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**Shaw, Mark Robert (2016)**

**Why the Media Matters: A Postfunctionalist Analysis of European Integration and National Identity in Public Discourse**

**Abstract**

This study contributes to the growing literature on the politicisation of European integration in EU member states, and the United Kingdom in particular. Existing studies have shown that political identities are closely related to the levels of support held by citizens for European integration, and that citizen opposition to the EU is mobilised by political parties who activate the tension between identity and jurisdictional reforms. This study argues that existing theories of integration do not adequately acknowledge the role of the media in national debates about European integration, in light of the media's role as the main source of information on the EU for citizens. It builds upon Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks' (2009) postfunctionalist theory of European integration, to examine the process by which European integration is politicised in member states, and argues that the media should be theorised as a substantive actor in this process. It presents a new model – Media Augmented Postfunctionalism – that conceptualises the politicisation process and the role of the mass media within it. A discourse analysis of nine UK national daily newspapers and of political party discourses is deployed alongside a quantitative analysis of media positions to explore the linkages between the press, party discourses, and public opinion in the UK between 1997 and 2010.

The thesis presents evidence to suggest that the structure of newspaper positions on European integration is similar to that of parties. It goes on to explore the content and character of newspaper discourses, and shows that there is a strong association between the position of newspapers on the 'new politics' dimension and their discursive construction of the EU: those newspapers that have a strongly traditional-authoritarian-nationalist position are more likely to oppose European integration. It demonstrates that while there is a strong and cohesive anti-European discourse in the UK press, there is not a corresponding coherent pro-European discourse. This thesis finally shows that newspapers play an important role in mediating party discourses and that they substantively (re-)frame public debates on European integration, determining their character. These findings suggest that the mass media can alter the outcomes of the politicisation and contestation of the EU in member states.

**Why the Media Matters: A Postfunctionalist Analysis of European  
Integration and National Identity in Public Discourse**

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2016

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Mark Shaw  
University College, Durham University, 2016.

## Introduction

This thesis develops an account of the politicisation and contestation of European integration in the domestic politics of European Union member states. In order to do so, it examines the recent ‘postfunctionalist’ theory of European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2005; 2009), and shows that European integration theory in general, and the postfunctionalist theory in particular, neglects the role of the media in influencing public attitudes towards European integration. The thesis develops a theory — termed the Media Augmented Postfunctionalist model — of how the mass media behaves in debates on European integration, and how the positions of media actors are structured in those debates. The argument presented here is that European integration is politicised in mass-mediated public debates, in which media actors play a substantive role in setting the agenda on European integration. The experience of the United Kingdom during the Labour governments of 1997-2010 is examined through an analysis of nine national newspapers and of party discourses. This shows that the agency of media actors substantively affects the outcomes of debates on European integration in member states, and this is particularly important when considering the structure of media actor positions on Europe. It is shown that newspapers play an important role in mediating party messages, and that they exercise influence on the content and character of public debates on the EU. Specific evidence from the UK reveals a coherent anti-European discourse in the press, however there is not a corresponding cohesive pro-European discourse. Finally, the findings presented in this thesis suggest that the scope of political parties to steer debates on European integration is limited by the structure of media positions on Europe, and point to a new direction for postfunctionalist theory.

The reasons why countries choose to integrate in Europe, and the factors that determine the course and speed of European integration, have been the subject of a number of middle-range theories of European integration (Haas 1958; Schmitter 1969; Moravcsik 1993; Hooghe and Marks 2009). Recently, a growing number of studies have sought to understand where key decisions are made and what factors influence the creation of European policy in member states (Evans 1999; Peterson 2001; Marks and Steenbergen 2004; Kriesi 2007). These questions are vital in order to understand the reasons for an apparent stall, or even reverse, in the progress of European integration, particularly since the global financial crisis of 2008, and the Eurozone crisis and recession that followed. Perhaps even more significantly, the United Kingdom’s 2016 referendum on membership of the European Union brings into sharp relief questions about the course and speed of European integration. The decision of the UK electorate to leave the EU marks a watershed moment for European integration, and indicates a shift in the ‘centre of gravity’ of public debates on the EU (Goodwin and Heath 2016, 331).

Far from being assured, the future of European integration has never been in more doubt; challenged from within by populist and nationalist forces in member states which seek to halt or reverse the progress of integration. The underlying motivation for the topic of this thesis is to understand what determines the course of European integration, and what consequences arise from the apparent resurgence of nationalism in European democracies and the growing politicisation of European integration.

The theoretical model best placed to explain the recent course of European integration is, this thesis argues, the postfunctionalist theory of European integration first proposed by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (2009). Building on the multi-level governance approach (see Bach and Flinders 2004), postfunctionalism argues that the course of European integration is determined by domestic patterns of conflict in EU member states. These conflicts, which engage the tension between national identity and changing governance structures, are held to constrain the course of European integration, as national policy makers are forced to take heed of Eurosceptical publics, limiting their ability to make policy on European integration. Postfunctionalism offers a politicisation model that seeks to explain how European reforms are politicised in debates in member states, and which actors are important in this process of politicisation (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 14). Thus, the first motivating question for this thesis is to understand what determines the outcomes of debates in member states.

The second motivating question is to ask what explains citizen attitudes towards the EU, and in particular the recent politicisation of European integration. Postfunctionalist theory builds on a growing body of work that concentrates on the increasing importance of identity politics for the development and course of European integration. This literature argues that public attitudes towards European integration have become of greater importance over the past 20 years, which coincides with a greater interest from scholars in the sources of citizen attitudes towards the EU (see, for example, Anderson and Reichert 1995; McLaren 2002; Risse 2005; Boomgarden et al 2011; de Wilde and Zürn 2012; Statham and Trenz 2013; Hurrelmann et al 2015; de Wilde et al 2016). This has also coincided with a substantial increase in the depth and breadth of European integration. The emergence of growing opposition towards the integration process, and the deepening of that opposition in member states, has led scholars to ask under what circumstances citizens oppose the EU, and what drives this apparent shift in attitudes (Usherwood 2003; Usherwood and Startin 2013). While opposition to European integration existed in the years before the Maastricht Treaty, it is since the transformation of the European Community into the European Union that popular opposition to the European project has become salient to the course of integration (Eichenberg and Dalton 2007); in the

years since Maastricht, the data show falling support for the European Union among its citizens (European Commission 2014).

The issue of what drives citizen attitudes on the EU is directly connected to the question of what structures debates on the EU. Within the literature, there has been a debate over the sources of attitudes towards Europe and the factors that structure these attitudes. Over time, this debate has shifted from a focus on utilitarian and economic predictors as the explanatory factors for opposition to European integration (often termed Euroscepticism), towards a focus on so-called ‘soft factors’, that incorporate culturally driven variables including identity (see, for example, McLaren 2002; Hooghe, Marks, and Wilson 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2005; McLaren 2006; Fligstein 2008; Fligstein et al. 2012).<sup>1</sup> Postfunctionalism argues that debates on European integration are structured by a non-economic dimension that runs from a green/alternative/libertarian (or *gal*) position to a traditionalism/authority/nationalism (or *tan*) position (Hooghe, Marks, and Wilson 2002). This association is held to be particularly strong for political parties on the *tan* side of the *gal-tan* dimension, which are particularly opposed to European integration. While this association has been demonstrated for parties, it is less clear in the existing literature if the positions of other actors in debates are structured by this dimension. This thesis seeks to understand if this is the case.

This thesis argues that postfunctionalist theory is the best way to address these questions about how we understand integration and its course. However, while postfunctionalism takes us towards a middle-range theoretical framework that is able to understand recent developments in European integration, it is incomplete. Accordingly, this thesis identifies a number of weaknesses in the postfunctionalist theory of European integration as it is currently constituted, and seeks to address them. The first weakness of postfunctionalism is that it fails to give a sufficient account of identity. Indeed, this is a weakness acknowledged by Hooghe and Marks themselves (2009, 23). To resolve this issue, this thesis looks to postfunctionalism’s focus on the construction of attitudes through party messages and discourses to inform a framework for understanding how national identities are formed. It proposes to adopt that a model of identity formation that emphasises the ‘discursive construction’ of national identity. With this framework in place, the thesis goes on to identify a

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, the term ‘Euroscepticism’ is used to mean ‘opposition to the European Union’ in general terms. Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008) distinguish between two types of Euroscepticism in party systems: ‘soft Euroscepticism’ and ‘hard Euroscepticism’. Soft Euroscepticism is said to be defined as a ‘principled’ opposition to the EU, and where parties favour withdrawal from the EU or where parties’ policies are tantamount to opposition to the whole project of European integration (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008, 2). Soft Euroscepticism is defined as where there is not principled opposition, but where parties express ‘qualified opposition’ to one of more areas of EU policies or membership, or where there are claims that the ‘national interest’ is at odds with the EU trajectory (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008, 2).

more significant weakness in postfunctionalism, namely that postfunctionalism's focus on parties as the main agents in shaping and mobilising public opinion on European integration ignores the agency of the mass media. The mass media is argued to play an important role in, first, the construction of European integration in general, and second in constructing connections between European integration and national identity. The mass media is argued to be a key source of public discourses on the EU and the nation, and this holds significance for our understanding of the sources of public opposition to the EU. This insight is drawn from the literature on identity formation as well as an emerging literature on the role of the media in shaping attitudes towards the EU (Trenz 2004; de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006; Vliegenthart et al. 2008; Hawkins 2012; Van Spanje and de Vreese 2014; Michailidou 2015; Van der Pas and Vliegenthart 2015).

In addressing these issues, this thesis seeks to move forward the postfunctionalist agenda by theorising about the operation of the politicisation model that Hooghe and Marks (2009) suggest, and by offering an alternative, augmented postfunctionalist model. It offers an original contribution in two ways. First, it seeks to develop one of the most incomplete aspects of the postfunctionalist model by exploring the formation of identity and the role of media actors in mediating party discourses and constructing discourses of identity. In doing so, it offers a novel approach to integration theory by combining postfunctionalism with key findings from the political communications literature. While this insight is significant, the question of where and how the media are consequential for the outcomes of debates on European integration is the main focus of the thesis. It is shown that the media play an important role in shaping the form and outcomes of debates by mediating the messages of political parties. The literature on media effects is used to argue that the mediating role of the media in the mass arena is significant for the ability of parties to achieve their strategic objectives in relation to the EU, and thus for the operation of the postfunctionalist politicisation model. If parties cannot reliably cue public opposition to, or rally support for, the EU in public debates, then this calls into question the primacy of parties in existing postfunctionalist politicisation model. It proposes a new domestic politicisation model — Media Augmented Postfunctionalism (MAP) — that seeks to explain how and why the media matter in national debates on European integration. Secondly, it examines empirical data to provide evidence of the politicisation and contestation of the EU in the domestic politics of an EU member state, the UK, in practice. These data provide some preliminary evidence to support the new model of domestic politicisation offered, as well as providing a useful contribution to the debate about the contestation of European integration in UK public debates.

In order to do this, the thesis explores a series of questions focussed around developing an understanding of how national debates on European integration are structured, and how and when different actors are important in determining the outcomes of those debates. These research questions can be summarised as follows:

- 1) How are mass media actors positioned in debates about European integration, and do they follow a similar pattern to political parties?
- 2) How do mass media discourses represent European integration in the UK? Do they construct connections between the nation and European integration?
- 3) How are the discourses of political parties represented by the media? How do the mass media affect the outcomes of debates through their mediation of the discourses of parties?

