisted of 80 areas discussed. The UK only accepted 38 of these, while arguing to change 39. In the result of the negotiations, half of the changes in the original proposal were based on British initiative, on the one hand stating the influence of the UK within the EU, on the other hand laying open the twisted role it plays in the Union (White Paper, 2004).

Concluding, the British intension is "to play a leading role in its [the EU's] future development" (White Paper, 1996) and to create "peaceful and beneficial power in the world, which encourages and allows flexibility" (White Paper, 1996). While the concept of a supranational superstate is strongly opposed by the UK, the close cooperation of the member states in security matters, as well as the liberation of the internal markets is advertised and aimed at. A close relation to the NATO in order to get the US on board, while increasingly cooperating in fields of military and intelligence. Apart from matters of security and defence, as well as the actual structure of the EU, the UK proposes a clearer and more "efficient decision making mechanism" (White Paper, 1996). The purpose of this topic was clearly to stop further integration and keeping political decision making power to the British government, while only giving those decisions to the EU, necessary to be dealt with on a wider scale. The inclusion of further member states is seen as important and in British long-term interest. Clearly, the UK favours a strong EU in terms of economy, military and security, while the idea of European integration is strongly opposed by the British White Paper (White Paper, 2004).

These tendencies can be connected to British history, recognizing itself as a world power, although its global influence has vanished during the past 90 years. The British position within the EU is further influenced by the British belief in sovereignty and self-responsibility, opposing the social welfare states included in the union. Concluding it can be said, that the British realized the importance and influence of the EU, as well as its potential in creating wealth and prosperity and joined it therefore. Still, the UK plays an own role within the union

due to the fact, that the original idea of cooperation in order to prevent further wars is not so closely related to the UK as to the other nations. Therefore, the main interests of the UK are of economic nature opposing the EU's endeavours for integration (White Paper, 1996; White Paper, 2004).

5.3.3 British EU Membership = A Trojan horse of the US?

"[…] So much for Britain's commitment to European solidarity; its real union is with America" is a famous quote by Jean-Claude Martinez, referring to a debate in the European Parliament about commercial espionage (in G. Rachman, 2006). When placing British politics in an international perspective, one important relationship – between the US and the UK – needs to be looked at closely. Not only the UK's strong bonds with the US, but also the influence the US has on British actions within and with the EU, needs to be examined. Thee origins of the special Anglo-American relationship are outline to better understand the double mill Britain is in. After that, a few examples of the influence of the US on UK's decisions concerning international and European politics are provided. Further an outlook on the future perspectives is given. However, the question of how the US influences the relationship between the UK and the EU is unlikely to be fully answered after this analysis. Only a few indications and ideas can be outlined. Moreover, it should be mentioned that there are always other variables that influence decisions that might be difficult to understand when taking a continental European perspective. For instance, it is interesting that strong British national identity and their different currency and geographic position set Britain apart from continental Europe.

In-between the US and the EU

When trying to find out why two countries have a close relationship, first the commonalities of those countries come to mind. A common identity is often created by the feeling of unity against all others; in this case against all that is not Anglo-American. Their special relationship is formed throughout a collective identity of 'lieux de memoires'[27]. Both countries fought in the 18th century on the American continent, yet they fought against each

[27] The concept of 'Lieux de memoires' by P. Nora differentiates between historical memory and collective memory. The latter is constructed throughout symbols, holidays and myths, where as the former is constructed by academics. Out of the two common 'lieux de memoires' are created (Nora, 1999).

other. However, what is remarkable in this respect is that already shortly after the Brits and the Americans were opponents they developed a strong bond. As Talleyrand found out: "the former colonists were far closer to Britain, which had oppressed them, than to France, which had assisted their liberation" (Harris, 2002). This close tie became even stronger over the years. Talleyrand concluded that the early close relationship between the former opponents was based upon commonalities such as a common language, common economic interest due to trade with one another and a similar legal system. The concept of identity by A. King states that a common identity and identification with one another is not only about having things in common, but even more about interaction. Thus, in a nutshell the special relationship between the Anglo-Saxons is due to culture, commerce and co-operation (Harris, 2002).

When the ECSC was established in 1951, the US were pushing the UK to join the Community. As stated by Harris "the United States has spent decades pressing Britain to become fully integrated in European supranational structures" (2002, p.7) probably not totally disinterested. Because of their special relationship with the UK, the US was hoping to be able to have a mouthpiece of Anglo-Saxon interest in the Community. When Britain finally yielded to the American, as well as the economic pressure of the EEC (European Economic Community) in view of its successful internal economic cooperation, the application was rejected. General de Gaulle, the French President in the 60s vetoed the British application two times in a row because he was "suspicious that Britain would prove a Trojan horse for US influence" when becoming an EEC Member (Kingdom, 2003, p. 120). This example shows how the special relationship was seen by some Members of the EEC and the risk they believed it beared.

Another example which shows the special relationship between the UK and US is the Iraq War where this relationship was really important. A quote by the former British Prime Minister depicts clearly the loyalty and empathy for the UK after the terrorist attacks in 2001 ""barbarism" and "shame for all eternity….Are we at war with the people who committed this terrible atrocity? Absolutely."" (in Harris, 2002, p. 1). In contrast to the rest of the European Union, the UK clearly and publically announced its support for the US. In contrast, the EU was, shortly after the attacks, already introducing ""limits to [EU-U.S.] solidarity". That is why it did not assist the US militarily in the so-called war on terrorism. Yet, Britain did not join the decision of the EU. Instead, it sent British troops to fight united with Americans against the Taliban. At first glance, it seems obvious that – at least in military matters –

Britain is influenced more by their special relationship to the US than by their commitment towards their European partners. Yet, when judging the decision of the UK, the fact that, besides the Brits, only France would have been equipped sufficiently to fight alongside the US needs to be taken into account. “Britain has become Europe’s only serious military power” (Harris, 2002, p.5), which makes them even more important for the US.

Lastly, attention should be drawn to the liberal economy of the US and the UK in contrast to continental Europe. What both countries have in common is the preference for limited state intervention by the government. Their markets are closely linked to each other, which coming back to King, creates a feeling of common identity, due to much interaction on the business level. Facts and figures depict that the UK is the biggest overseas investor in the US. “The US receives 44 percent of UK overseas compared with the European Union’s 36 percent” (Harris, 2002, p.6). The circumstance that the economic markets of both countries are based upon similar concepts and that both trade with and invest in each other a lot, also reflects the current financial crisis. Regarding their phylosophy to intervene as less as possible into the market, which can be claimed is one reason that led to the financial crisis - thr failure of regulation - . Therefore, it is not surprising that the first efforts of the UK to rescue the economy after the economic downfall were more similar to the ideas of the US than the once of the EU. Yet, it remains to be seen at the economic G-20-Summit in April if Europe speaks with one voice, including the UK, or the UK tries to solve its economic problems in close cooperation with the EU.

n a nutshell can be concluded that there is definitely is a special relationship between the UK and its former colony, the US. This relationship is due to common ‘lieux de memoires’ and a lot of interaction among each other economically, but also politically. Yet, it cannot be fully answered in how much the relationship influences the commitment of the UK to the EU, only examples can be given. Judgments about the influence need to be made with caution, because the motivations for a decision of the UK are not always visible and depend upon different variables as mentioned above. It needs to be kept in mind that the US also has a lot of influence on the EU and its Member States, not only on the UK, for instance through the NATO. Lastly, it is to conclude that the US should not only be seen as rival, but rather as a partner. It was Eisenhower who was one of the first politicians that promoted publicly the idea of a “United States of Europe” after the Second World War. Therefore, the US has a lot of influence, mainly on the UK but also on the EU in general because they are one of the

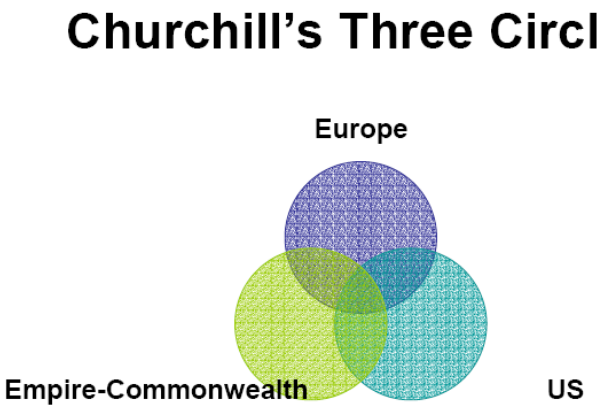
super powers in our globalised world (Harris, 2002, p.4). Yet, if the EU develops towards an ever-closer-union and speaks up with one voice, the EU can be a counterweight to the US. The role of the UK remains to be seen depending on many circumstances. Yet, many scholars predict the same future perspectives as Harris, who believes in the special relation between the UK and the US and therefore states: "At the end of the day, Britain stands with America" (2002).

5.3.4 UK and EU Foreign Policy

When examining the current prevailing political views by Britain towards EU foreign policy, and its relationship therewith, we can trace it back to a significant change in 1997 when New Labour came to power. Ever since the Second World War, British politicians from both parties generally held a firm belief that European projects would not work. The UK was an isolated island, and its sovereignty was seen as incompatible with European integration. Moreover, in the first few decades after the war, the UK was still one of the major players in the international community – though by no means as strong as the US or the USSR. There was less competition from continental Europe or Asia than today; hence Britain felt little need to hand over some sovereign power to a European institution (Deighton, 2005).

It has often been argued that one of the reasons New Labour won the elections in 1997 was because of its new attitude towards Europe. John Major's Conservative party held tough anti-European sentiments. The policy was basically a continuation of the last decades: curbing European integration, favoring the principle of 'subsidiarity', limiting the authority of Community institutions and blocking attempts to make Europe more federal. At the same time, Major was strongly in favour of extending the EU to the East. Thus, the policy was based on widening, not deepening (Dryburgh, 2005). New Labour, on the contrary, was viewed as more pro-European than any of its predecessors. The EU section on the website of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) starts with a quote from Prime Minister Gordon Brown – which portrais the new British view on integration with EU foreign policy: "The European Union is essential to the success of Britain and a Britain fully engaged in Europe is essential to the success of the European Union" (FCO, 2009). Nevertheless, Brown is also known as being more anti-European than Tony Blair in the sens that he said Europeans are more attached to national values than to Europen values, and hence the EU should take a step back (BBC, 2005)

But is these merely rhetoric or does it really translate into deepening the EU's foreign policy (at the expense of British sovereignty)? Deighton argues that ever since the Second World War, the UK viewed their position in foreign policy as one of three circles (2005), which he illustrated by drawing the following figure:



This subchapter will not discuss the UK's 'special relationship' with the US, but is has to be noted that New Labour has not deviated much from this world view. During the run up to the Iraq war, Pentagon officials frequently called Blair "Churchill" (Deighton, 2005, p. 6). British government rhetoric has always viewed the UK as taking up a leadership role in Europe. Yet, the UK has failed to participate, let alone influence, many developments on the internal level of the EU (e.g. European Monetary Union). On foreign policy, however, the UK's security concerns have led to more integration in this field. Indeed, on some specific issues, the UK can be accredited with successfully taking up a leading role.

When Labour came to power, the discourse on CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy) changed substantially with Blair declaring that the EU must be able to speak with one voice on key international issues. As a result, Britain was willing to cooperate in institutional changes that would make CFSP more powerful – albeit still intergovernmental. Labour, just like the Conservative Party, negotiated for the maintenance of veto power in the Council. Nonetheless, it pressed for "expanding the scope of the CFSP, and on issues of external representation and decision-making" (Dryburgh, 2001, p. 7). Although Britain did not take up

a leading role here, as one of the 'big three' its cooperation was of major importance for the extension of CFSP.

ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) is quite a different case. Britain's military capabilities are stronger than any other European country. Furthermore, as a staunch supporter of a US role in European defense matters, Britain held the key to develop ESDP. As Dryburgh (2007) notes: "There is little doubt that Blair's Government was fundamental to the development of the ESDP" (p. 8). Contrary to the Conservative government, who tried to avoid the debate about European defense as much as possible, Blair chose to engage in active leadership in order to push through the UK's preferences (Dryburgh, 2007).

In both ESDP and CFSP, Labour has thus tried to actively shape the institutional and policy frameworks. Britain perceives itself as having a leading role on key debates on Europe. This may stem from Britain's imperial history and the contemporary public, and political, consciousness of that history. Britain's viewpoint of its international position, detached from the EU, becomes very evident from a quote by Tony Blair, with which this chapter will end: "Century upon century, it has been the destiny of Britain to lead other nations….That should not be a destiny that is part of our history. It should be part of our future….We are a leader of nations, or we are nothing" (Deighton, 2005, p. 10).

5.3.5 Case Study: The UK's reluctance towards the Euro

In the previous parts Britain's Euroscepticism was analysed in terms of political and cultural terms. This part deals with the UK's reluctance to adopt the European common currency, the Euro. This issue will be examined, particular, in the light of the current financial crisis and recent remarks that Britain might have been better off when being part of the Euro zone. Baimbridge and Whyman (2008), in their book "Britain, the Euro and Beyond", try to explain why Britain has so much trouble to accept another currency and dismiss their pound. First, though, they try to illustrate why the relationship between the EU and the UK is so difficult. As already mentioned before an important reason is the fact that Britain's idea of the EU concerns rather economic cooperation than a supranational political level. This approach derives from the strong sovereign nature of Britain and that they do not want to share or even give up power (Beimbridge & Whymann, 2008).

Contrasting this economic cooperation, however, the economic integration in terms of the Euro, was rejected by the British government in 1997. After bad experiences being part of the European Monetary System (EMS) and fixing their currency to the European Rate Mechanism (ERM), the UK decided to dismiss the Euro entirely[28]. According to Baimbridge and Whyman (2008) and their cost-benefit analysis of the EU-UK relationship in the last decades, they draw the conclusion that the membership, from a British viewpoint, rather incorporated costs than benefits. Referring to the expensive Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the non-existent trade improvement between the UK and the EU, Baimbridge and Whyman (2008) claim that the membership was no win-win game for the UK.

The public opinion, it has to be mentioned, was one reason for the refusal too. After an opinion poll in 2003, the British government was backed by the British to dismiss the euro. Additionally, if the public opinion could decide, some would even favour leaving the EU entirely. Furthermore, also politicians across parties express their doubts whether the EU membership really is an advantage for the UK (Baimbridge & Whyman, 2008).

However, due to the recent economic crisis, some policy advisers in the EU and the UK, made comments that keeping the pound was maybe not the wisest decision of the British. The pound depreciates against the strong standing of the Euro and in this respect state loans (borrowed in the EU or the US) become more expensive. What increases the depreciation further is the advice of many analysts to sell everything that is valued in pound, as the currency is so weak (Streck, 2009). Others, though, are still convinced that the pound is the only solution for the UK. Peter Mandelson, the "former European Union trade chief", for example dismissed the idea, expressed by Jose Manuel Barroso that the UK considers the joining of the Euro (EuBusiness, 2009, p. 1). He sees no necessity and is in line with the Prime Minister Gordon Brown when he states that

> We have enough challenges and difficulties on our hands steering the British economy through this global downturn without taking on the additional challenge and complexity of taking Britain into the single currency (EuBusiness, 2009, p.1)

[28] The ESM was established in 1979 and replaced the Bretton Wood exchange rate system. From then on the currencies were fixed "against each other, and thus against the European Currency Unit (ECU), which was a composite of member currencies" (Baimbridge, Whyman, 2008, p. 42). Britain was part of the ESM from 1990 till 1992. In this period Britain experienced high rates of unemployment and could not achieve the requested low inflation rates.

This statement resembles the UK's policy towards the further integration in the EU economic system. Even more surprising is that such a statement above is made by a former EU chief. If he has such a strong position against the Euro, what about the more national politicians or the people that are not concerned with EU matters at all? An opinion poll from the beginning of this year for BBC shows that 71 percent of the respondents still do not want the UK to join the Euro area and 23 percent being in favour of a further integration (The Guardian, 2009). The problem is that they do not see a connection between the depreciation of the pound and a possible recovery with the Euro (69 percent). The comments by national politicians, also in light of the EU elections this year and the cultivated Euroscepticism in the UK, seem to be very reluctant towards an adopting of the Euro. However, their comments give the impression that they desperately try to keep up the refusal of the Euro while in the meantime considering it indeed, in particular the Tories. A breakthrough concerning this issue would be a change in the public opinion that is expected after the British realize the depreciation of the pound after they have travelled to continental Europe in the summer where they will experience the decreased value of the pound (The Guardian, 2009).

In the following, it will be asked, why the UK is so reluctant to increase the degree of cooperation with the EU where it is member of for over thirty years by now and why it does stick to the pound so adamantly? First, the British attitude towards the EU was always sceptical. As described in the sections above, the intergovernmental nature of the British approach in EU matters has a long history and will not vanish at once. Furthermore, striving for a British identity also concerns the pound and the Queen's image on it. On the other hand, the depreciation of the pound not only has negative sides, as the public is told. The decreasing value increases the British exports as their goods become less expensive for countries that us dollars or the Euro. This aspect is mainly fostered by the Conservative party, as they flagged their election campaign with the statements that they will not join the European single currency at all. This development shows the difficulties. The issue of being part of the Euro region or not, became a major part of the next national elections. Therefore, if the euro will be introduced depends also on the British government's performance in the running term (Walker, 2008), as it is not the case yet that national and European issues will be considered separately.

5.4 The other way around: How does the EU perceive the UK?

This paper has its inherent focus on the UK and overall researches the British point of view. Nevertheless, when specifically looking at the relationship between the UK and the EU, it is interesting to not only understand why the UK prefers to stay apart from the EU to a certain degree, but also to look at this topic from a reverse point of view: Why is the EC eager to include the UK into the Union? In order to answer this question, several sides have to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the historical roots of the EU explain why the UK – as well as other European states - can and should be included in the EU. Secondly, in answering this question it is important to be aware of standardisation tools such as the Copenhagen Criteria, the *acquis communautaire* or the EMU criteria which ensure that all MS act on the same basis. Thirdly, even though the UK did join the European communities, it nonetheless asked for many opt-outs and in general stirred and still stirs into a rather intergovernmental direction. Two facts which often led to a rather isolated position within the EU.

In order to answer the question of why the EU has been eager to include the UK, one has to go back to the beginnings of the EU originally rooting in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951. The Schuman Declaration clearly stated, that:

> The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible. The setting up of this powerful productive unit, open to all countries willing to take part and bound ultimately to provide all the member countries with the basic elements of industrial production on the same terms, will lay a true foundation for their economic unification (Schuman, Declaration of 9 May, 1950).

Thus it had been incorporated from the beginnings of the community that it was open to all European countries – of which the UK undoubtedly is one. Furthermore, the thought of enduring peace was at this time still predominantly at the heart of its founders. Nonetheless, this ideological basic framework was soon to be accompanied by large economic success which, in turn, caused membership application by the UK and other European states. However, political structures had evolved favouring French-German predominance which France was reluctant to give up, leading to its veto on British accession. Even though five of the six member states were in favour of British application, France constantly circumvented this from 1961 to 1969 (Nelson and Stubb, 1998; Cini, 2007). Besides the economic interest,

there was also a political dimension to the question. When in 1957 the Treaty of Rome was concluded and the EEC commenced to not only be an economic community, but also planned to pool its political power, some MS saw the need for an inclusion of the UK: "…it was understood that the Netherlands had strongly opposed any move towards closer European political union which excluded the United Kingdom, and had insisted that British participation was essential for the success of such a union" (Nicholson and East, 1987, p.3). This quote shows adequately, that the MS perceived the political weight and influence the communities would gain through an accession of the UK. Moreover, it has to be taken into consideration, that British accession also meant an application of its traditional allies, Ireland and Denmark. "[T]he accession of new members such as Great Britain, Ireland, Denmark, and Norway, whose political and economic structures and level of development are very close to those of the present member states, could both strengthen the Community and afford it an opportunity for further progress" (European Commission in Nicholson and East, 1987, p.51). Thus, a union of nine European states sharing the same democratic values and all being part of one economic zone, was expected to be more powerful than a union of six (Nicholson and East, 1987). Having established this general tendency towards enlargement, it might be helpful to mention the standardization of accession procedures which was set into place in the course of time. The Copenhagen Criteria in 1993 introduced clear guidelines to regulate accession.

Hence, states fulfilling these criteria will be considered for participation. Going one step further, also the EMU follows certain criteria that need to be met according to the stages in order for countries to be part of the euro-zone. These criteria are supposed to find an objective judgement to determine future membership of the EU and the EMU. Hereby, however, it should be noted, that even though the UK fulfilled the necessary criteria in 1951 to join the ECSC and does so similarly nowadays to be part of the Euro-zone, it has been its own choice to opt out from closer cooperation in several fields as will be elaborated on beneath. Nonetheless, since the eastern enlargement of 2004 and of 2007, it has to be noted, that there is a power shift within the European Union. Having 27 MS of which more than ten are not in the EMU, the position of the UK is changing (Cini, 2007).