The specific case study examined is that of the UK during the New Labour governments of 1997-2010. As one of the EU countries with the most-consistently Eurosceptic populace, the UK provides a useful case-study for the operation of the mechanisms that postfunctionalism describes. As Chapter 3 discusses, the 1997-2010 period was chosen as a recent and particularly significant period for UK European policy. The incumbent Labour Party sought to redefine the UK's relationship with the EU and 'sell' membership to a public that had been traditionally quite sceptical of the European Union (Daddow 2011). Historically, the UK has also been one of the EU Member States with the lowest levels of support for EU membership, and its citizens report among the highest levels of 'exclusive' national identity (Eurobarometer 2014). The choice of the UK as a case study also offers an opportunity to contribute to a research literature that has focused in the 'troubled' history of the relationship between the UK and European integration, taking a largely 'domestic politics approach' (Gifford 2004). This research agenda has sought to explain the 'semi-detached' approach of UK governing elites towards the EU (George 1992; 1998; Gowland and Turner 2000; Forster 2002). Many of these studies discuss the geo-political role of the British state and the outlook of British institutions and the public (Bulmer 1992; Schweiger 2007). Another focus has been on the role of parties, and particularly the divisions within them. The divided nature of UK parties on Europe, and the adversarial nature of the UK political system have been found to have contributed to the lack of policy consensus on the EU, and given considerable influence to Eurosceptic factions within the largest parties (Ashford 1992; Aspinwall 2000; Usherwood 2003). Recent contributions have detected a permanent 'Eurosceptic challenge' to governing elites, and have led to claims that Euroscepticism has become a persistent phenomenon in UK politics (Usherwood and Startin 2013; Gifford 2014).

As set out above, the UK case also takes on a greater significance in the light of recent developments. As this thesis was being finalised, the events of the 2016 UK referendum on EU membership were unfolding. In this referendum, 51.9% of those who voted cast their votes to leave the European Union, while 48.1% voted to remain in the European Union. This represents a hugely significant moment for the UK, EU, and beyond. While this study does not seek to explain specifically how it was the UK came to be the first member state to vote to leave the European Union, the research contained within it casts some light on how European integration has been constructed in public discourses in the UK, and how the media play an important role in framing debates on the EU. The result of the referendum also emphasises the importance of identity politics for theories of European integration. In the campaign itself, the Leave campaign(s) emphasised the themes of identity and national sovereignty. The slogan ‘vote leave, take back control’ signalled an important role for nationalist politics in the referendum campaign. While the full consequences of the UK’s vote to leave the EU remain unknown at the time of writing, the great significance of the referendum for the EU, and for theories of European integration, underlines the usefulness of the UK as a case study. While this study was designed and undertaken before the referendum took place — the vote to leave came in the final stages of writing up this thesis — in seeking to shed light on the process by which European integration is politicised, and in providing evidence from the UK in the years before the referendum, it adds to the wider body of evidence about the causes of the referendum outcome.

This study makes a contribution to the relatively small literature on the effect of the mass media on the UK debate on European integration. Existing studies of UK media discourses do not generally address the issue of politicisation with direct reference to theories of European integration (Anderson and Weymouth 1999; Diez Medrano 2003), or take a discourse-theoretical approach that is instructive of the shaping of the wider ‘discursive environment’ (Hawkins 2009; 2012), but which do not connect this to debates about the formation of citizen attitudes about European integration. This study locates explanations of Britain’s domestic conflict over European integration in a wider theory of European integration, allowing for the beginnings of an effort to understand the UK case in the context of European integration theory.

Overall, this thesis develops a novel postfunctionalist account of the politicisation of European integration in EU member states that has the potential to significantly alter the way in which postfunctionalist theory thinks about the outcomes of national debates on the EU. This thesis finds evidence that the UK press are positioned on European integration in a similar way to parties. The *gal - tan* dimension appears to structure press positions: *tan*

positions are consistently associated with opposition to European integration in the UK press. The ways in which the media matter to the outcomes of debates becomes clear from the findings of the discourse analysis presented: the media are able to alter the substantive character of debates through their selective reporting of party discourses, their framing and reframing of party messages, and the way that they construct their own distinctive discourses on European integration. This leads to the conclusion that the structure of mass media positions in debates in EU member states may be highly significant for the outcomes of those debates, since they act as a constraining force on political parties; limiting parties' strategic room for manoeuvre and contributing to the creation of a 'constraining dissensus' on European integration.

### *Thesis structure*

In order to address the questions set out here, the thesis proceeds as follows. Broadly, Part I of the study develops an account of the postfunctionalist theory of European integration and identifies to key areas in which this theory currently requires further development. It goes on to propose the *Media Augmented Postfunctionalist* politicisation model, and then sets out the methodology used to address the research questions set out above. Part II of the study empirically analyses the politicisation of European integration in the 'mass arena', studying the debates in the UK between 1997-2010. Part II first seeks to understand how the positions of the UK press on European integration are structured. It then goes on to analyse the content of discourses in the UK press on the EU, and then studies comparatively the discourses of the press and of parties in order to shed light the relationships between these actors.

Chapter 1 discusses recent developments in European integration theory and the emerging importance of identity in explaining the course of European integration. Postfunctionalist integration theory is introduced as a relatively recent account of the apparent 'gridlock' or 'constraining dissensus' in European integration. The chapter outlines the means by which European integration becomes politicised according to postfunctionalists, focussing on the role of political entrepreneurs in agenda-setting and discourse construction. It argues that a postfunctionalist approach allows for an understanding of how European integration is contested in public debates, and how discourses within states can constrain the process of European integration. The chapter argues that postfunctionalism does not yet contain a developed account of identity, nor of the mechanisms by which public opinion is cued by discourses that employ constructions of identity. The chapter then goes on to review some of the literature on national identity in relation to European integration. The chapter concludes that approaches which conceive of national identity as constructed discursively in everyday



practice (including in the media) are most compatible with postfunctionalism. The key elements of this discursive approach are outlined, and it is argued that the role of the mass media in presenting, reproducing, and shaping the messages of political parties on identity is important, given the role that the mass media play in the everyday construction of citizens' national identities. It is argued that we must therefore understand how the media construct identity in relation to European integration, and how they represent party discourses on identity.

In Chapter 2, the Media Augmented Postfunctionalist (MAP) model is presented. The chapter argues that the media must be incorporated as a significant actor in postfunctionalist theory, and presents the MAP model, a 5-stage process that addresses key weaknesses in the existing literature on postfunctionalism. The MAP model conceptualises the politicisation process being decided in a 'mass-mediated public debate', in which the media play an important role in producing and mediating discourses on European integration. The chapter then goes on to review the literature on media effects to substantiate these claims. In particular, the areas of framing, representation, and agenda-setting are expanded. Media framing affects are argued to be particularly significant – in constructing national identity in relation to Europe, and in construction representations of the EU which have an impact upon the formation of public opinion.

Chapter 3 sets out the methodology of Part II of the study. It recaps the hypotheses identified in Part I of the thesis, and sets out the methodology to be used to explore them. Norman Fairclough's (1995, 2000) framework for critical discourse analysis, and particularly his method for the analysis of media discourse, is outlined as the basis for this methodology. The rationale for studying the UK during the New Labour governments of 1997-2010 is then discussed in detail, and it is argued that the UK during this period provides an excellent case-study for this thesis. The two specific methods used are then discussed. The first method seeks to estimate the positions of media actors through the use of large-scale survey datasets to estimate the positions of their audiences. It then discusses the primary method of the study – critical discourse analysis. It develops an account of some of the literature on discourse analysis that forms the basis of this approach. Finally, the specific textual analysis methods and sources are then discussed.

Addressing the structure of press positions, Chapter 4 seeks to estimate the positions of UK newspapers on their support for European integration, the left-right political dimension, and the 'new politics' dimension. This is achieved through a statistical analysis of data from the British Social Attitudes Survey – using readership of newspapers as a proxy for the

newspapers themselves. It is shown that a relationship is observed between support for European integration and position on the new politics dimension, similar to that found in political parties by Hooghe, Marks and Wilson (2002). It is argued that finding suggests that the positions of newspaper readers on European integration are structured in the same way as parties, with a closer relationship between their support for the EU and their position on the new politics dimension than with the left-right politics dimension. This is significant for our understanding of the agency of newspapers in the mass-mediated public debate, and provides context for the following two chapters.

Following from the findings of Chapter 4, Chapter 5 outlines the findings of an analysis of the content of newspaper articles from nine national newspapers. Reports are analysed for their content, tone, and focus. The discursive strategies are analysed and it is argued that the same pattern priming and cueing citizens observed in party discourses can be found in newspapers. In particular, this chapter seeks to understand the key frames and narratives of discourses on Europe in the press, and the differences between the accounts of European integration found in newspapers along the new politics dimension. The differences and similarities between these discourses are examined comparatively to understand how newspapers along this dimension treat European integration differently in their reporting. It is shown that there is a general pattern of alignment between the positions estimated in Chapter 4 and the discursive content analysed, although this relationship is stronger for newspapers with positions estimated towards the *tan*-pole of the new politics dimension. This appears to confirm the conclusion that the press adopt distinctive positions in debates on Europe, and in the case of the Eurosceptic newspapers, adopt discursive strategies that construct clear connections between the defence of the nation-state and opposition to European integration. This indicates that the press play an important role in the politicisation process, and that their agency may prove decisive to parties' attempts to act strategically in the mass arena.

Finally, Chapter 6 examines the representation of party discourses in the press, in order to attempt to better understand the relationship between party discourses and the media in the mass arena. This is undertaken through the analysis of five major speeches by UK party leaders, and the subsequent press coverage of them. The framing and re-framing of speeches, and the way that party narratives are represented is examined in order to understand what effect mediation by newspapers has on party messages. It is shown that substantial re-framing of party messages occurs, and that consequently the agency of the media is significant beyond their general discursive construction of European integration. It is shown that there some evidence to suggest that the political positions of newspapers determined in the previous chapters structure this reframing, but the behaviour of the press in this regard is found to be

inconsistent. This leads to the conclusion that while the media are a significant class of actors in the politicisation of European integration, they cannot simply be substituted for parties in postfunctionalism. Rather, the chapter concludes, the media are important gatekeepers to the mass-mediated debate. This suggests that structure of press positions in member states is important in determining outcomes, since the power of the press (and other media) in mediating party messages and constructing their own narratives on European integration is considerable. This in turn is likely to influence the outcomes of mass-mediated public debates on European integration.

## Chapter 1

### Literature Review: European Integration, Postfunctionalism, and Identity

This chapter begins to construct the theoretical framework of this thesis. It does so by first locating the theoretical framework in the postfunctionalist integration theory of Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (2005; 2007; 2009). It argues that the postfunctionalist approach to regional integration theory offers a useful alternative to earlier neofunctionalist and liberal intergovernmentalist approaches, and shows that postfunctionalism can be employed as a theoretical means to understand the way in which identity is an important explanatory variable in the development of European integration. This chapter argues that by locating this study in an emergent school of integration theory, new insights into the character and consequences of public debates on European integration can be gained. Understanding the reasons why European integration has taken its present course poses questions as to how political choices are made which shape the direction, speed, and character of integration. Theories of European integration ought, therefore, to seek to understand the underlying conflicts, issues, and consequences in the integration process, and pay attention to the substantive character of the debate in Europe over integration (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 2).