5.4.1 British Opt-Outs – Margaret Thatcher's Speech in Bruges

For smooth European integration the highest degree of coherence within the Union is desirable, meaning that all MS accept the *acquis communautaire* and the whole of the legal framework without exception. According to Adler-Nissen, "opt-outs challenge the fundamental principles of solidarity and equality that underpin the EU's legal system", which in turn hinders coherent application of EU law (Adler-Nissen, 2007, p.4). Nonetheless, some member states, most prominently the UK, were in the position to ask for exemption from certain regulations. With the Treaty of Maastricht, several opt-outs were granted, which led to the fear "that the Maastricht opt-outs would set a precedent leading, at worst, to an *à la carte* EU with member states picking and choosing the areas in which they were willing to pursue closer integration" (Cini, 2007, p.35). Hence, threatening not to agree to the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, the UK consolidated its decision to refrain from the Schengen area, to refuse to accept the last stage of EMU hence keeping the Pound Sterling and to stay apart from the Social Union. Moreover, also in 1997 with the conclusion of the Amsterdam Treaty, the British government negotiated an opt-out from the Justice and Home Affair (JHA) agreements (Adler-Nissen, 2007).

In order to explain these demands for exception, it is important to remember the Eurosceptic attitude which the UK holds towards the EU. It has never been the wish of the UK to be part of a supranational state, but always wanted to keep as much of its sovereignty as possible (Cini, 2007). However, interestingly, even though very much Eurosceptic, Margaret Thatcher supported the Single European Act (SEA), which was signed in 1985. Supposedly, signing the SEA is one of the few decisions she regretted after her time in office due to the fact that she gave away parts of Britain's sovereignty (Newstatesman, 2003). Nonetheless, the urge for sovereignty remained. Probably the best symbol of this is the speech at the College of Europe in Bruges, which was given by Margaret Thatcher in 1988. According to Harris, the speech did not only discard the plans of the European Commission of this time, but also illustrated what the UK would prefer as the future of the EC: "voluntary co-operation between independent nation states, free markets and open trade" (Tiersky, 2001, p.103). However, the independent plans proposed by Thatcher were not in the common interest of the EC whose outspoken goal it was to reach an "ever closer union" (Treaty of Rome, 1957).

5.4.2 Discussion

For once looking at the European perspective of the relationship between EU and UK several things come to be clear. Doubtlessly, the UK has been a major asset for the EU and it can rightly be observed that the EU could not claim the same stand in the international arena if it did not include the UK. In terms of economic and political contributions, the UK has been highly valuable for the EU, not less because British membership also led to application of at least two other Member States, Ireland and Denmark. Nonetheless, it can be assumed that for most of its membership, the European Commission as well as other more EU-friendly member states would have wished for a less troublesome UK. From the British rebate – as has been researched in Chapter two –, and the opt-outs in the TEU (Treaty of the European Union) as well as the Treaty of Amsterdam, the UK has negotiated more exceptions than every other member state. Moreover it is not part of the Euro-Zone. This as well as its constant fight for intergovernmentalism has challenged the development of the EU as we know it today. However, the question remains, what is the EU but a voluntary accumulation of states which shape the form of this union. Within this, the UK plays rightfully the part it has chosen for itself.

This paper has its inherent focus on the UK and overall researches the British point of view. Nevertheless, when specifically looking at the relationship between the UK and the EU, it is interesting to not only understand why the UK prefers to stay apart from the EU to a certain degree, but also to look at this topic from a reverse point of view: Why is the EC eager to include the UK into the Union? In order to answer this question, several sides have to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the historical roots of the EU explain why the UK – as well as other European states - can and should be included in the EU. Secondly, in answering this question it is important to be aware of standardisation tools such as the Copenhagen Criteria, the *acquis communautaire* or the EMU criteria which ensure that all MS act on the same basis. Thirdly, even though the UK did join the European communities, it nonetheless asked for many opt-outs and in general stirred and still stirs into a rather intergovernmental direction. Two facts which often led to a rather isolated position within the EU.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter aimed at making the relationship between the UK and the EU more clear and maybe even answer the question why the UK can be still considered as sceptic towards continental Europe and specifically 'eurosceptic' today.

For this purpose, first cultural and historical reasons were looked at. It turned out that British exceptionalism based on the English language and tradition, loyalty to the monarchy and its geographical position was partly responsible for today's 'Eurosceptisism'. This development was strengthened by the fear of losing sovereignty. However, what set the UK apart from continental Europe even more was the split from the Catholic Church and the foundation of Anglicanism. Though, an important turning point was the Treaty of Westphalia following the Thirty Years war which included the UK into the European setting. However, due to the special relationship to the US and the rise of imperialism in the middle of the 19th century, the UK became more interested in its oversea empire than in Europe, and was therefore rather isolated again.

The relation to the US and the pressure to join that came along was further important for the application to the EC. Moreover the inclusion into the community would mean economic advantages, as well. This sudden opening up to continental Europe was only overshadowed by the French, or in specific De Gaulle's, reluctance to let the UK, which made the Brits feel rejected. Nevertheless, the UK finally entered the EC in 1973.

Within the Union, it could be observed that Britain still tends to a rather intergovernmental form of cooperation instead of a supranational one. This again shows how important sovereignty is for the country. When elaborating on the UK and its view on EU foreign policy, this chapter mainly focused on the connection between the UK and the US. This relationship can be considered as quite influential for the UK's attitude towards the EU as well as the other way around since this connection might also be beneficial for the EU.

By focusing on the UK reluctance to adopt the Euro, this chapter also uncovered more about the economic situation of Britain in regard to the EU. Moreover, by introducing an opinion poll, illustrates how the public is still rather sceptical towards the EU.

The reasons mentioned above explain why the UK has often set itself apart from continental Europe and until today. Still, the British people emphasises its identity and tradition and wants to keep its sovereignty as much as possible. Nevertheless, one can see that

Britain saw it as a necessity to join the EU, in economical but also political terms, although it still favours a strictly intergovernmental union or as Wall states it: Britain beliefs in a "…Europe of governments, a Europe in which the independent authority of the supranational institutions was to be feared and, where possible, held in check" (2008, p. 219).

Conclusion

Throughout the book, the distinctiveness of the UK has been explored. Although continental Europe played, and continues to play, a vital role in the development of the UK, its relationship is nonetheless strained. In the introduction we asked ourselves how the British reluctance towards deeper integration with the EU could be explained. The answer to this question is one that requires elaboration. This conclusion provides thoughtful answers to this question starting by assembling our most important observations.

The British Empire has left a lasting impression not only on the shape of the modern world, but even more on the UK. Near to the end of the 19th century, predominance in imperial trade and global naval power gave Britain a substantial advantage over its European competitors. Britain had the power to operate largely independent. Not only was the UK the first country to industrialize, but it continued to play a crucial role in the global economy for over 300 years. More than to any other nation, its predominance gave the British the possibility to travel and to gain knowledge of different cultures on an immense scale. Perhaps most importantly, Britain was on the side of the victors during the two World Wars. The British had been weakened severely by the two World Wars, leading to financial bankruptcy and loss of influence on a global scale to the USA - developments, which ultimately triggered of the demise of the colonial empire. These remembrances from the past have left traces in modern British politics and public perceptions in the sense that the UK still demands a rather special treatment from its European partners.

Above all, it was the outstanding economic performance that gave Britain its predominant role. The early evolvement of the Industrial Revolution set Britain apart from the rest of Europe and gave them a head-start in economic power for years to come. Without doubt, colonialism contributed largely to this development due to its delivery of cheap raw resources. Moreover, the government provided for a good infrastructure, even in the colonies, with a well working transportation and public utility system and thus provided the infrastructural basis for a successful development of the economy. During the Great Depression in the 1930's Britain could take advantage of their economic structure which is illustrated by the fact that they did not suffer as much as most European countries. Britain was one of the first countries to pursue Keynesian economics and brought about an economic

revolution in Europe by being the first to make the switch to Monetary economics during the reign of Thatcher.

Not neglecting failures and economic slowdown within the UK after WW II, the British economy has shown better growth rates during the last two decades than the Euro-zone. This partially explains why the British attitude towards full-fledged membership of the EU is still dominated by euro-scepticism and a sentiment that the island's economy is better off if it keeps as much of its sovereignty as possible. Moreover, the discussion on its 'level' of membership of the EU is largely influenced by the presumed economic benefits or costs. The predominant argument heard is that the UK initiates more jobs and economic opportunities for Europe than the other way around (6 million for Europe compared to 4,5 million for the UK). Furthermore, although Thatcher successfully renegotiated a rebate, the UK still pays more for the CAP than it receives in benefits – mainly due to its relatively small agricultural sector. Nonetheless, it is not totally implausible anymore to forecast that this attitude may change as a result of current economic instability and Britain's increasing trade dependence with its European partners. Interestingly, the ongoing financial crisis – which struck the UK particularly hard due to its large financial sector – has given rise to renewed public and political debate on opting for more involvement in the European economic integration process. Whatever the case, Britain's economic path is arguably different compared to the EU's (or better, EU-15) economic developments and thus also its commitment towards the EU.

Apart from economic differences, the UK also has some striking disparities concerning its political system and its conception of state sovereignty when compared to some other European countries. For this matter, and others, we took up a case study of comparing the UK to The Netherlands. Notwithstanding there are differences on the continenent as well, the British system is a classic example of the majoritarian model whereas there are quite a few countries on the continent that can be attributed to the consensus model of democracy. Therefore, the views of these countries on how the EU should be institutionalized, the degree of flexibility in negotiations and diplomacy (due to more than one political party involved and more political volatility in consensus models) and the degree to which continental Europe is prepared to handover sovereignty shows disparities with the UK. Sovereignty is arguably one of the most sensitive topics in the UK whenever there is talk about the EU. In the UK the urge to state sovereignty and independence dominated from the beginnings of the involvement

with the EU and has been widely strengthened through negative press on the EU. The Netherlands had been more open in handing over state sovereignty in the EU, though this has also largely changed in recent years culminating in the negative referendum on the EU Constitutional Treaty.