The central contention of this chapter is that the complexity of identity formation and politicisation is not adequately reflected in postfunctionalist theory, however. In setting out their postfunctionalist theory, Hooghe and Marks concede that they present ‘an incomplete account of the construction of identity’ (2009, 23). This presents an area in which the theoretical framework of postfunctionalism requires further development, since identity plays a central role in determining individual citizen orientations towards European integration, shaping public opinion and structuring the debate between political parties (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 17). In order to understand how identity is politicised and mobilised by parties and other political entrepreneurs, we must build an account of identity which is compatible with the framework provided by Hooghe and Marks, but which also clarifies the relationship between identity, public opinion, and politicisation, and particularly the role of actors in the process of politicisation.

In order to do this, the chapter then sets out an account of identity formation that builds a framework centred around the role of discourse in constructing national identities. A discussion of the work of Benedict Anderson establishes national identity as the product of everyday discourses, and highlights the importance of the mass media in the construction and reproduction of national identities. The ‘discursive construction’ framework proposed by Ruth

Wodak and others (Wodak et al. 2009) is then reviewed, and it is argued that this framework is one that could provide a basis for a more developed understanding of the politicisation of identity. This discussion reveals that the construction of national identity is founded on the construction of the differences between the national in-group and foreign 'out-group'. It is shown that national identities arise from discourses in both public and private arenas, and that these discourses can be articulated by diverse actors for a range of purposes. This discursive construction framework goes on to form the basis of the alternative, Media Augmented Postfunctionalist model of politicisation presented and analysed in subsequent chapters.

The chapter therefore proceeds as follows. First, the key tenets and conclusions of neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism are briefly outlined. These two orthodox theories of regional integration have been influential in shaping the theory and practice of the process of European integration. It is then argued that a key weakness of both theories in conceptualising European integration is a failure to accommodate the importance of public opinion, and particularly public opinion driven by identity politics. In the next section, it is argued that Postfunctionalism offers a theoretical framework which incorporates the influence of identity politics and allows for an understanding of contemporary developments in the politicisation of European integration without rejecting many of the key conclusions reached by neofunctionalists. In this discussion, two of the weaknesses of postfunctionalism emerge. These are the account of identity offered, which is shown to be incomplete, and the account of the role of actors in the politicisation of European integration, where it is argued that insufficient consideration is given to the role of intermediary actors, and the media in particular. The chapter then goes on to review the literature on European identity and its relationship to national identity, and how postfunctionalism treats this relationship. The chapter finally reviews some of the literature on identity formation and argues that the 'discursive construction' model offers a good fit with postfunctionalist theory. This model emphasises the importance of diverse actors, and particularly the mass media, in the construction of national identities.

### **1.1 Neofunctionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism, and the challenge of politicisation**

Neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism constitute the most influential 'orthodox' positions on European integration, against which newer developments, including postfunctionalism and related models of multi-level governance have emerged (Diez and

Wiener 2009).<sup>1</sup> This section briefly sets out the neofunctionalist and liberal intergovernmentalist positions before discussing the recent challenge to these theories posed by the increasing politicisation of European integration. As these two theories fail to account for politicisation, the rise of identity politics, and the causes of these changes, it is shown that an alternative model — postfunctionalism — offers a means of explaining the recent course of European integration.

Building on the work of the functionalist theorists, neofunctionalism is defined by its concern with the processes responsible for integration, focusing their work on the early years of the European Communities. Neofunctionalist theorists, led particularly by Ernst Haas, identified a number of political processes which were argued to drive a process of change and alignment between the functionality of authority, and the structure of that authority (Haas 1958; Lindberg 1963; Schmitter 1969; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970; Nye 1971). Neofunctionalism refined the functionalist view of integration, recognising that the discrepancy between collective welfare and the nature of political authorities in nation-states was not sufficient as an explanans for the impulse to reform jurisdictional boundaries on a transnational basis. Their understanding of integration as a process, rather than a condition, led Haas and Lindberg to describe a process both of functional institution-building, but also of a dynamic change in the expectations and activities of political actors including parties, bureaucracies, and interest groups (Lindberg 1963; Moorhead 2003). Neofunctionalism focuses its analysis from institutions to the actors which drive the integration process. Particularly, neofunctionalists argue that reform in jurisdictional scope and competency must be conceived, initiated, and propelled by transnational interest groups which seek to generate economic and other benefits from the creation of supranational authorities. These groups are seen as being inherently utilitarian in their approach to the achievement of their goals and fulfilment of their interests (Haas 1964). Neofunctionalism emphasises that integration takes on a self-sustaining dynamism, following from the activities of political actors who are defined by their loyalty toward collective views of how their interests are best served by jurisdictional change (Rosamond 2005).

This self-fulfilling process is conceptualised by the concept of a process of ‘spill-over’, which aims to demonstrate how political actors shift to support greater amounts of integration. As new supranational institutions become established as centres of authority, they are argued to

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<sup>1</sup> Both theories find their roots in functionalism, which argues that the choices which form the driving force of European integration are made on the premise that there exists a mismatch between the scale of various human problems, and the territorial scale of political authorities charged with dealing with these problems. The existence of this mismatch between problems and territorial political authorities creates pressure for jurisdictional reforms, since governance arrangements should match the scale of the problems to be solved (Mitrany 1966). The ‘collective welfare’ benefits of supranationalism are held to be the impetus for this process of supranational institution building (Haas 1958).

become focal points for the actors driving the integration process, and the alignment between these actors and new institutions is argued to provide outcomes consistent with their preferences (Haas 1958, 292). This alignment in preferences and outcomes is argued to lead to a deepening of support for integration and in greater pressure for integration to occur. Three types of spill-over are identified. The first, 'functional spill-over', arises due to the nature of the functional tasks — institution building among them — undertaken as part of the integration process. The interdependency of many problems, particularly issues involving the regulation and administration of economic sectors, mean that it is difficult to create new institutions or regimes of governance for one area and not those to which it is interconnected. Thus, the attempt to integrate functional tasks in one area leads to the creation of new problems which are only able to be resolved through further integration of functions (Haas 1958, 283; Lindberg 1963, 10). Secondly, 'political spill-over' is held to occur as elites learn to recognise the benefits of new functional institutions. These elites — both governmental and non-governmental — are held to develop the perception that their interests are more effectively advanced through the development of supranational institutional structures; this in turn leads to a shift in their loyalties towards these new institutions, leading to their support for further integration (Lindberg 1963, 9). Finally, 'cultivated spill-over' emphasises the role of the central institutions in functioning as a 'midwife' for the integration process; embodying and 'upgrading' the common interest in order to resolve differences in the negotiation of functional arrangements. This is an element of neofunctionalism which implies a voluntary element to integration — and is therefore closer to the intergovernmental approach — than the otherwise deterministic nature of neofunctionalist theory (Tranholm-Mikkelsen 1991, 6). Thus, in neofunctionalism, a widening and deepening of integration is seen as an inevitable part of an ongoing process. Support for further integration is not seen as a function of exogenous events and trends such as deepening economic interdependence, military threat, or socialisation - but rather an endogenous result of prior integration (Moravcsik 2005, 352). The result of this process is argued to result in the outcome of an emergent political community which resembles, in many ways, domestic pluralist polities (Rosamond 2005, 241).

Neofunctionalism has been criticised on both empirical and theoretical grounds, leading a move away from neofunctionalism by some integration theorists - including Ernst Haas himself (Keohane and Nye 1975; Haas 1976; Cornett and Caporaso 1992; Wincott 1995, 598). The most significant alternative to neofunctionalism is liberal intergovernmentalism, developed primarily by Andrew Moravcsik (1993). For liberal intergovernmentalists, European integration is best explained as the result of inter-state bargaining. The impetus to integrate certain economic and political functions is a result of the aggregation of national interests by governments, followed by inter-governmental negotiation. One of the most

important theoretical reactions to neofunctionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism has sought to challenge several central elements of neofunctionalist analysis (Moravcsik 2005, 358-359). The agency of member-state governments is placed at the core of the intergovernmentalist approach, which draws heavily on the realist school of International Relations. Liberal intergovernmentalism is distinctive in that it combines both domestic and system-level explanations for how governments behave when bargaining at a European level, and in that it also offers a developed account of preference formation (Forster 1998, 348).

Central to the liberal intergovernmentalist's explanation for European integration is the assumption of state rationality. This is accompanied with an assumption that national preference formation takes a liberal, rather than realist approach, and adopts an analysis of interstate negotiation which is intergovernmentalist in nature. These, Andrew Moravcsik calls the 'three essential elements' of his approach (Moravcsik 1993, 480). Rather than the spillover described by neofunctionalists, Moravcsik and others argue that a three stage-model can explain preference formation and jurisdictional change (Moravcsik 1993; 1995; Pollack 2001). These three stages are 'foreign economic policy preference formation', 'inter-state bargaining', and 'institutional delegation'. In the first stage, national governments aggregate the interests of their constituencies, in addition to their own interests, and articulate these preferences on the national level. Moravcsik argues that these national preferences are constrained by the microeconomic interests of groups within national polities, although these constraints may be 'supplanted by geo-political and ideological motivations' in polities where 'economic preferences are diffuse, uncertain or weak' (Moravcsik 1995, 612).

The second stage of this model suggests that national governments then bring these preferences to negotiations of intergovernmental treaties. National governments therefore act as a mediating force between organised special interests and the new jurisdictional regimes they seek to create, shaping the outcomes of the process. The resulting agreements are, it is argued, reflections of the relative power and negotiating success of the constitutive states participating in each agreement (Pollack 2001, 225). The view that pressures from producer groups have been the amongst the primary forces driving European integration, is preserved in liberal intergovernmentalism, therefore. However, intergovernmentalists also acknowledge the role of ideological forces - particularly the desire of Germany to reconstruct its unity, security, and political autonomy after the Second World War (Moravcsik 2005, 359). A central feature of the approach of liberal intergovernmentalists is to challenge the conclusion reached by Haas that new institutions would, through administrative momentum created through spillover effects, drive a process of 'gradual' and 'incremental' integration (Haas 1964, 70). Rather, integration is seen to have spilled over 'only intermittently', and has proceeded 'in fits



and starts through a series of intergovernmental bargains' (Moravcsik 1993, 476). Liberal intergovernmentalism has been criticised on the grounds that it constitutes an 'approach' to the study of European integration, as opposed to an empirically testable *theory* which set out the circumstances in which it might be empirically disproved (Wincott 1995, 598-99). In particular, Daniel Wincott has argued that the biases of liberal intergovernmentalism 'cut it off from rich debate over the character of 'domestic politics'' (Wincott 1995, 599).

Thus, in the two theories outlined, we can see differing approaches to the role of actors in the integration process. Neofunctionalism places emphasis on the agency of organised interests to act as the motivating factor and driving force behind integration, emphasising the role of economic interests and the power of spillover effects to sustain and increase momentum in the integration process. Liberal intergovernmentalists explicitly reject the conclusion of neofunctionalists that the formal role of states in driving integration is 'potentially illusory' (Schmitter 2005, 259); instead emphasising the role of state governments in aggregating interests and striking 'grand bargains' which lead to periodical 'leaps' in integration as opposed to a steady, progressive process. These theories have been useful in providing theoretical interpretations for the steady progress of European integration, however they find themselves challenged by growing Euroscepticism and opposition to Europe in the public arena (Usherwood and Startin 2013).