Looking at the colonial history, the British Empire was without a doubt much bigger and politically more influential, actually setting the tone in most political issues. The Dutch colonial empire on the other hand put its emphasis on only one colony, Dutch-India. Instead of taking political influence, it was much more engaged in trade and leading in this domain over the 17th century. One result of both colonial histories surely is the development of the societal structures and the handling of immigration. The two countries take a very diverging approach on society. The British formerly and still owe a vertical, hierarchical structure – illustrated by its school system which is largely based on financial means. Although during the last two decades attempts have been made to make the system more accessible, especially for the new coming immigrants it remains rather difficult to move upwards in society. In the Netherlands, the school system has been better accessible for immigrants due to the equal financial support which the state gave to all independent schools, disregarding their religious or political profile. In terms of immigration policy, the two states show some similarities in the sense that after WW II both were in favour of multiculturalism but after problems during the last two decades that concept is now – by many, not all – largely discredited as stimulating parallel societies. Other EU MS cope with similar immigration problems. Hence, the UK actively seeks more integration of immigration policy within the EU as it directly affects their interests as well. However the UK is not prepared to hand over much state sovereignty even within this policy area – a fact that stems from their 1992 demand to opt-out of the Schengen Agreement.

After having given an introduction to the UK and a scrutinisation of its political, economic and societal cultures we come to clarifying the UK's reluctance towards the EU. Even though the UK never wished to be part of a supranational state, Thatcher agreed to the SEA in 1985. However, later she declared that she regretted this decision. This intergovernmental 'nature' of the British approach in EU matters has a long history and will not vanish at once – if, at all. We have seen that even today 71% of the British population does not want the UK to join the EMU.

Identification is one vital element to understanding the UK's position. British identity is partly, but importantly, linked to the Pound Sterling currency in which the British take a lot of national pride. Another source that distances British identity from Europe is 'British exceptionalism'. This exceptionalism translates into a strong belief that the country posses over a unique tradition, language, political culture and public sphere. British exceptionalism is generally seen as an important part of their identity, and arguably with the creation of the EU, English exceptionalism evolved into what is known today as Euroscepticism. Furthermore, with regards to geography and psychology, it should not be forgotten that the UK is located on two islands. Arguably, this creates a significant psychological barrier. Additionally, in terms of identification, what set the UK apart from continental Europe even more was the split from the Catholic Church and the foundation of Anglicanism. Finally, the old and special relationship to the USA means that the British today still identify more with the USA than with the EU. Common language, as well as cultural values, cooperation in wartimes and a similar economic model contribute to this.

Ever since the WW II the UK has viewed itself as one of the three circles of US, Europe and the UK. By setting themselves in between the US and the EU, the UK requires a special position in international affairs. Obviously, backing of the US gives Britain a prominent position in Europe. Although it cannot be said in concrete terms what the effects of US-UK special relationship are on the UK-EU relationship, in the past the UK has many times chosen to deviate from the path of its European partners. Instead, the UK decided to follow the US. For instance, in the Iraq war. Furthermore, the desire to maintain state sovereignty – especially over foreign affairs – and curbing European integration means that the UK's policies are generally in favour of widening the EU, not deepening. By widening, the UK has better chances to maintain its proclaimed special position and influence through intergovernmental channels. As Tony Blair said: "We are a leader of nations, or we are nothing" (Deighton, 2005, p. 10).

To conclude, state sovereignty is the key to understanding the UK-EU relationship. From a historical point of view, the UK has maintained a set of political, economic as well as cultural characteristics which is substantially different from its continental partners. Once it ruled the largest empire the world has ever seen. As a result, national pride, or the more appropriate

expression ‘British exceptionalism’, is still quite strong today. Moreover, the UK has a special relationship with the US which means that the UK is less dependent on the EU in international affairs. Furthermore, not only politicians are sceptic about the EU – the British population is even more. Citizen’s identification with the EU remains at very low levels largely due to psychological (island), language, cultural as well as economical (e.g. fear of economic loss when joining EMU) reasons. Nevertheless the UK has played a large and significant role in the European integration process and has signed the majority of treaties – albeit with some opt-outs. In some policy areas, such as the accession of new Member States or security issues, the UK even takes the forefront. However, when it comes to handing over a degree of sovereignty to supranational body such as the EU, the UK generally remains a staunch opponent and favours intergovernmentalism. In this sense, the British people can be considered as being well represented by a government which is definitely not enthusiastic about shifting more sovereignty than necessary to any supranational authority. In any case, British reluctance towards the EU is on the one hand based on a degree of realism: the UK indeed is less dependent on the EU than most countries on the continent. On the other hand, a degree of old pride and an ideology of independence may, unintentionally, cause reclusion merely on the basis of such sentiments. After all, to end with a famous English proverb, no man is an island.

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1. Art

1.1 Gilbert & George

Gilbert and George, two men in their mid-60s, are a British artist couple. In their early career, they started portraying themselves as art, with for example acting as 'living sculptures' or making a movie out of filming themselves getting drunk. Later, they turned to create images. With their paintings and photomontages, their main goal is to provoke the society which they consider as rather prudish. By portraying for instance human genitals and excrement, themselves naked in front of urine under a microscope (see left picture), they aim at criticising the prudish handling of sexuality and promoting a more open dealing with issues like this. Further images aim at fighting against discrimination in general or homophobia in particular. Moreover, religion is a regular topic in their works. Considering religion as contrasting liberalism, they harshly oppose it. Despite with their images, Gilbert and George are also popular as characters. Always appearing together in the same 'gentlemen' suits (see picture), they managed to create a certain image around themselves. It is assumed that they are a homosexual couple; this assumption was however never confirmed nor denied by them (Tate Modern, n.d., Focus, n.d.).

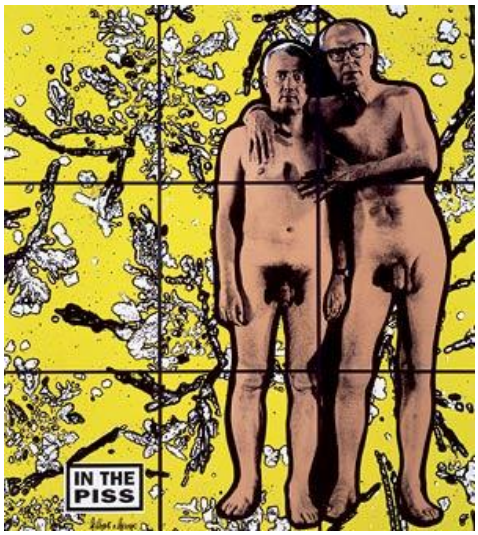


Image from the 'In The Piss' Series
Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.nationalgalleries.org/media/source/tnp__gilbertgeorgepiss.jpg

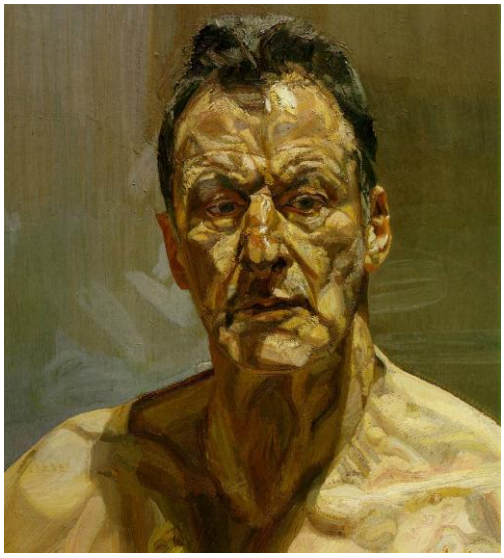
Gilbert (right) and George in their typical dresses
Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.bbc.co.uk/devon/content/images/2007/02/27/gilbert_and_george_465x350.jpg

1.2 Lucien Freud

"*I paint people not because of what they are like, not exactly in spite of what they are like, but how they happen to be*"…

Lucien Freud (*1922-) is a German-born British painter. As we might tell from his name, he is a relative of Sigmund Freud. At the age of 10, Lucien Freud moved with his family to the United Kingdom (Lucien Freud, 2009).

His paintings are characterized by raw physical characteristics and inner tensions. It is also important to mention that he received the Order of Merit which was awarded to him in 1993. Related works are, for example, 'Portrait of a Woman' (1949), 'Girl with Leaves' (1948) or 'Dead Monkey' (1950) (Lucien Freud, 2009).



"Reflection" (1985). Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://www.google.de/imgres?imgurl=http://www.geocities.com/~mhrowell/lucien_freud-reflection.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.geocities.com/~mhrowell/lucien_freud_port.html&h=982&w=885&sz=154&tbnid=CNyY6IyKYXd8yM::&tbnh=149&tbnw=134&prev=/images%3Fq%3DLucien%2BFreud&hl=de&usg=__CSDB0UkpSGL6SBImge3L407MbdU=&ei=XDfTSe70CcXR-QaEnJCZBQ&sa=X&oi=image_result&resnum=1&ct=image&cd=1

"The Queen" Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://www.flatrock.org.nz/topics/society_culture/assets/queen_by_freud.jpg

1.3 L.S. Lowry

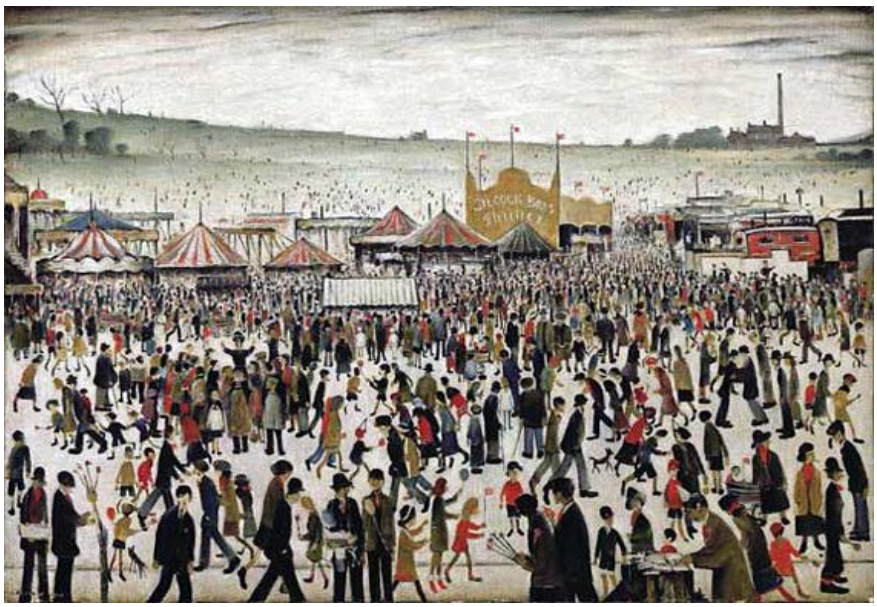
£ 3.8 Million was the record selling sum paid for one of the paintings by L.S. Lowry, in 2007. The famous painting is called "Good Friday, Daisy Nook" (World Collectors Net, n.d.).
It shows a festival with many visitors in Manchester which was the hometown of many mill workers, who only had two holidays during the whole year. One of the holidays was Good Friday. Thus, on this day, there was a big fair. Like most of Lowry's paintings and drawings, this one depicts a setting in the industrial area of Northern England. The latter can be classified as the overall topic of his paintings. Moreover, it is striking that Lowy mostly painted people as so-called Matchstick Men (see figure). The extraordinary way of drawing human beings made the British singers "Brain & Michael" aware of L.S. Lowry. In honour of Lowry the duo wrote the song "Matchstalk Men and Matchstalk Cats and Dogs", which was on place 1 of the British charts for over 3 weeks. One year after the great outcome of the song, the painter L.S. Lowry died, at the age of 88 (Manchester Evening News, 2007).