### *The challenge of politicisation*

Developments over the past several decades in the course of European integration seem to have generated facts that 'escape the theories on offer' (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 1). The advent of increased levels of Euroscepticism, more competition between political parties over Europe, and the outcomes of referendums on European integration have led to a situation where ignoring the effects of public opinion, and identity politics, on European integration seems untenable. This increased politicisation of European integration, and rising Euroscepticism, has challenged both neofunctionalists and liberal intergovernmentalists to develop explanations for the scope and intensity of Eurosceptic challenges to European integration, which 'came as a surprise' to these theories (Hooghe and Marks 2007, 119). In particular, domestic political conflicts over Europe are not adequately explained by either theory, both of which concentrate on distribution bargaining among interest groups. An important area that both traditional theories of European overlook is the agency of national publics in shaping elite agendas, and the role played by public opinion and national identity. Two particular forms of conflict over European integration can be identified; that which

draws on economic arguments to oppose the EU, and that which employs arguments based on national identity and the loss of national independence, sovereignty, and distinctiveness (Fligstein et al. 2012).

Neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism do not capture the effects and significance of public opinion, and particularly Eurosceptic opposition, and the role played by identity politics and nationalism in engendering support for, or opposition to, integration (Niemann and Schmitter 2009, 52). Evidence drawn from across the European Union during the last decade suggests that support for European integration has been at best stable, and more likely, in decline (Hooghe and Marks 2009; Fligstein et al. 2012; Usherwood and Startin 2013). There is evidence that Eurosceptic opposition to integration has become ‘increasingly embedded post-Maastricht both at European and national levels across a range of contexts and environments’ (Usherwood and Startin 2013, 4). This has occurred both in political parties, which have been argued to be the ‘largest reservoir’ of Euroscepticism (Hooghe and Marks 2004, 416), and in non-party groups, in governments, and in the media (Usherwood and Startin 2013, 4).<sup>2</sup> Thus, identity politics is seen as being increasingly important to understanding integration (Risse 2010). Evidence suggests that, particularly following the Maastricht Treaty of 1991, party competition and the electoral salience of European integration has significantly increased. For example, between the 1970s and 1990s, the proportion of campaign statements on European issues in several European states more than doubled (Koopmans 2004; Kriesi 2007). European integration also became one of the most important issues in national party competition across Western European countries, behind only taxation and deregulation/privatisation, and in 2003 was the most salient issue in the UK, France, Malta, and Cyprus (Benoit and Laver 2006). This is supported by evidence from expert surveys conducted between 1984 and 2002, which show that the salience of European integration for parties and for internal party dissent has risen in almost all EU countries (Ray 1999; Steenbergen and Marks 2007)

One response to this in the literature has been the introduction of social constructivist theory into the field of European integration theory, particularly through the study of the Habermasian public sphere in and across European countries (Risse 2009; Checkel and Katzenstein 2009; Diez Medrano 2009). However, these studies typically treat identity as the dependent variable, raising the question of whether identity matters in explaining outcomes in European integration (Risse 2009, 156). These comparative approaches are also not guided by

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<sup>2</sup> Past research into public opinion on European integration concentrated on trade theory to build models which focus on economic costs and benefits, making the assumption that individuals and political parties calculate their support for European integration in terms of the economic consequences integration brings (Hooghe and Marks 2007, 120; see also Carey 2002; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993).

any theory of regional integration which explain the significance of domestic politics for the course of integration (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 1). Postfunctionalism has the potential to ‘bridge the gap’ between these theoretical standpoints, treating identity as the explanatory variable, while acknowledging a role for the construction of identities, and accepting the neofunctionalist explanation of the impetus for jurisdictional reform.

While neofunctionalists have acknowledged the potential role of public opinion, driven by national identity considerations, as a factor in engendering opposition to integration, this is accompanied by an assumption that loyalty to the nation would be replaced by identification to the new institutions (Haas 2001). Neofunctionalism predicts that spillover effects will operate in the same manner for public support for integration as for the tendency of elites to pursue further integration (Hooghe and Marks 2007, 119). Much in the same way that spillover is held to mean that ‘the potentiality for future creative action on the part of regionally oriented elites tends to increase’, the success of one element of integration is argued to lead to a spillover of public support for integration in other areas (Schmitter 1969, 162). In this view, the increasing politicisation of European integration is held to increase public support for Europe, as the benefits of jurisdictional change move from special interest groups to the wider society (Hooghe and Marks 2007). Over time, Schmitter argues, this effect was expected to result in ‘a shift in expectations and loyalty toward the new regional centre’ (Schmitter 1969, 166). Importantly, neofunctionalism does not allow for identity as a driving factor behind support for, or opposition to European integration. Indeed, Schmitter explicitly excludes identity as an explanatory variable, arguing that ‘interests, rather than common ideals or identity’, are the driving force behind the integration process (Schmitter 2005, 259). Similarly, Liberal intergovernmentalism ignores public opinion and issues of national identity as separate variables. Whilst intergovernmentalists accept that national governments serve to aggregate ‘interests’ in their constituencies, these are seen as relating primarily to economic and socio-economic interests, particularly commercial liberalisation and public goods provision (Moravcsik 1993, 495). Liberal intergovernmentalism thus largely ignores identity altogether (Hooghe and Marks 2007).

## **1.2 Postfunctionalism: explaining the importance of the politicisation of European integration**

Postfunctionalism, proposed by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (2004; 2005; 2007; 2009), builds upon the multi-level governance approach to develop an understanding of constraints

placed upon policy making by the political contestation of European integration.<sup>3</sup> This conflict, postfunctionalism argues, engages communal identities, which are used to politicise European integration in high level debates in EU Member States. This builds on research which has found that national identity is a factor which can act as a strong constraint on individual preferences on the level of integration in Europe (Hooghe and Marks 2004; McLaren 2006). The attachment of people to territorial entities has been shown to be important, given the role of the state as the ‘terminal political community’, the highest entity to which individuals feel allegiance, in performing governance tasks and representing citizens (Carey 2002, 392). Thus, the role of the state in making laws for nations becomes important; individuals’ perceptions of the use of government power are dependent on their understanding of which governing institutions represent their terminal political community (Carey 2002). This leads to the conclusion that individuals who feel association with a shared ‘European identity’ are more likely to support the institutions of the EU, since they represent their terminal political community, and those individuals recognise the authority of the EU to make public policy for their community (McLaren 2002; 2006). Conversely, individuals who do not identify with a shared European identity, and instead hold an attachment to their state, nation, or a lower level of community are more likely to oppose the authority of the EU to make policy within their community since they reject the notion that the EU represents their terminal political community (Carey 2002; McLaren 2002). Thus, individuals who do not identify with a European identity, and who hold a strong sense of a national identity, are more likely to be opposed to European integration. As argued below, this treatment of identity leaves many questions unanswered, not least the origin of citizen identities and the means by which they are contested in mass debates. However, the key claims of postfunctionalist theory must first be explored in order to explain why postfunctionalism offers a compelling (if incomplete) theoretical framework on which to base the present study.

As a development of neofunctionalism, postfunctionalism is founded on the premise that an understanding of the course of European integration can only be developed by looking beyond the economic preferences of interest groups, and by incorporating identity as the explanatory variable (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Postfunctionalism forms the basis of its understanding of European integration upon three connected claims. The first of these is that public and political party preferences on European integration matter, and are frequently different. The second is that these preferences matter when European integration is ‘politicized in high profile public debate’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009). The third is that the divergence of public and political party preferences has led to a ‘constraining dissensus’ over European integration. These three claims will now be examined in greater detail. The

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the multi-level governance approach, see Marks, Hooghe and Blank (1996).

emphasis on identity and discourses in public debate makes postfunctionalism a much more compelling theoretical framework for the present thesis than competing theories of European integration. This is especially the case since, in making identity the explanatory variable, postfunctionalism is able to answer the ‘so what?’ question that other approaches fail to address (Risse 2009).

The first central claim of postfunctionalism is that party and public preferences on European integration are important factors in determining the course of integration. While the importance of functional economic interest groups is acknowledged, postfunctionalism does not view these groups as ‘inherently’ decisive for European integration, rather as decisive only in ‘certain conditions’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 5). Instead, postfunctionalists claim that public and party preferences have become increasingly relevant to the outcomes of negotiations on European issues. Whereas the first three decades of European integration were driven by the primarily economic demands of organised interest groups, and had limited implications for most people, public opinion has become more relevant as the importance of European institutions has increased for the general population. This, it is argued, has resulted in a shift from an environment of ‘permissive consensus’, in which public opinion was quiescent, to one of ‘constraining dissensus’ in which ‘elites, that is, party leaders in positions of authority, must look over their shoulders when negotiating European issues’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 5-6).

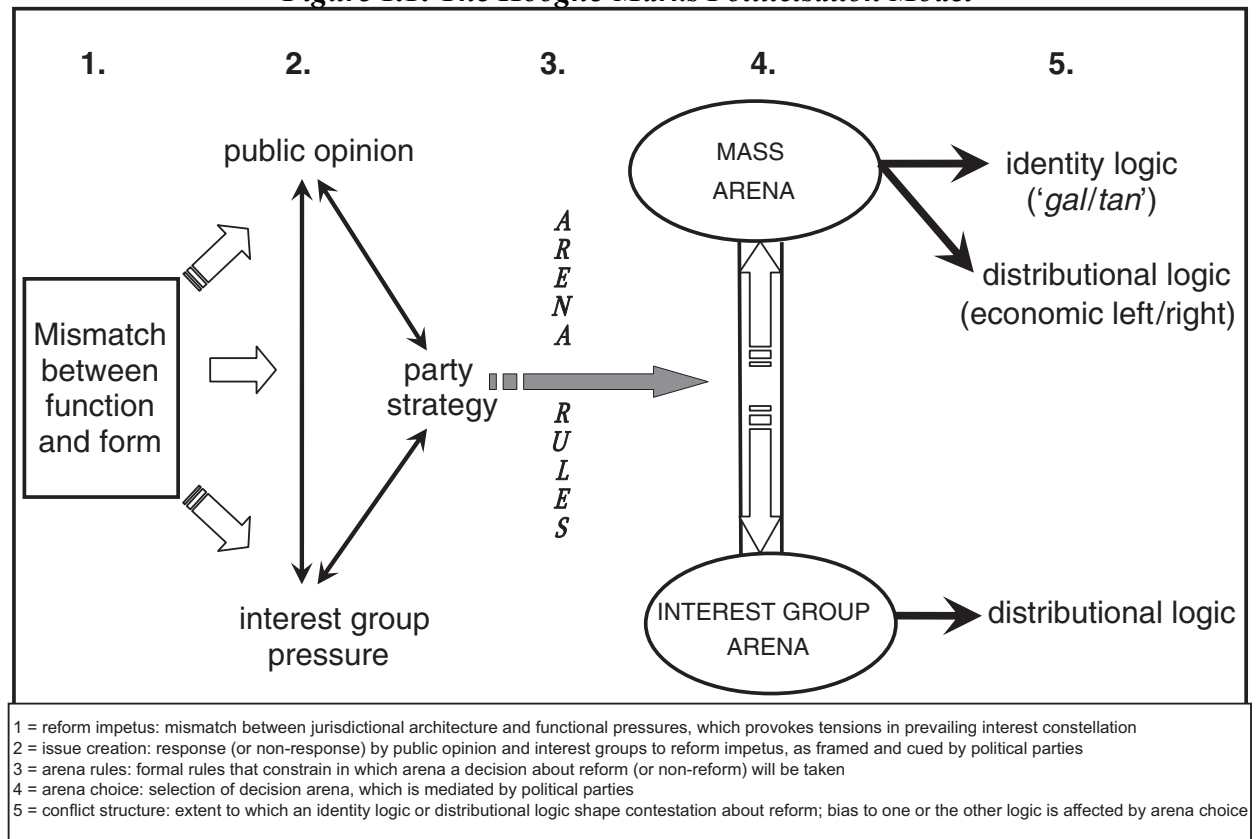
The prediction of neofunctionalists that a process in which European issues would become prominent in a European public sphere and drive further support for integration as emergent political institutions became increasingly relevant to publics is reversed by postfunctionalists. Rather than supporting the integration process, the mass mobilisation of public opinion has, instead, threatened it (Schmitter 2009, 211). Thus, the abandonment of an elite-centred view of European integration by postfunctionalism leads them to claim that that public opinion on European integration has reached a point where it is influential on the course of further integration; it is ‘rather well structured, affects national voting, and is connected to the basic dimensions that structure contestation in European societies’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 7). Public opinion on European integration has diverged from that of elites, with lower levels of support for the EU among publics (Spence 1997; Hooghe 2003). This leads to the claim that European integration has become a politicised and salient issue across EU Member States, and that public opinion is not simply an abstract or theoretical mechanism, but one which exerts real influence on the integration process (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Hooghe and Marks argue that the issue of European integration has entered what they call the ‘mass arena’, having moved away from being debated largely in the ‘interest group arena’, primarily

through the efforts of political parties seeking to gain from the politicisation of European integration (2009, 9-10). This has led to a decisive change in that the elite has been compelled to ‘make room’ for the debate on European integration in the public area and for a Eurosceptical public, meaning that ‘in 1985 the public could be ignored; in 2005 this was no longer an option’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 9). The politicisation of European integration has led to the rise of symbolic or identity politics in the debate on integration (Carey 2002, McLaren 2006, Hooghe and Marks 2009, Usherwood and Startin 2013).

While the arrangements for governance and the jurisdictional architecture of Europe have been transformed by the development of the European Union, the central argument of the postfunctionalism thesis is that the way that citizens conceive of their identities has not been similarly transformed (Hooghe and Marks 2007, 2009). The growth of mobility, and of transnational social and cultural interaction within Europe has not precipitated the construction of a collective European identity at the same rate at which jurisdictional change has occurred (Fligstein 2008; Fligstein et al. 2012). Hooghe and Marks argue that Eurobarometer and other survey data do not support evidence of an increase in identification toward Europe, and a shift away from exclusive national identities (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 14). For many Europeans, the factors which promote a sense of European identity — interaction across borders, tangible economic benefits, and social benefits delivered by the European Union — may not be present in great enough quantity (Fligstein 2012). This creates a tension between ‘rapid jurisdictional change and relatively stable identities’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13).

This tension is politically significant due to the increased salience of European integration. Integration in Europe has increased significantly in depth and in scope, and this has been accompanied by measures to increase the mobility of capital, goods, and people, which has led to a breakdown of national barriers within the EU (Börzel 2005). Parties are held to play key roles, as ‘political entrepreneurs’ in the politicisation of European integration, and the ‘cueing’ of this tension in order to turn it into a salient political issue. This, it is argued, is mobilised by what Hooghe and Marks describe as ‘political entrepreneurs’, who construct accounts of the connections between national identity, cultural and economic security, and European integration and the enlargement of the EU, since these connections cannot be directly induced from the experiences of individuals (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13). Given limited public knowledge and time for individuals to consider their economic interests in relation to European integration, it is argued that parties act to cue individuals toward their own position (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 10). These cues may, however, come from different sources, including ‘the media, intermediary institutions such as trade unions or churches, or

*Figure 1.1: The Hooghe-Marks Politicisation Model*



from political parties' (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 10-11). Political entrepreneurs, particularly political parties, must mobilise the tension between static identities and evolving jurisdictional arrangements in order to create politicisation. This is crucial, since the nature of European integration, the effects of which are hard for individuals to evaluate from direct experience, means that public opinion on Europe is particularly susceptible to construction through discourses from political entrepreneurs in the public sphere (Hooghe and Marks 2009; Risse 2010).

*The politicisation of European integration*

The means by which the politicisation of European integration has been incorporated into national politics is dealt with by Hooghe and Marks as a party political question; they seek to discover how European issues connect (or otherwise) to existing patterns of domestic conflict (see Hooghe and Marks 2009, 14-19). Rejecting a left-right model of contestation structures, postfunctionalism instead argues for a model of competition based on a non-economic 'new politics' dimension, rather than economic redistribution, since the level of economic distribution practiced by the European Union is currently low at 0.75 per cent of its total economic product (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 15). In addition, a left-right conception of

competition is not thought adequate enough to capture the dynamics of party competition in Europe, which is not only concerned with redistribution from the rich to the poor, but also across member states from the wealthier north and west of Europe to the poorer south and east, alongside the challenge of increasing cultural diversity with the addition of new member states to the east and south (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2003).

Postfunctionalists have suggested, therefore, that political competition over the issue of Europe is now defined by identity and distributional issues; left-right conflict over outputs is joined by conflict over the boundaries of the political community, which is a 'rather more combustible issue' (Hooghe and Marks 2004; 2009, 16). Economic left-right political position is argued to be less associated with party positions on European integration than non-economic left-right dimensions which postfunctionalists have found to hold a much stronger association. These are defined as, alternatively, a green/alternative/libertarian (abbreviated as *gal*) position, and a traditionalism/authority/nationalism position (abbreviated as *tan*) (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002; Marks et al. 2006). These groupings of party positioning are claimed to be associated with positions on national identity, particularly on the part of the *tan* dimension. Opposition to integration on this side of the political cleavage is on the grounds of nationalistic arguments; integration is held to dilute the sovereignty of the nation state, weaken self-determination, and introduce foreign ideas to the in-group (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 17-18). Thus, the same force that drives public opinion on European integration is also held to structure the contestation of Europe by political parties. This association is particularly strong for parties on the *tan* side of the dimension due to the strong defence of the national community associated with parties located towards the *tan* pole - they defend the nation-state 'against international regimes and against multiple territorial identities' (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 17). This division can arise within parties, for instance in the internal divisions in the UK Conservative Party since the late 1980s, which has been divided between those taking a *tan* nationalist position, and neo-liberals who support European integration (Turner 2000; Bale 2012).

A number of factors influence when parties attempt to politicise an issue. Parties are particularly incentivised to seek to politicise an issue when they see an electoral advantage to doing so. Parties with potential electoral popularity on an issue are more likely to seek to politicise European integration, however this is potential constrained by reputational considerations and the ideology of their party, along with the need to ensure party unity (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 19). The chance of an issue entering mass politics is held to be determined by 'whether a political party picks it up', rather than the intrinsic importance of the issue (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 18). Parties are able to overcome interest group politics,



as mass politics trumps the interest group arena when both are engaged on an issue: the more attentive the public is to an issue, the less influential lobbying is likely to be (Lowery 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2009, 18-19).

The process of party-driven politicisation given by Hooghe and Marks is outlined in figure 1.1. This is a five-stage process whereby the impetus for reform arises from a mismatch between the form and function of jurisdictional arrangements. Parties respond to public opinion and pressure from interest groups at (2), leading to issue creation. Arena rules (3) - such as those which require a referendum on transfers of national powers - influence the ability of parties to push debate into the mass arena (4). If issues do enter the mass arena (5), then they are decided by a conflict structure which is biased towards identity. Issues which remain in the interest group arena are decided on distributional logic (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 9). The arena is both a dependent and explanatory variable, in this model. However, this raises the question of the factors that influence the outcome of contestation issues at stage 5, in the mass arena: what factors lead to identity logic constraining policy making? Postfunctionalism argues that parties are decisive, that they can frame European integration as antithetical to support for the nation and its institutions, and that parties are able to cue opposition among individuals with these exclusive identities to opposition of European integration through mobilising these sentiments (Hooghe et al. 2007; de Vries and Edwards 2009).

In shaping arena choice, parties are able to determine where the contestation of European reforms take place. If this contestation occurs in the mass arena, it is argued that *gal/tan* identity logic is more influential than left/right distributional logic (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 9). Contestation of European integration in the mass arena means that the interest group arena, which is a closed shop of government leaders, interest groups, and Commission officials, is bypassed. Instead, European integration has become 'a field of strategic interaction among party elites', one in which parties compete for power and to influence public opinion (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 9). Identity is held to be causally important for European integration because European integration it has opaque economic implications, much clearer communal implications, and is debated in public forums by mass organisations (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). In these debates, identity becomes the decisive issue because it affects public opinion on European integration, and is held to be important in this regard in three ways. First, in that it holds greater weight in public opinion than for elites or interest groups; second, that it must be politically constructed in relation to European integration; and third, that individual citizens who identify exclusively with the nation are more likely to oppose European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). Party debates on European integration

are thus held to be structured by identity. Party competition in this field pits market and cultural liberals against social conservatives and nationalists, and varies across European states in the geometry of the parties that embody these values.

### *The deficit in postfunctionalist theory*

As Hooghe and Marks acknowledge, their account of politicisation is incomplete, since they do not give a full treatment to the construction of national identity (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 23). The fundamental argument of this chapter is that through the incompleteness of their account of identity, postfunctionalists neglect the agency of a significant actor in the process of the construction and politicisation of national identities: the mass media. This argument arises from two deficits in the account of the construction of identity as given by Hooghe and Marks (2009). The first is that while they argue that identities change slowly and are not fixed, the processes by which identity comes about, and by which it comes to be defined by exclusive constructions of the nation is not explored. This process can be understood as the long-term formation of citizen identities, against which representations of European integration are constructed. Understanding how citizen identities arise is important to developing a clearer understanding as to when and how political entrepreneurs are able to politicise European integration through appeals to these identities.

This leads to the second deficit of postfunctionalism, namely that it does not give sufficient treatment to the role of other (non-party) actors in this construction process. The current politicisation model is predicated on the ability of parties to effectively cue opposition to European integration through public communication, however public communication often relies on intermediary actors that connect parties to the public (Statham and Trezn 2013).<sup>4</sup> As the next sections argue, these two issues must be resolved in order for the explanatory mechanism of postfunctionalism to properly accommodate national identity as an independent variable. We must understand how national identity arises and is reproduced in order to understand how it can be used to frame European integration as a threat to the nation. Similarly, we must understand how parties are able to communicate these messages to the public, in mass-mediated debates, in order to understand how the Eurosceptical outcomes that postfunctionalism predicts come about from the public contestation of European integration. The first of these tasks is addressed in the second part of the present chapter, while the second is addressed in Chapter 2.