Lawrence Stephen Lowry was called "Laurie" by his family. Maybe that has to do with the fact that his mother wanted to have a girl rather than a boy and was her whole life upset

about being the mother of a son.

As sang in the song, Lowry was a great British painter because he painted the British neighbourhoods like they were without any beautifications. Moreover, Lowry put his emphasis upon Northern England, his home country, instead of painting more foreign, exotic places. The singers "Brian and Michael" describe Lowry as someone who was also concerned with the poor districts of Northern England and thus painted pictures that depict the real life of the part of the UK. According to them, Lowry did not bend over backwards for anybody. In contrast, he is described as a naive painter by some experts (Manchester Evening News, 2007).

Retrieved February 11, 2009, from
http://www.thelowry.com/



"Good Friday, Daisy Nook" (1946). Retrieved Retrieved, February 11,2009, from
http://www.worldcollectorsnet.com/news/newstories/news1257.html

1.4 Damien Hirst

The British artist Damien Hirst was born in Bristol in 1965. He currently lives and works in London and Devon. Hirst practices a wide range of arts like painting, drawing and sculpturing. He is particularly interested in depicting the uncertainty and the frailty of life. Subjects of his works therefore range from love and death to loyalty and betrayal. Hirst is also known for his use of animals in vitrines suspended in formaldehyde, such as 'The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living' (1991) and 'Mother and Child Divided' (1993) (Damien Hirst, n.d.) was also a member of the 'Young British Artists' or YBA's. This group of artists marked a new era in British art when they started in the late 1980s. Today Damien Hirst is one of the best known contemporary British artists (Young British Artists, n.d.).

Damien Hirst with 'For the Love of God' (2007). Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://a.abcnews.com/images/Entertainment/rt_skull_hirst_070601_ssh.

2. Early 20th century Literature

2.1 Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie (1890 – 1976) was probably one of the most successful British novelists of all times. According to her homepage, she is the best selling author worldwide, with 2 billion sold copies of her over 80 novels and short stories. The majority of her stories are detective

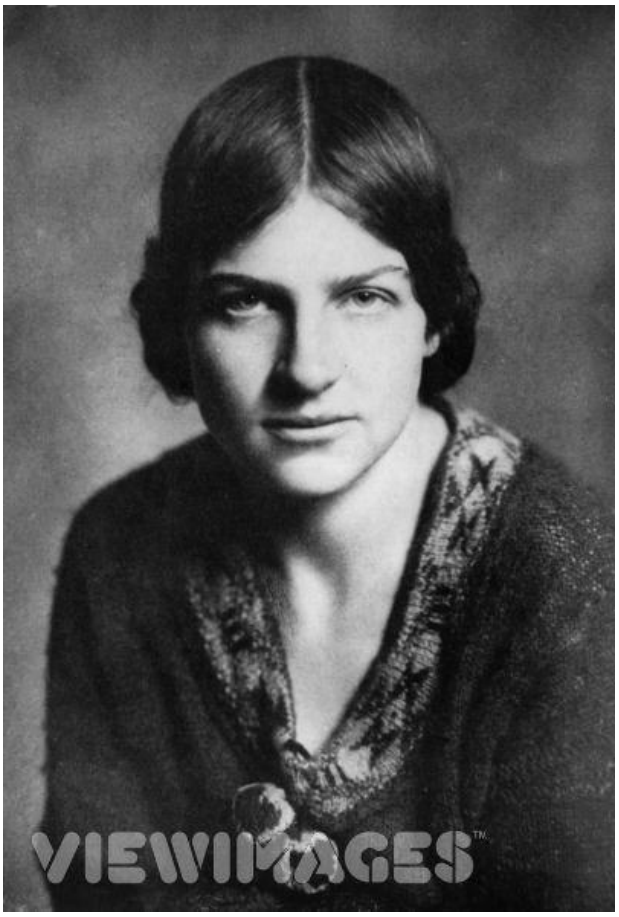
stories, and many of them were also turned into movies. The Belgian Detective Hercule Poirot and the old, grumpy 'hobby-detective' Miss Marple were the central characters in most of the stories and also the typical faces for Christie's movies. Christie received inspiration for her stories to a large degree from own experiences. Since she worked as a nurse as well as in a pharmacy before her writing career, she was familiar with all sorts of poisons, which were later integrated in the murders she made up. Moreover, she travelled a lot, as for example to Iraq or the Orient, and later on married an archaeologist. Elements from all these experiences were incorporated in her writings. To honour her success, Christie received the Title of the Dame Commander in 1971, as well as she received several other awards over the years. That her success did not vanish with her death in 1976 but her stories are still popular, what is shown for instance by the fact that recently, also computer games had been developed which are based on her stories and her created characters (Agatha Christie Home, n.d.).

Agatha Christie herself (left) Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://stgabss.net/SpecialNeeds/images/stories/famous/agatha_christie_in_1937.jpg
Her most famous characters Miss Marple (middle) Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://www.beruehmte-detektive.de/detektei/miss-marple.jpg
and Hercule Poirot (right) Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://shinymedia.blogs.com/photos/uncategorized/2007/04/27/poirot_gn_04_2.jpg

2.2 Naomi May Margaret Mitchison

Naomi May Margaret Mitchison was born in Edinburgh in 1897. She is widely known as the most famous Scottish poet and novelist. At age 84 she was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire. This means that she was actually allowed to call herself Lady Mitchison, however she never did so. She came from a famous family, her brother J.B.S. Haldane was probably best known for his work in the area of Biology (Ascherton, 1999). Coming back to her literary career, it should be mentioned that she wrote more than 90 books which did not concentrate on one specific area. She had many styles of writing and was

experimental. For example, her most famous work ‘The Corn King and the Spring Queen’ (1931) openly discussed different themes related to sexuality, which was very unusual and rather courageous for her time (Ascherton, 1999). Naomi Mitchison was a good friend of previously covered J.R.R. Tolkien. In fact she was one of the proof readers of his famous book ‘Lord of the Rings’ (Wallace, 2005).

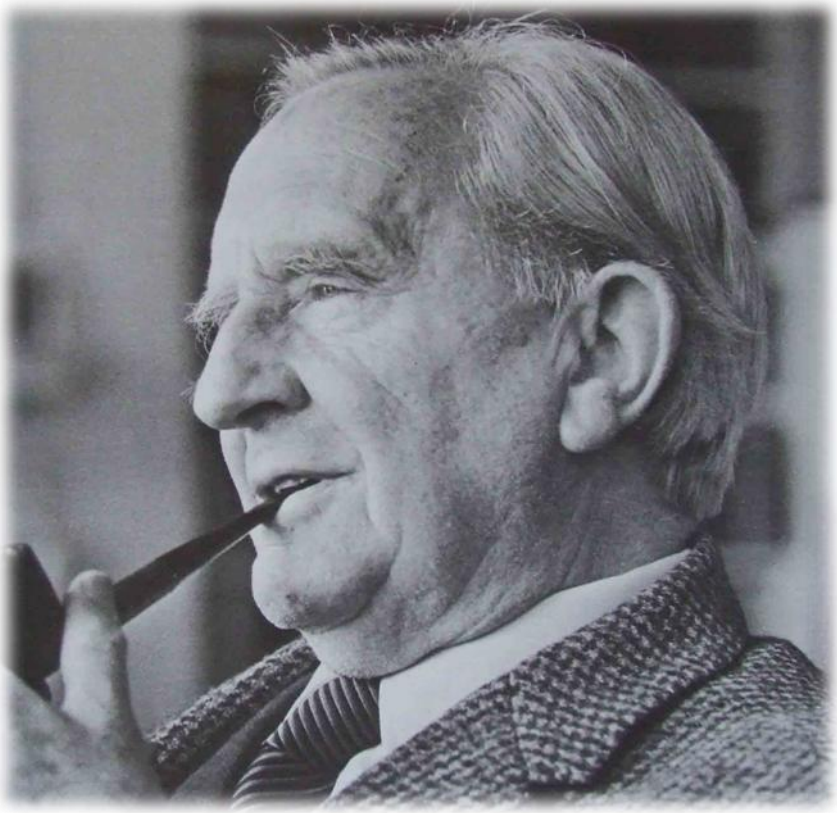


Retrieved March 31, 2009, from http://cache.gettyimages.com/xc/3068951.jpg?v=1&c=ViewImages&k=2&d=32F168F2F013CA9A368C26E294756F05A55A1E4F32AD3138

2.3 J.R.R. Tolkien

J.R.R. Tolkien, or John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, was born in today’s South Africa in 1892. He is best known for being an English writer and philologist. However, he also was a poet and university professor. With the publication of his well known work ‘The Lord of the Rings’ he is said to have invented the modern-fantasy literature. Therefore, today he is widely referred to as the father of this type of literature (TolkienSociety.org, 2007). ‘The Hobbit’ and ‘The Silmarillion’ are other well known works of J.R.R. Tolkien. He had a large impact on other writers who were operating in the same field. As a consequence, he became a large source of

inspiration for others. In 2008 THE TIMES ranked him 6th on a list "The 50 greatest British writers since 1945" (TolkienSociety.org, 2007).



Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.oetg.org/Joomla_OETG/images/tolkien%20portrait%20web.jpg

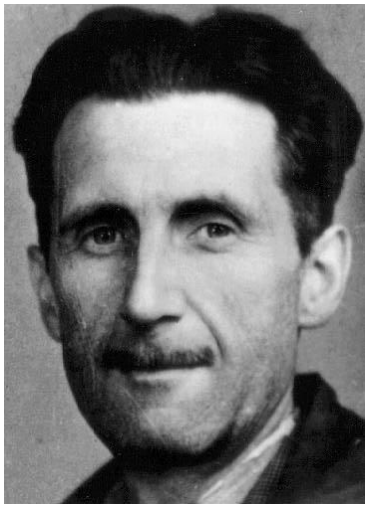
2.4 George Orwell

Eric Blair alias 'George Orwell' (1903-1950) was, as a young man, committed to socialism and went to Spain in 1936 to report on the Spanish Civil War. He, then, joined the war when he became a member of the Lenin Division Barcelona. In his book 'Homage to Catalonia' (1938) he wrote down his experiences and criticized especially the propaganda followed by newspapers in Britain. In 1941, he started working for BBC by writing news commentary on the Second World War which were then broadcasted to India. During this time he also worked for The Observer (George Orwell, 2009).