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<sup>4</sup> This issue is explored in detail in the next chapter.

### 1.3 Postfunctionalism and identity

The next task of this chapter is to outline an account of national identity that is compatible with the theoretical framework provided by postfunctionalism, therefore. In order to do this, the question of what national identity is and how it arises must be addressed. Therefore, this section outlines the account of identity given in postfunctionalism, in order to situate the subsequent discussion of the formation of collective identities in an appropriate theoretical field. It goes on to review the literature on the concept of ‘European identity’, which has become a locus for research on the interaction between national and European identities.

The concept of identity is discussed in the postfunctionalist corpus primarily in terms of national identities *versus* European identity (Hooghe et al. 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2009). According to Hooghe and Marks (2009), political conflict structured around and engaging communal identities is the main determinant of policy outcomes toward European integration. Individuals who hold an exclusive sense of national identity are less likely to support European integration than those who hold a mixed identity, or who identify primarily towards Europe or a ‘European identity’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009). What matters is ‘whether a person conceives of her national identity as *exclusive* or *inclusive* of other territorial identities’, because individuals who hold an exclusive sense of identity are liable to be cued to believe that European integration is incompatible with ‘love of their country’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13). This cueing is undertaken by ‘political entrepreneurs’, primarily parties.

As discussed above, postfunctionalism adopts three generalisations which guide their understanding of how identity affects public opinion on Europe (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). These are: first, that ‘identity has a greater weight in public opinion than for elites or interest groups’; second, that ‘identity does not speak for itself in relation to most political object, but must be politically constructed’; third, that ‘the more exclusively an individual identifies with an ingroup, the less that individual is predisposed to support a jurisdiction encompassing outgroups’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). As Hooghe and Marks note, in order to make sense of the relationship between national identity and European integration, we need to theorise how ‘national identity can both reinforce and undermine support for European integration’ (Hooghe and Marks 2006, 424). For postfunctionalists, the most important aspect of political identities is not the specific group or groups with which citizens identify, but rather ‘how different group identities relate to each other, and whether and how they are mobilized in elite debate’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). While the governance of Europe has been transformed by supranationalism and the emergence of a new jurisdictional architecture, the way that citizens form and conceive their identities has remained constant. As a result,

‘Europe is faced with a tension between rapid jurisdictional change and relatively stable identities’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13).<sup>5</sup> However, the mechanics of this mobilisation in elite debate, and indeed the means by which citizens come to possess a sense of national identity, are left unexplored. Perhaps the most crucial of these three generalisations is that identity must be politically constructed. Public opinion on European integration is particularly susceptible to the construction of identity in relation to it, and this is defined in terms of three processes: priming, or making a consideration salient; framing, or connecting a consideration to a political object, and cueing, or installing a bias (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13). While the extant literature on postfunctionalism leaves the *origins* of identity largely unexamined, the emphasis on the social construction of identity places it within the modernist field of identity theory.

Current postfunctionalist theory makes several further assumptions which guide its account of identity. The first is the idea that humans are innately ‘ethnocentric’, and favour their own group over others. This does not necessarily mean that people are inherently hostile to outside groups, merely that they define their own identity in relation to those other groups. This draws on the work of Social Identity Theory (SIT), which has become key to accounts of the interaction between conceptions of national and European identity in the ‘European identity’ literature.<sup>6</sup> Individuals may have multiple identities, identifying with communities at different scales (Côté and Levine 2002). National identity has been the most significant form of group or community identification in the modern world, being ‘very widely held and even more commonly taken for granted’ (Gellner 1983, 409). Thus, we can understand national identity as being one level of group identification, while identification towards Europe in general or the European Union in particular is often termed ‘European identity’ (Eder 2009; Risse 2010). Social Identity Theory suggests that identities can be a source of tension. Since individuals and groups define their identity in relation to the ‘Other’, this can entail an implicit rejection of those out-groups. This may be part of a ‘competitive response’ whereby individuals try to achieve a ‘distinctive and positive’ image of their own in-group (Nigbur and Cinnirella 2007). The extent to which this competition may lead to hostility toward out-groups is debated in the literature (see, for example, Triandafyllidou 1998; Brewer 1999; Nigbur and Cinnirella 2007). However, some studies have found that derogation of out-groups is more strongly associated with those individuals who have been primed with an intergroup comparison orientation, supporting the assertion by Hooghe and Marks that the role of priming, framing, and cueing is central to the process of conflict along identity logics (see Hopkins and Murdoch 1999; Hopkins 2001; Mummendy, Klink, and Brown 2001).

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<sup>5</sup> For a full exposition of the claims of postfunctionalism, see Chapter 2.

<sup>6</sup> See Eder (2009) for an overview of the dominance of SIT in contemporary scholarship on European identity.

Thus, postfunctionalism offers an account of identity that suggests that identities are socially constructed. It does not specify the mechanisms which contribute to this construction, nor does it explore the potential consequences that a more developed theory of identity might have for the wider explanatory potential of the postfunctionalist research agenda. We must therefore turn to the wider literature on the formation of national identities, and the possibility of a 'European identity', to explore this aspect of national identity, and the mechanisms by which it comes to be politicised.

*The relationship between national identity and 'European identity'*

If tension between national identities and European integration is at the core of the postfunctionalist thesis, then the concept of a European identity can be seen as the conceptual opposite of closely held national identity (Risse 2010). Understanding the extent to which citizens identify with Europe is important, since postfunctionalism expects that it is the emergence of a European identity that might relieve the tension between feelings of national identity and European integration. This change, postfunctionalists predict, will be at least in part generational (Hooghe and Marks 2009). A great deal of attention has been paid to the possibility of the emergence of some form of European identity among European citizens (Bruter 2005; Robyn 2005; McLaren 2006; Magistro 2007; Checkel and Katzenstein 2009; Risse 2010; Spiering and Wintle 2011; Fligstein et al. 2012). A variety of research methods have been applied to the measurement of this European identity. A number of scholars have concentrated on identity in the context of institutions: for instance, the role of the central institutions of the EU in the socialisation of actors (Risse 2006; Checkel 2007). However this approach ignores the role of political dynamics and the mass identities of citizens, which postfunctionalism holds to be highly significant. A more substantial strand of work examines the possibility of a European identity through the use of survey and experimental data to measure the extent to which citizens identify with Europe and how multiple levels of identity - European and national - interact and shape attitudes. The core of the postfunctionalist case for the importance of identity is based on this work, and the finding that strongly held national identities correspond with low levels of support for European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2005, 2007).

Citizens who strongly identify with a national community are more likely to support exclusionary norms and are more likely to perceive European integration as a threat - to their own identity and to their national communities. There is a significant association between the strongly-held identification of individuals with their nation-states and their support for

European integration (McLaren 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2005). This relationship between national identity and opposition to European integration is crucial for the wider operation of the postfunctionalist model. Feelings of national identity are a 'strong influence' on the evaluations of individual citizens of European integration, and the effects of this influence are 'at least as significant as utilitarian explanations, such as income, education and subjective economic competence' (Carey 2002, 407-8). Evidence suggests that opposition to the EU 'is not just about cost/benefit calculations or about cognitive mobilization... but about fear of, or hostility toward, other cultures' (McLaren 2002, 553). As McLaren notes, while the role played by the EU in the cultural affairs of Member States is minimal, 'many Europeans are likely to perceive that the European project as a whole is designed to strip away their national cultures and identities' (McLaren 2006, 74). Opposition to European integration is frequently associated with a defence of the nation state against the European Union and its institutions. For instance, Christin and Trechsel (2002) find that in Switzerland, the greater attachment to the nation held by Swiss citizens, the less likely they are to support Swiss membership of the European Union. This effect also works in the opposite direction. Indeed, even relatively weakly held identification towards the European Union correspond with higher levels of support for, and approval of, European institutions (Citrin and Sides 2004).

Survey methodology has also been used to identify trends in identification by citizens towards Europe. For instance, Bruter (2005, 166) argues that 'a mass European identity has emerged over the past 30 years' and that this identity 'continues to grow', drawing on data from mass surveys and experiments to argue that news and symbols have an impact on the way that respondents conceive of their identities, and that exposure to positive news about the EU creates a greater identification toward Europe. Eurobarometer data is often used in these studies; for instance McLaren (2006) shows that individuals who are concerned about 'perceived threats to group level economic resources and symbols' are less likely to identify with Europe than those who feel that national are not threatened by integration. This is manifested in opposition to the transfer of health and social welfare policy making to the EU, for instance (McLaren 2006, 190). Other methods include the use of a psychological approach based on Q methodology. For instance, Robyn (2005) finds that there is a significant amount of support across the seven countries studied for the EU, but this does not translate to support for a specific European identity - national pride, he argues, exists alongside support for European integration, however there is 'little agreement' on what a European identity might look like (Robyn 2005, 229).

Correspondingly, a literature has emerged which examines the theoretical basis for the development of a common mass European identity, and the interaction between this identity

and national identities. This is useful for the purposes of this chapter in that much of this literature sheds light on the compatibility of dual European and national identities. The creation of a European in-group, it is argued, arises from the everyday interaction of citizens across national boundaries (see Fligstein 2008). This conception of European identity echoes the processes of the formation of identities within nation-states in many respects (Davidson 2008). Among those arguing for the importance of a 'civic' European identity, Fligstein et al (2012, 109) argue that 'it is the people who are involved in these routine interactions who are most likely to come to see themselves as Europeans and be involved in a European national project'. They also find that the conception of European identity that has developed among those who think of themselves, in part or in whole, as European is of a civic or cosmopolitan nature (Fligstein et al. 2012, 117). Those who consider themselves to be European - at least in part - tend to be those who live, work, or travel in other European countries, speak other European languages, or belong to European networks or associations. Thus, for these people, it is argued, European identity is tied up with the freedoms associated with the EU and the single market: those who accept the rules and values of the EU can be citizens of the EU, without regard to characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, religion, or culture (Fligstein et al. 2012, 116-117).

This literature also gives support to the notion that individuals holding inclusive or multiple identities is consistent with continuing to hold an attachment to a national community (Fligstein 2008; Robyn 2005; Risse 2010). Diez Medrano and Guitierrez (2001) argue that a European identity is simply one component of a more complicated nested system of identities which include national, regional, and local identities (including those associated with cities or even neighbourhoods). Individuals may hold several identities simultaneously, each activated in different contexts. Similarly, Risse (2005, 2010) argues that national and European identities are not necessarily incompatible, because these identities relate to different communities - one can be both European and French without the two identities coming into conflict, if those identities are activated under different social conditions. The extent to which it is normatively desirable for identification towards the European Union to take on the 'us' and 'them' characteristics of the nation state has also been questioned. Wittlinger (2009, 381) argues that it is a mistake to wish to shape the identity structures of Europe in the same way as the state-based nationalism of the twentieth century - which produced conflict and 'nationalism at its worst'. Instead, 'a European Union that does *not* bind its citizens emotionally, *is* evaluated in terms of costs and benefits, and does *not* manage to mobilise its citizens' could be considered to be 'a welcome and appropriate response to the twentieth century' (Wittlinger 2009, 381). The significance of this is that we should pay attention to the context in which identities are engaged and potentially politicised. Whereas exclusive national

identities are the focus of postfunctionalism, individuals with multiple identity attachments may be still liable to be cued into opposition to European integration if attachment to the nation is perceived to be threatened.

The role of national history and culture, as important determinants of these contexts, is significant, therefore. Discourses of history and culture are argued by a number of studies to be particularly influential in the patterns of support for European integration in Member States. For instance, national histories shape the way in which debates over Europe are conducted (Diez Medrano 2003). An apt comparison here is between the UK (and particularly England), and Germany. In regards to the UK, a number of authors have argued that opposition to European integration is grounded in the history of British imperialism, with Britain's imperial past exerting a considerable influence on the popular conception of British national identity (Young 1999; Diez Medrano 2004; Schweiger 2007). Meanwhile Germany's pro-Europeanism is argued to be product of the legacy of Germany's role in the Second World War and Germany's Nazi past: the experience of the war has led to a commitment to European integration both from elites and mass publics (Diez Medrano 2003; Wittlinger 2010). Indeed, Germany has been described as following a 'European vocation', one that led it to avoid discourses of national interest in favour of the European interest (Paterson 2011).<sup>7</sup> These studies highlight the importance of understanding the context of the politicisation of European integration: while a the general model of postfunctionalism can explain the common processes of politicisation and contestation across member states, divergent national cultures and histories may lead to significant differences in the context of this process in each Member State.

Thus, while the literature is mixed in its conclusions on the emergence of a coherent European identity, it does provide insight into the complex relationship between national identity and attachment to a European identity. However, it is the political use of exclusive national identities that are the constraining factor in postfunctionalism, and it is to these exclusive national identities that this chapter now turns. Having laid out the account of identity presented by postfunctionalism, the theoretical basis of this account will now be explored, in order to expand and clarify the understanding of identity in this thesis.

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<sup>7</sup> However, in recent years a 'tipping point' seems to have been reached where Germany's traditional Europeanism has declined at the same time that it has been pushed 'somewhat reluctantly centre stage' in Europe (Paterson 2011, 57).



#### 1.4 How is national identity constructed? The ‘imagined community’ and the discursive construction of national identity

The wider literature on national identity is extensive: the formation of collective identity in general, and national identity in particular, has been of interest to a broad range of sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and historians. As Wodak et al. (2009, 18-19) note, many of the key concepts of national identity, including nationalism and the idea of the ‘nation’, are essentially contested. While in Europe, nations have developed since the late Middle Ages, the history of the nation is one of unique trajectories and special paths. As a result, ‘there is no generally accepted definition of a ‘nation’, nor is there any general consensus on the time from which one can speak of a ‘nation’” (Wodak et al. 2009, 18). National identity has become ‘an all-purpose catchword’, particularly in relation to the causal connections between culture, the nation-state, and European political integration (Schlesinger 1987, 220). In the 1990s, the focus of analyses of nationalism shifted toward a debate between those who took a modernist view of nationalism, emphasising the role of nation-state building and modern print communication, with those scholars who understood the historical bases of national identities as being rooted in ethnic affiliations and cultural cleavages (Smith 1995; Anderson 2006; Savage et al. 2010).<sup>8</sup> More recently, the role of globalisation and the influence of everyday practices of national identity in hybrid conditions has become a locus for research (Savage et al. 2010, 598).<sup>9</sup> It is in the modernist strand of literature that we can locate the work that is most compatible with postfunctionalism. This section reviews this work, and concentrates on the idea of the nation as an ‘imagined community’, constructed by political actors. Key strands of these perspectives are briefly reviewed, before turning to theories of national identity that consider the role of the construction, by elites and other actors, of the nation. This leads to the conclusion that postfunctionalism should give consideration of the different types of actors - beyond political parties - that construct identity, and in particular the media.

##### *The ‘imagined community’*

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<sup>8</sup> Earlier perspectives developed ‘Primordialist’ claims to the origin of the nation, which differ from modernist claims in that they assume that the fundamental building-blocks of the nation are pre-existing ethnic groups or communities (Smith 1991). The world consists, in this view, of ‘natural’ nations that must be restored or reawakened (Pearson 1993). These primordial nations are held to arise from factors including ‘blood ties’, or quasi-kinship, race, language, geography, religion, and custom (Geertz 1973; Smith 1998). On these lines, any new states are held to be susceptible to discontent arising from primordial attachments - which have ‘an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves’ (Geertz 1973, 259). Thus, for primordialists, the nation exists as a deeply held characteristic, arising from one’s birth into a particular religious, linguistic, or cultural community (Geertz 1973, 260).

<sup>9</sup> Contemporary debates on national identity have largely moved away from those who adopt a primordialist perspective, towards debates between those who conceive of the nation as a product of modernism (Smith 1995).

While there are many theories of national identity, modernist theories appear to be most compatible with postfunctionalism. Of all the modernist theories, that of the ‘imagined community’ has been one of the most influential on the work of political scientists investigating the relationship between national and European identity (see for instance De Cillia et al 1999; Edensor 2002; Fligstein 2008, Risse 2005, 2010; Wodak et al. 2009; Fligstein et al. 2012). Originating in the work of Benedict Anderson, this work defines national identity in similar terms as earlier modernist thinkers, but with a different solution to the concept of elite construction and mass response to national identity (Smith 1998, 131). The nation is, according to this theory, ‘an imagined political community’ which is ‘imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign’ (Anderson 2006, 6). Anderson’s understanding of the nation is thus centred on three concepts - community, limited boundaries, and sovereignty. Nations are imagined because of the scale that a national political unit inherently demands: ‘the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them’ (Anderson 2006, 5-6). In this, Anderson follows Gellner, who argues that ‘nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist’ (Gellner 1964, 169; Anderson 2006).

Three key elements constitute the ‘imagined’ nation. The first is that the nation is imagined as a *community*. The nation is a ‘deep, horizontal comradeship’: the fraternity of nationhood is described as the force behind the willingness of millions to die for their nation (Anderson 2006, 7). Second, the nation is defined as *limited*. That is, even the largest of nations is encompassed by finite borders, beyond which other nations exist. For Anderson, nationalists do not ‘dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation’ (Anderson 2006, 7). As discussed above, this idea, as with much of the modernist view of nationalism and national identity, draws on social identity theory: in-groups are defined against the existence of out-groups; in order for there to be an ‘us’, there must be a ‘them’. Finally, the nation is imagined as *sovereign*. Drawing on the changes heralded by the Enlightenment and the subsequent erosion of the ‘hierarchical dynastic realm’, Anderson argues that nations are imagined as being free - either ‘under God’ or directly. The ‘gauge and emblem’ of this status is sovereignty (Anderson 2006, 7-8). If the nation is imagined in this way, then we can argue that forces, internal or external, which impinge on any of these three elements, might be effectively constructed as a *threat* to the nation (see below).

The explanans for the emergence of mass national identities is the development of capitalism and the print media, and the convergence of the two - giving a new conception to the role of elites in constructing the nation. What Anderson calls ‘the fatal diversity of human language’

created the opportunity for the creation of new imagined communities, establishing the foundations for the modern nation-state (2006, 46). This account outlines an everyday and mundane cultural process. Instead of staged traditions, public festivities, or national ‘high cultures’, national identities emerge out of the spread of local written languages, and the use of those languages by elites, via the emergent print-media, to form national communities.<sup>10</sup> The regular ritual of reading the same daily or weekly newspapers, and other print publications is a key element of this. The discursive construction of the nation in newspapers, which explicitly address the reader as part of a nation in-group, and contrasts this in-group to outsiders from other nations, develops in readers a set of shared interests, values, and orientations. Anderson thus offers a historical account of the development of the nation rooted in the changes in the structure of economic relations and mass communication inherent in the emergence of the modern world: in short, ‘print-capitalism’ (Anderson 2006, Ch. 3). The mass media is therefore the driving force behind the construction of national identities, raising important questions about the agency of the mass media in this process.

While Anderson fails to consider other forms of media, particularly those which have emerged in the twentieth century, namely radio, television, cinema, and the internet, he provides us with a framework through which to understand how the nation is produced and reproduced through common, mass cultural practices. As he notes, the newspaper reader is reassured by the ‘mass ritual’ of the consumption of the same content at the same time by many thousands of others of whom he has no knowledge: ‘the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life’ (Anderson 2006, 35). The imagined community is thus created by the mass participation (active or passive) in cultural discourses by citizens. This framework can be extended from Anderson’s core concern, newspapers and other printed media, to a wider range of sources.

### *The discursive construction of national identity*

The framework of the *imagined political community* presents a compelling account of national identity formation, and has been seized upon by a number of political scientists and discourse analysts. This section builds on the *imagined community* to a framework for understanding the importance of identity construction, particularly based on the approach of the Vienna School of Critical Discourse Analysis. This account of national identity, focusses particularly on the discourses of the nation found in public and private spheres, and the way in

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<sup>10</sup> In particular, as the market for Latin books was saturated in the late sixteenth century, the significance of local languages increased, and these consolidated into a smaller number of written languages. New groups of readers were formed around these languages, and were mobilised for political and national purposes (Anderson 2006, Ch. 3).

which political actors contrast the nation. National identities are produced, reproduced, transformed, and dismantled through discourses, by means of language or other semiotic systems, and thus we must understand these discourses in order to examine the construction of the nation (Wodak et al. 2009, 4-5). The discursive construction framework is particularly useful in that it is complementary to, and compatible with, the account of identity already offered by postfunctionalism. Hooghe and Marks note that ‘public responses to Europe are refracted through national institutions and patterns of discourse that reflect historical trajectories’ (2009, 14).

In order to understand this process, we must provide a more detailed account of the mechanisms which constitute the construction of national identities. To do this, national identity is defined to mean a set of conceptions and perceptual schema, attitudes and behavioural conventions, shared by its bearers collectively. Following the theoretical expressions of identity already discussed, the arguments of Wodak et al. (2009, 22) summarise how constructed national identity, formed in everyday discursive acts, constitutes the shared, imagined community of the nation:

If a nation is an imagined community and at the same time a mental construct, an imaginary complex of ideas containing at least the defining elements of collective unity and equality, of boundaries and autonomy, then this image is real to the extent that one is convinced of it, believes in it and identifies with it emotionally.

This draws upon Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of habitus - common ideas and conceptions shared within a group of persons (De Cillia et al. 1999, 153; Wodak et al. 2009, 4). It also borrows conceptually from the social psychology of groups, and SIT, in that the discursive construction of nations and identities involves the construction of difference, distinctiveness, and uniqueness.<sup>11</sup> The definition of identity involves defining what one is not, and any in-group requires an out-group against which to define itself (De Cillia et al. 1999, 153-4; Wodak et al. 2009, Ch. 1). National identity can therefore be defined as an interrelated complex of phenomena commonly shared among individuals, which include similar emotional dispositions, attitudes, behavioural conventions, and particularly conceptions and perceptual assumptions which are internalised through socialisation via a variety of avenues, including politics, the media, everyday practices, education, and culture (Wodak et al. 2009, 4). Thus, individuals might share common conceptions of a common national culture, a common history, and a sense of national territory or space, attitudes towards other nations and communities. The nation-state, far from being merely a political entity, is rooted in cultural

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<sup>11</sup> For an overview of the social psychology of citizenship and national identity, see Sindic (2011).

representations, 'symbolic formations - a 'system of representation' - which produced an idea of the nation' (Hall 1993, 355).