One of his most famous work is 'Nineteen Eighty Four' ('1984'), a novel about the threat of political tyranny. Many of the words used in 1984 entered every day language.

'He did not do so, however, because he knew that it was useless. Whether he wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made no difference.

Whether he went on with the diary, or whether he did not go on with it, made no difference. The Thought Police would get him just the same. He had committed -- would still have committed, even if he had never set pen to paper -- the essential crime that contained all others in itself. Thoughtcrime, they called it' (Extrait from the novel 1984) (George Orwell, 2009).



Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://threesixty360.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/georeorwell.jpg

2.5 C.S. Lewis

"Mere Christianity" is the title of one of Lewis most famous books and could also be the title of Clive Staples Lewis' life. Even though he was born into an Anglican family, he lost faith during his school time. His childhood was not easy because after his mother died, Lewis stayed in different boarding schools, where he did not feel comfortable at all (Gerold, 2003). During his later studies of literature and languages at the University of Oxford, Lewis started to dispute with Christianity. An important role in this dispute played his friends J.R.R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson. By the time Lewis had a fellowship for English at the Magdalen College Oxford, he and a few other friends, the so-called Inkling, meet regularly to discuss books and writings. These meetings and his interest in author's like George MacDonal contributed to his return to the Anglican faith (Rekowski, n.d.). His faith and the way he approached it and questions it, is reflected in most of his works. Lewis is famous for his explanations of Christianity based on logic. One of his most famous writings is 'The Chronicles of Narnia', a fantasy book for children which discusses questions about Christianity (Gerold, 2003). Last but not least Lewis tragic love life with Joy Davidham has to be mentioned. After she found to the Christian belief partly due to Lewis books, Davidham became friends with Lewis and later fell in love with him and the two eventually married. Shortly after Davidham died, after she had suffered from cancer, Lewis fell into a deep hole. His faith and the work on his book 'A Grief

Observed' helped him to get through this difficult time (Gerold, 2003). A film called 'Shadowlands' was made about his friendship and love to Joy Davidham. In a nutshell can be stated that Lewis helped many adults and children to understand the difficult question that come up when one wants to understand Christendom (Rekowski, n.d.).

Retrieved February 19, 2003, from
http://pastorandpeople.files.wordpress.com/2007/12/cs-lewis-2.jpg

2.6 Virginia Wolf

Adeline Virginia Stephen was born on 25 January 1882 in London. Her father, Leslie Stephen was the first editor of the Dictionary of national Biography. He and Virginia's mother Julia were both married before. In 1895, Virginia's mother died and she suffered a mental breakdown. Virginia gained access to her father's library and at a young age she determined that she wanted to become a writer, although she never went to school. Her first novel 'The Voyage Out' was published in 1915, her second novel 'Night and Day' was published in 1919. Both novels were published by Duckworth co. Woolf's claim to fame as a modernist writer came when she wrote 'Mrs. Dalloway' in 1925, followed by 'To the Lighthouse' in 1927, and 'The Waves' in 1931 (Virginia Wolf, n.d.).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://tothemax.ca/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/woolf.jpg

2.7 W.H. Auden

Wystan Hugh Auden was a British poet of the 20th century and is as such one of the most famous of this time period. His work is concerned with the theme of moral and involves many aspects of his day to day life. His parents had a great impact on his work, on the one hand his mother, who was very religious and on the other his father, a doctor and psychologist. Influences of both get mixed in his poems and especially psychological aspects play an important role. He created a new style of poetry including imagery speech, describing clear pictures of certain ongoings, as well as the terminology of psychoanalysis he learned from his father(Davenport, 1995). This new style got attached to him and his fellow students of Oxford University, who were called the 'Auden Generation' (Hecht, 1993). The first publications he made were concerned with political issues, as well as strongly emotional and describe the feelings and rebellious tendencies of a student opposing the old structures of the UK. His writings were attached to a certain mysticism due to his use of special medical terms mostly unknown to the normal reader (Hecht, 1993). Special about his work was his unique writing style and technique, which was totally different to the type of writing style used until then. His position between science (Psychology) and religion occurs often in his texts and discusses on the one hand how to connect them in order to form a human world on the other hand using

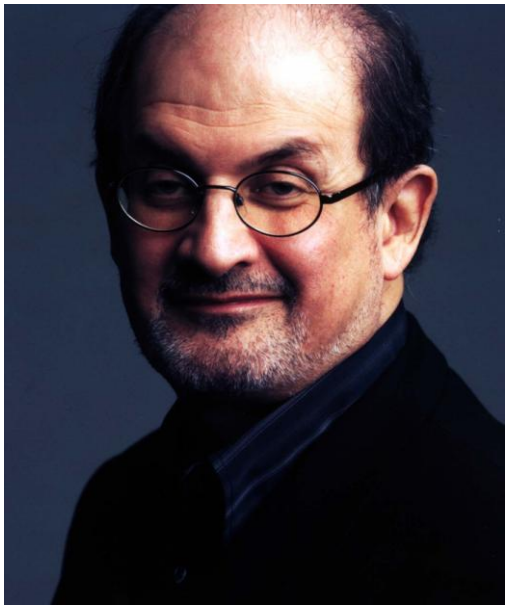
both to analyse people and society (Davenport, 1995). Concluding it can be said, that he was one of the most important poets of the 20th century who created and formed new styles of poetry and brought new topics into the old structures. Especially his philosophical connection between science and religion in order to explain and to analyse the world became famous and recognized.

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://thebestamericanpoetry.typepad.com/photos/uncategorized/2008/10/09/auden2.jpg

3. Contemporary 20th century Literature

3.1 Salman Rushdie

Salman Rushdie, originally born in India, came to Britain at the age of 14 and started his career as an author there, which was firstly successful in the 1980s. His books are mainly based on a political or historical background, to which he however adds fantasy elements. 'The Satanic Verses', a book published in 1988, is probably his most popular and his most criticised work. Since it includes a satirical portray of Prophet Muhammed, it was especially opposed by the Islamic world and resulted not only in heavy protest but eventually, in 1989, even in a death sentence for Rushdie, judged by Iran's head of state. A head money of several millions was placed on Rushdie, and Muslims from all over the world were called to enforce the judgement. The conflict even led to a temporary break-up of diplomatic relations between Iran and Great Britain. Even though Rushdie officially apologized for the portrayal of Muhammed, Iran kept the judgement and even doubled the head money to increase the effort to enforce it. Rushdie received various death threats and hence has to live under police protection. While translators of the book were actually attacked and killed, Rushdie, so far, is still alive (Salman Rushdie Biography, n.d.).



Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://meerchant.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/salman_rushdie.jpg

3.2 Nick Hornby

Nick Hornby was born in England in 1957. Today he is widely known as an English essayist and novelist. In his younger years he attended the Jesus College in Cambridge and the Maidenhead Grammar School. His best and most famous works include ‘About a Boy’, ‘High fidelity’ as well as his football memoir called ‘Fever Pitch’. He is known to make stories which are strongly interlinked with sports and music. In his stories the protagonists are often aimless and have obsessive elements (Penguin.co.uk, 2008). With regards to his private life it should be mentioned that his sister is married to Robert Harris, a best-selling English novelist. In the past Nick Hornby operated as a BBC TV reporter. Over the years he established himself as a specialist in historical thrillers. Furthermore, his books became internationally famous; as a consequence his works were translated into more than languages (IMDb.com, 2009).

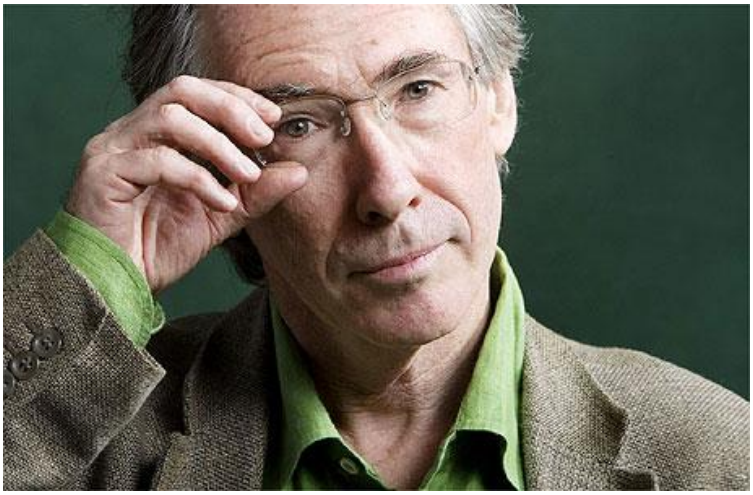
Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.imdb.de/media/rm1187354880/nm0394984

3.3 Ian McEwan

Ian McEwan (*1948-) is a well known author born in Aldershot, England. He graduated in the University of East Anglia with a MA degree in English Literature (BATB, 2009).

His works were awarded with many prices such as the Somerset Maugham Award (1976) for his first collection of short stories and the Los Angeles Times Prize for Fiction (2003). Further, he was awarded a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) in 2000 by the Queen (Ian McEwan, 2009).

His personal life is also very interesting: He was born as a child resulted by an affair of his mother during the Second World War. Before her husband could come back from war, McEwan was given away by his mother. Eventually, the husband died and Ian McEwan's mother married her former affair. However, it was after his mother's death that he got to know that he has a brother (Ian McEwan, 2009).



Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-images/Books/Pix/authors/2007/09/06/mcewan460.jpg

3.4 Doris Lessing

Lessing' most famous work is 'The golden Notebook' published in 1963. Another fact that is noteworthy about the author is that she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2007 after she was recommended for it several times. During her childhood she dropped out of school at 13. Yet, she proved that even though she dropped out of school early, getting a degree of Harvard University and even an honorary degree 60 years later is possible (Hanford, 2008).

Lessing became one of the best known British authors of the 20th century, probably also because she wrote over 50 books. At the age of 89 she published her – as she said – last book 'Alfred and Emily' (Mayerhofer, 2007).

Doris Lessing grew up in South Africa and was divorced there from her first husband in 1943. After that, she married the German Communist Gottfried Lessing. However, also this marriage was divorced in 1949. The social-critical and feministic view point that can be found in most of her works is also reflected in her way of living. As mentioned above, one topic that she often refers back to in her books is the female search for identity (Köster, 2008). This and also her way of life – being divorced twice before the beginning of the 50s – reflects why she is often described as feminist, what she rejects (Hanford, 2008). Her unhappy childhood, which was dominated by pain and a mother that was eager to raise a 'proper' daughter, was maybe one of the reasons why Lessing became such a successful fiction writer, as claimed by

herself (Mayerhofer, 2007). Due to the fact that she started early to use her fantasy in order to escape from the world she lived in. During that time she read a lot of books, for instance Dickens, which inspired her later and also, helped her to educate herself (Köster, 2008).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.dorislessing.org/

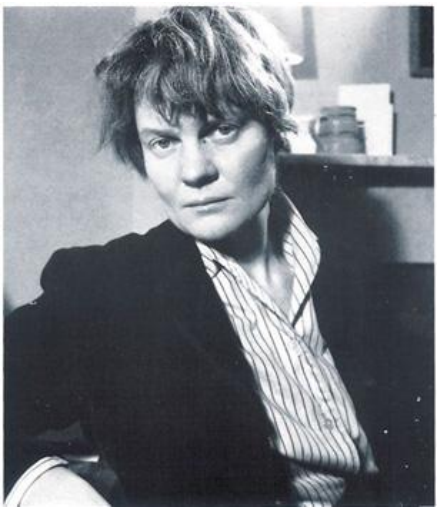
3.5 Monica Ali

Monica Ali was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 1967. When she was three years old, her parents moved to England. Ali grew up in Bolton, Greater Manchester, and later started studying at Oxford University graduating with honours in 1989. After graduation she started working at publishing and branding agencies in London. In 2003 she wrote her first novel 'Brick Lane' about a Bangladeshi family living in the United Kingdom. The theme of the book is the immigrant experience in the UK. The novel was shortlisted for the 2003 Man Booker Prize and in 2007 a film based on the book was released. Her second novel was finished in 2006, called 'Alentejo Blue' and is set in Portugal. Today Monica Ali lives in London (Monica Ali, n.d.).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.boltonschool.org/library/pics/SeniorGirls/News%5CMonica%20Ali%202004a.

3.6 Iris Murdoch

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from



http://www.nndb.com/people/439/000104127/iris-murdoch-1.jpg

Iris Murdoch, a 20th century British writer, wrote 26 novels between 1953 and 1995. Their works are often based on fantasy elements, putting the protagonists in extraordinary situations, while staying realistic. Her novels were influenced by religion and philosophy and contain deep going psychological aspects in the different characters. While novels such as 'The Severed Head' are concerned with psychological effects of the human kind, 'The Bell' as well as 'The Red and the Green' are rather typical for her, placing people in special

situations and letting them interact as realistic as possible. She drew extraordinary characters, in order to create an even more fascinating and unique picture within her novels (Kirjasto, 2009). Most of her fame Murdoch received in 1978 for 'The Sea, The Sea', with which she won the Booker Prize. It is told out of the perspective of the tyrannical director-playwright Charles Arrowby, who meets his childhood love again after 40 years but is not able to get along with her due to his tyrannical way of being. As a consequence to his inability to change, he starts an affair with a 18-year old girl, who is equally tyrannical (Kirjasto, 2009). But not only her characters are having affairs and change lovers. Her first love, the Jewish poet Franz Steiner had a heart attack and died in her arms in 1952. This was stated by Elias Canetti, a former friend of the deceased, with whom she had an affair later on. Although she married the English Professor John Bailey in 1956, but had reportedly several affairs he did accept (Bailey, 1998). As her husband states in his memoirs, to him she was a superior being. In the mid 1990's, Iris Murdoch became ill of the Alzheimer disease and died of it in Oxford 1999 (Bailey, 1998).

4. Film

4.1 Richard Curtis

Richard Curtis is a British Screenwriter and Film producer. In his early career of the 1980s, he started writing comedy for TV productions, mostly in form of sketches. These largely included Rowan Atkinson, with whom he also produced the Blackadder series of the 1980s as well as the Mr. Bean series in the early 1990s. Curtis was also successful in producing a number of those films which can be said to represent typical British comedy. For example, he wrote the script for 'Four Weddings and a Funeral', for which he was also nominated for an Oscar. When published, this was the most successful British movie of all times, but it was redeemed by Curtis' next production 'Notting Hill'. Further well known movies by Curtis are for example 'Bridget Jones' Diary' and 'Love Actually'. In 2005, Curtis produced 'The Girl in the Cafe' for BBC. The story of the movie was based on the background of a fictional G8 summit. Since it was broadcasted shortly before the actual summit, it aimed at raising awareness and questioning the meaning and the goals of the meeting. However, this movie was not the only way Curtis' engaged in politics and charity over the last years. 'Make Poverty History', for instance, was a campaign he founded in order to act against absolute poverty. The campaign, composed of over 540 member organisations, aimed at promoting trade justice, more (governmental) aid as well as dropping the dept of third world countries. Moreover, Curtis organized the Live8 concerts in 2005 in cooperation with Bob Geldorf (The Internet Movie Data Base, n.d.).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/telegraph/multimedia/archive/01176/arts-graphics-2007_1176999a.jpg

5. Music

5.1 The Beatles

The Beatles, who started off as a school band, are the most successful band in music history. Secondly, the mop-top haircut made them famous and *vice versa*. The band consisted out of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr (Schirra, 2007). Further, the song 'Please, please me' was their first number-one hit. What differentiated them from other bands during that time was the fact that they mixed up different styles of music in their songs. Though, already in 1970 the band separated, after not even having been together for 10 years (Schirra, 2007). 10 years later, one of the band members, John Lennon, was shot by a crazy fan. The band has never really reunited but all members did some solo projects, which were also successful (Laut, 2009). (Read more about The Beatles in Chapter 3).

Picture retrieved March 12, 2009, from
http://www.dailycollage.com/collages/beatles/05-the-beatles-lennon-mccartney-harrison-starr-1024x768.jpg

5.2 David Bowie

David Bowie (born 1947) is a British Singer, Songwriter, Producer and Actor and is regarded as one of the most influential artist of his times. Starting playing music in bands as well as being a solo artist in the 1960s, he was relatively unsuccessful in the beginning. Nevertheless, in the beginning of the 1970s, Bowie had its break-through with the album 'The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars' and after the following world tourney he became popular worldwide. After becoming popular, Bowie started suffering from depression and consumed cocaine and amphetamine. Nevertheless, throughout the decades, he remained successful and also cooperated with various other popular singers such as John Lennon or Tina Turner.

Despite with his music, Bowie is also famous as a character. He changed his look and image as well as his musical direction various times, what gave him the nickname 'Chameleon of Pop'. From the very beginning, Bowie played with an image of homosexuality, and even came out as a gay in interviews, even though he was married to a woman with whom he had a child. Although also his second marriage was with a woman, he

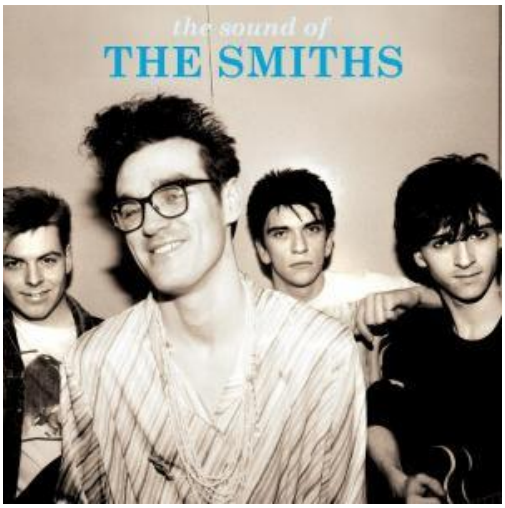
himself confessed to have had various male lovers over the years. Rumours state that Iggy Pop and Mick Jagger belonged to those lovers, but Bowie never confirmed that (BowieNet, n.d.).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://media.photobucket.com/image/david%20bowie/theketchupmess/DavidBowie1.jpg

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.musicbabylon.com/files/imagecache/body350/files/blogpics/David_Bowie.jpg

5.3 The Smiths

The Smiths are a British indie pop band of the 1980s, and are seen as the founding fathers of modern indie music. The band had four members, Steven Patrick, better known as 'Morrissey', Johnny Maher or 'Marr', Andy Rourke and Mike Joyce. The Smiths existed for five years between 1982 and 1987, and stayed in this formation of four for the entire time. Their music was based on elements of the famous Britpop, which was vanishing during the 1980s due to the new wave of synthesized electronic music. In these times, the Smiths invented a new style of music, contradictory to the actual trends and are therefore seen as the "Saviour of Britpop" (Laut AG, 2009). While their music was based on beautiful melancholic melodies played by guitarist Marr, the Smiths became especially famous for their controversial, sad and aggressive lyrics by Morrissey. Due to his use of irony and sarcasm, many of their songs have been misunderstood and misinterpreted, such as the parole "hang the DJ" in their song "Panic" (Laut AG, 2009). While the media claimed to have found racism and hate messages in the Smith's lyrics, Morrissey's intentions were different. He explained, that the parole was said against a radio DJ of the British station Radio One, who broadcasted a funny pop song after announcing the Chernobyl accident. It was also Morrissey who was able to change the perception of vegetarians within British society with the 1985's album 'Meat is Murder'. Being a vegetarian himself, he was able to take this subject into the media. During the five years of their existence, the Smiths became the idol of a whole generation of teenagers, due to their melancholic songs and modern topics of their lyrics. In 1987 the band split after a fight between Marr and Morrissey about the future way of the band. Morrissey became a solo artist, while Marr joined several other bands but never started an own band again. Andy Rourke and Mike Joyce became famous for suing Morrissey and Marr for financial damages after the split, while their career as musicians ended (Laut AG, 2009).



Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.soundbase-online.com/wp-content/uploads/Image/200709/The%20Smiths.jp

6. TV

6.1 David Attenborough

Sir David Frederick Attenborough was born in London in 1926. Attenborough studied Natural Sciences at Cambridge University. After his graduation in 1947, he started his National Service in the Royal Navy (David Attenborough, n.d.). He joined the BBC Television Talks Department in 1952, and in 1954 he started his 'Zoo Quest' series which was broadcasted for 10 years. In between he made political broadcasts, archaeological quizzes, short stories, gardening and religious programmes. In 1965, Attenborough became Controller of BBC2 and was responsible for the introduction of colour television in Britain. Four years later he became Director of Programmes with the editorial responsibility for both of the BBC's television networks. In 1973 he returned to programme-making. His most famous series 'Life on Earth' was estimated to be watched by 500 million people worldwide. Today he is best known for his natural history series 'Planet Earth' first aired in 2006 (Attenborough, n.d.).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.theage.com.au/ffximage/2007/02/06/attenborough_wideweb__470x311,0.jpg

7. Sports

7.1 The Stig

The Stig is an anonymous racing driver working for the BBC show "Top Gear". Starting in 2002, Top Gear primarily deals with testing and presenting motor vehicles, mostly cars. The identity of the Stig is a well kept secret by the BBC. This means that he or she is not allowed to talk in front of any camera or remove his helmet at any time (Telegraph.co.uk, 2009). This anonymous racing drivers' main job is to drive post lap times[29] and to train celebrities taking part in the Top Gear segment "Star in a Reasonably-Priced Car" (BBC.co.uk, 2008). Other driving duties might be carried out as well, depending on the need. There has been a lot of speculation about the Stig's identity over the past. Many pictures have been taken, apparently showing some body parts (e.g. the eyes) of the Stig. Recently the speculation in the media peaked again as a builder went to work in a person's private home and discovered the entire Stig outfit in a closet. The owner of that home turns out to be the house of Ben Collins, a famous NASCAR, Formula Three and GT driver who was also working as a precision driver for the movie 'Quantom of Solace' (BBC.co.uk, 2008).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.sablogzone.com/carzone/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/stig2.jpg

8. Architecture

8.1 William Alsop

William Alsop was born in 1947 and is a well known British architect. Currently he lives in London, from where he became famous for his numerous controversial modernist buildings.

[29] "**Power Laps** is a segment of the programme in which The Stig completes a lap around the track to compare the performance of various cars. The car tested has usually been reviewed by one of the presenters in the current episode, but sometimes is a carry-over from a previous one."

Most of his works were designed and built in the United Kingdom. His buildings usually distinguish themselves from others by their colours and odd shapes. Alsop has become famous for using bright colours in buildings and atypical forms (Alsop, 2008). Generally he is often praised by avant-garde architecture fans. The general public and numerous fellow architects have criticised him for his style of building. Some even claim his works to be an eyesore, ruining the looks of entire neighbourhoods. With regards to his personal life it is know that he has three adult children and lives in an Edwardian mansion flat in London. He is often said to drink and smoke a lot, while leading a rather unhealthy lifestyle. *The Observer* has called him “obviously not a man familiar with gyms" in an April 2007 article (Knowles, 2008).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.arkitera.com/UserFiles/Image/interview/william_alsop/alsop02.jpg

8.2 Ernö Goldfinger

Ernö Goldfinger was an architect that was influential for the British modern movement who was born in Budapest in 1902. He studied architecture in Paris at the prestigious Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts were he met the young British artist Ursula Blackwell in 1932. He married her two years later and moved to London. After the Second World War, Goldfinger was commissioned two projects, the headquarters of the British Communist Party and the offices for the newspaper the Daily Worker. In 1959, Goldfinger won his most ambitious commission as the London County Council wanted him to reconstruct at five sites at the Elephant & Castle road junction in South London. The commission included housing, leisure facilities, offices and a shopping centre. Goldfinger’s design was not always popular

and his opponents proclaimed him ‘the heartless standard bearer of modernism’ (Ernö Goldfinger, n.d.).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from

http://www.designmuseum.org/__entry/5058?style=design_image_popup

9. Fashion

9.1 John Galliano

‘*Curiosity : It’s the most important thing*’

…John Galliano (*1960-) is an English fashion designer who managed to establish his name in the scene of Paris’ Haut Couture. John Galliano was born on the British Peninsula of Gibraltar but grew up in London and studied fashion at St. Martins. His first collection ‘Les Incroyables’ was inspired by the French Revolution and proved to be very unique in the history of contemporary fashion (John Galliano, 2009).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://www.toubeauty.com/media/john_galliano.jpg

9.2 Alexander McQueen

… is the ‘Bad Boy‘ of the British fashion scene. He has his own label and received the ‘Designer of the Year Award’ several times as one of the youngest designers ever (BBC News, 2001). After his graduation collection was purchased entirely by Isabella Blow, who is a fashion editor and style icon and thus an important figure in the fashion business, his career began to start. Due to Blow’s influence, McQueen became known in the world of fashion and changed his name Lee to his second name Alexander (Fashion Forum, 2007). His collections can be depicted as “dramatic, gorgeously constructed pieces, combining elements of British tailoring with French couture” (MyMag, 2009). In contrast to most British fashion designers McQueen started - after its fourth show - to design and present collections that are wearable. His life reads like a story about the ‘American Dream’. McQueen was the sixth child of a big

family. His father earned their living by taxi driving. Even tough, McQueen is often described as “the hooligan of English fashion” or “infant terrible” and has this bad boy image. Though, he was always ambitious, hardworking and dreaming of a career in the fashion business (MyMag, 2009). It seems like the British version of the American Dream became true with Alexander McQueen.

Retrieved March 25, 2009 from
http://latefabrication.wordpress.com/2008/11/10/alexander-mcqueen-for-target-in-2009/

10. Politics

10.1 Margaret Thatcher

Margaret Thatcher is one of the most famous British politicians of the 20th century. No other politician in the past 150 years was able to stay in office as long as she did. But not only the time span of her government is remarkable, but also the way she was able to change British politics from the early 1980's onwards arguably until today. After the postwar-consensus and its socialist ideas had failed, leaving the UK bankrupt and with a high inflation, she turned away from the socialist approach and turned Britain into a liberal market. She privatized all key industries, fought inflation (although it took until her predecessor to succeed in this issue) and changed the British welfare state into a state of self responsibility. She was famous to be a harsh and strict ruler over the UK, due to which she gained the nickname 'The Iron Lady'

(Thatcher Foundation, 2009). During the 1980's she fought a war against Argentina and reoccupied the Falklands and joined the USA in the second Gulf War. Although her great success on the political stage, she originally studied chemistry at Oxford University and is one of the inventors of soft Ice-cream. After the end of her political career in 1990, she published three books on political issues, but had to stop her public speeches in 2002 after several smaller strokes (Thatcher Foundation, 2009). Summarizing, Mrs Thatcher was a great statesman, guided by the belief in self responsibility and the self healing mechanism of the liberal markets. She abolished the British welfare system and created one of the most liberal markets within Europe. Nevertheless, unemployment never had been higher in Britain than during her reign, as well as the gap between rich and poor had never been bigger. Scholars also argue, that her strict approach damaged British society and vanished the working class. Consequently, talking about Mrs Thatcher one has to recognize her influence on the modern UK, which still follows her liberal approach (Marsh, 1999).

Retrieved March 31, 2009, from
http://img.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2007/07_02/ThatcherDM1707_468x569.jpg

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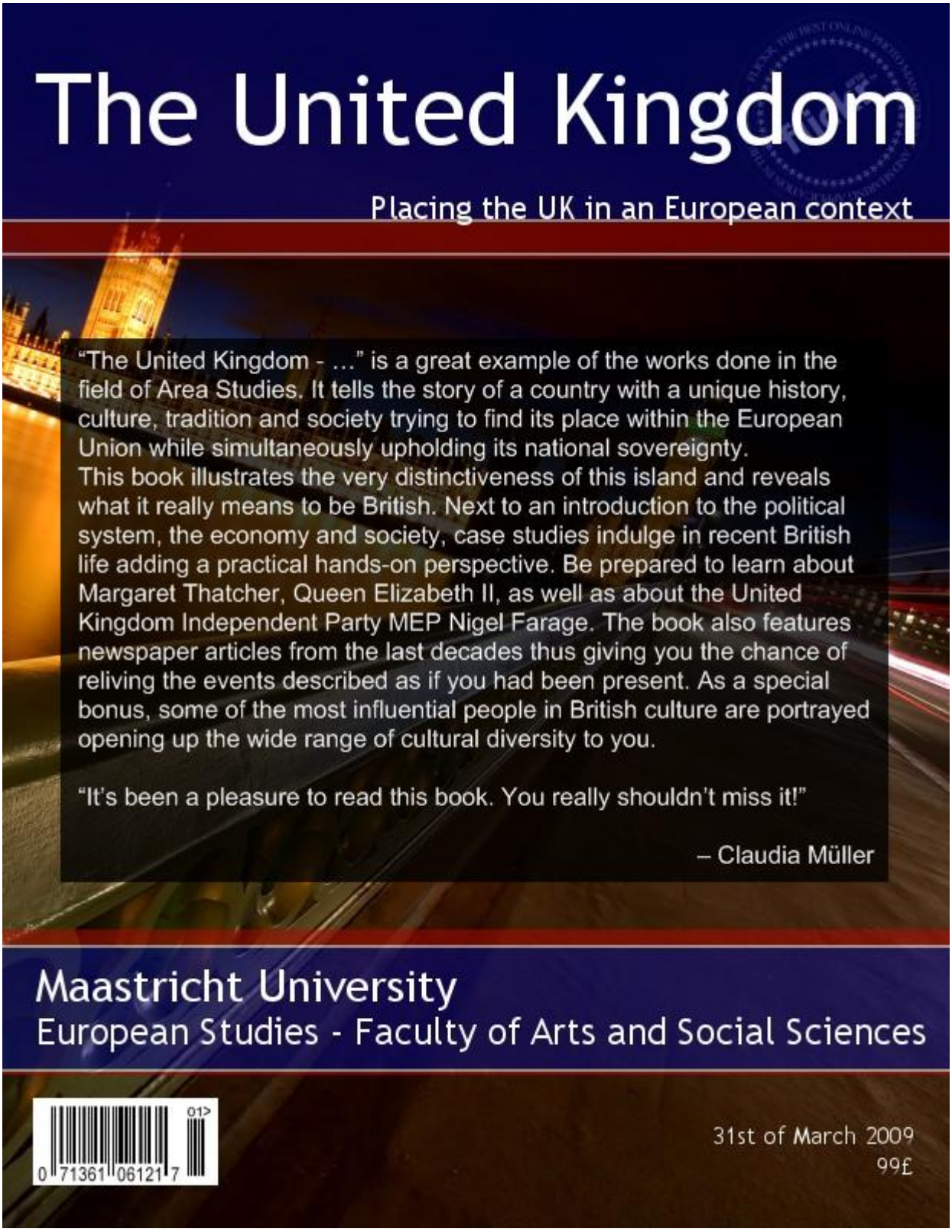
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