The stories constructed around the nation create common meanings with which citizens can identify, and constituting them as 'subjects' in Foucault's sense of 'subjection': both of and to the nation (Hall 1993, 355-6). The centralised nature of the nation-state is manifested in strong cultural institutions which claim to 'subsume all differences and diversity into their imagined community' (Hall 1993, 355). This cultural representation of the nation is inherently hybrid - while the role of the national culture is to present 'one nation', this apparent continuity masks the 'ethnic hotch-potch of modern nationality' (Hall 1993, 356). This account of national identity does not assume that there is one, definitive, national identity that can be objectively observed, but rather there are different identities which are discursively constructed according to context (De Cillia et al. 1999, 154). Identity in this sense is 'in the eye of the beholder'. However, the shared, commonly-held aspects of these identities, and their attachment and reference to the political object of the nation-state is what defines them as specifically *national* in character, as opposed to merely small-group or community identities.

Therefore, nationality is rooted in a 'narrative story' which constructs the nation as part of the wider meaning individuals give to the social world (Geertz 1975; Eder 2009; Wodak et al. 2009). The concept of collective memory is also important to this idea. The narrative construction of national identities draws heavily on an emphasis on common history, and how history is remembered. Maurice Halbwachs' (1992) argument, that collective memory is the product of the selective recollection of past events which are significant for members of particular communities, is influential here. According to De Cillia et al. (1999, 155), the stories of national history told by citizens, which form a key part of the 'national narrative', rely on a collective memory which maintains a certain historical continuity. For example, collective memory has been of particular interest for those scholars analysing the relationship between German national identity and European integration. The influence of the collective memory of the Second World War and Germany's Nazi past has had a significant impact on contemporary conceptions of German identity and is held to be, in part, responsible for Germany's 'European vocation' (Wittlinger 2007; 2010; Paterson 2011).

Eder (2009, 443) argues that we must analyse the construction of national identities by concentrating on the sites where debates over identity take place. These include the market, discourses on constitutional patriotism, secular legal culture, and institutions such as the Council of Europe (Eder 2009, 443-4). The role of discursive acts in various settings,

including in politics, the mass media, sports, education, and everyday practices, and the subsequent socialisation of citizens is crucial to the discursive construction of national identity. As there is no single national identity, different identities are constructed in different contexts: ‘audience, setting, topic and substantive content’ are important (Wodak et al. 2009, 4). National identities are changeable and often ambivalent, therefore. As De Cillia et al. (1999, 154) argue, while discourses of identity may change according to context, there are relations of transfer and contradiction between the images of identity presented by elites and the media, and the ‘everyday’ discourses which take place in the private or semi-private lives of citizens. The discourses of the elite and the media thus interact with those of the citizen in a meaningful way. The construction of similarity and difference is a key part of this process. Actors use strategies which construct identity by ‘promoting unification, identification, and solidarity’ are the most comprehensive strategies employed in the discursive construction of national identity (Wodak et al. 2009, 33).<sup>12</sup>

Importantly, this understanding of identity as a discursively constructed phenomenon entails understanding identity not as a singular discourse, but as multiple, overlapping, and contested discourses. Political actors produce and reproduce discourses of the nation that contain ‘a complex of common or similar beliefs or opinions’ (Wodak et al. 2009, 28). These discourses are constructed by actors including the state, political parties, the media, and in everyday social practices, and result in material and social conditions that socialise individuals and contribute to a shared sense of ‘national identity’ (Wodak et al. 2009, 30). The discursive construction of national identity may be undertaken by actors operating under the guise of different ‘macro-strategies’ (Wodak et al. 2009, 33-45). These correspond to a number of social functions, including community construction, perpetuation, justification, and transformation. Perhaps most relevant for the purposes of this thesis, these discursive constructions of national identity may seek to ‘construct and establish a certain national identity’ for strategic ends: this might include attempts to promote solidarity and unification, or to seek to create differentiation. The emphasis placed on exclusive national identities by much of the recent literature on European integration suggests that differentiation and perpetuation are particularly relevant. Discourses may seek to ‘maintain and to reproduce a threatened national identity’ in order to preserve, support, or protect it (Wodak et al. 2009, 33). Justification strategies seek to justify or relativise the status quo by emphasising the legitimacy of past events and the history of the national ‘in-group’ in order to defend a common ‘national-self perception’ (Wodak et al. 2009, 33-4).

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<sup>12</sup> See Chapter 5 for a discussion of discourse theory.

Importantly, the *discursive construction* framework places emphasis on the role of mass media discourses in shaping national identity, echoing Anderson (2006) and Billig (1995). The mass media play a role in socialising citizens in shared, collective identities that are expressed in media discourses. The media formulate models of identity in the same way as political elites; these are subsequently recontextualised in private spaces ('everyday discourse'), and form the basis of national identities (Wodak et al. 2009, 3-5). Discourses in the mass media have a reciprocal relationship with elite (political) discourses: a transfer and contradiction of ideas and images of identity takes place between the two sets of discourses, and, ultimately, with 'everyday' constructions of identity (De Cillia et al. 1999, 153). The mass media also play an important role in recontextualising and producing derivative forms of identity discourses from elites in diverse forms: in news reporting, advertising, and popular entertainment, among others (Wodak et al. 2009, 204). Thus, the media are a key focus for the analysis of identity discourses in this body of work, since they both reproduce existing discourses and act as a site of discourse construction: the media both reflect and shape discourses on national identity in a complex and broad set of interactions between actors.

This builds on Michael Billig's (1995) *banal nationalism* thesis. Billig takes the concept of elite construction of the nation, and re-frames it in a more complex way that acknowledges the role of practices beyond those of the elite in identity construction. The reproduction of the nation is *banal* in its character - that the complex of 'beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices' that comprise national identity are reproduced in a 'mundane way' (Billig 1995, 6). In particular, it argues that everyday practice is the most important mechanism through which the nation is remembered. It follows, therefore, that we must study the everyday in order to understand how the nation is 'embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind, or 'flag' nationhood' (Billig 1995, 38). Perhaps more important than politicians, the media play a crucial role, since they act as a means of transmitting the rhetoric of politicians into the homes of citizens, and also because the media are a key site for the construction and reconstruction of the nation. Most importantly, 'the dexis of homeland is embedded in the very fabric of the newspapers', and the effect of this is 'like the hum of distant traffic', it 'makes the world of nations familiar, even homely' (Billig 1995, 94).

The framework offered by the *discursive construction* of national identity therefore provides a means to understand the significance of public (and private) discourses of identity. Citizens conceive of their identity in a way that is shaped by discourses in the public and private sphere. Postfunctionalism holds that the politicisation of European integration occurs when these identity considerations are brought to the fore in the public sphere, engaging latent identities through the processes of priming, cueing, and framing (Hooghe and Marks 2009,

14). Kriesi notes that the basis of the success of political entrepreneurs who seek to use identity to politicise European integration lies in the exploitation of ‘anxieties about losing one’s identity in a denationalizing world’ (Kriesi 2009, 224). The framework offered by Wodak et al. helps to unpack this priming, framing, and cueing of national identities in a the wider context of the construction of national identities through discourse: the precise operation of mechanisms is discussed in the next chapter. What is clear from the ‘imagined communities’ and ‘discursive’ theses is that postfunctionalism fails to acknowledge the role of actors other than parties in constructing identities. The mass media appears to be the most significant of these. As Billig argues, ‘Anderson is surely correct in stressing the importance of newspapers in the reproduction of nationality’ (1995, 125). The ‘banal’ construction of national identity in everyday life should make the media more important for the purposes of explaining the politicisation of European integration. The everyday reporting of the EU in relation to the nation becomes more significant in characterising the the relationship between national identity and European integration, since the everyday construction of the nation is the driving force behind citizens’ sense of their national identity.

To summarise, the significance of this discursive construction literature for the postfunctionalist framework is in the account of the formation of identity that postfunctionalism gives, and especially in the role of actors in shaping citizen identities. The most important of these actors not currently included in postfunctionalism is the mass media. Postfunctionalism currently gives a limited treatment of the role of the media in 1) shaping citizen identities through discourses, and 2) interpreting and reproducing the nation in relation to European integration. The literature on identity formation discussed here has shown that the mass media play an important role in the operation of the mechanisms that lead to the formation of citizen attitudes. The postfunctionalist account of identity must theorise how identity is constructed and reconstructed by the media if it is to rely on the explanation that the relationship between identity and European integration can be constructed by politicians, therefore (see also, Statham and Trenz 2013).

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has argued that theoretical approaches to European integration which incorporate identity as a variable stand a greater chance of providing an effective explanation of the integration process - taking into account the increasing politicisation of European integration since the Treaty of Maastricht. Postfunctionalism retains many of the the key features and findings of neofunctionalism, while incorporating identity as a variable. Postfunctionalists



argue that political entrepreneurs are able to take advantage of identity in relation to European integration when it becomes politicised as an issue, cueing responses which act as a constraint on policy-makers in their negotiations to further integration. However, this account does not give a full treatment to identity, in either its construction and origins, or its contestation in mass mediated public debates.

The chapter then went on to argue that an account of identity that acknowledges the role of the media in both its formation and contestation is required to strengthen the postfunctionalist theory. The postfunctionalist theory rests on the notion that the politicisation of European integration is undertaken by the cueing, by political parties, of tension between exclusive national identities and changing forms of governance. However, as this chapter has shown, identity theory attributes a significant role for a range of actors in the formation of these identities, including, crucially, the media. This chapter therefore addressed two key issues in the exposition of a more developed postfunctionalist account of identity. The first was the way in which identities are formed. It was argued that an account of identity formation centred on discourse is consistent with postfunctionalist theory on identity. National identity does not exist in isolation of political actors, instead, it is shaped in everyday public discourses. The sources of national identity and their reproduction in everyday practice are significant for our understanding of how they become politicised. Adopting an account of national identity that follows the work of Anderson (2006) and Wodak et al. (2009) appears to allow us to begin to understand the significance of mass discourses. These discourses adopt a range of strategies, but their foundation is the emphasis of national uniqueness and the construction of ‘the greatest possible difference’ between the in-group and foreign nations, particularly those foreign nations that are the most similar (Wodak et al. 2009). This theory also tells us that there is no single national identity, but rather different discourses of identity that are constructed according to need and context, and which may compete with each other. National identity is not a static target for political parties to use, but as changing and dynamic.

Second, it was shown that the media play an important role in the construction of national identities, and adopting the concepts of the *imagined community*, and the *discursive construction of national identity*, it was argued that the postfunctionalist model must incorporate a more detailed account of identity that acknowledges the constructive role of the media in identity formation. As the product of modernity, national identity is closely tied to the means by which it is reproduced. For Anderson (2006), this is primarily through the newspaper, for example. In order to capture the dynamics of the politicisation of identity, postfunctionalism must acknowledge that one of the main sources of its construction and reproduction, the media, is an active intermediary actor in the arena of mass politics.

Understanding the mass media's role in constructing identity, and how this interacts with the strategic behaviour of parties, appears to be important for our model of the politicisation process. The next chapter seeks to begin to address this issue by examining the literature on media effects.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Role of the Media in Politicising European Integration**

As shown in the previous chapter, the postfunctionalist framework develops an account of the domestic politicisation of European integration that takes identity as its explanatory variable. This analysis presents only an incomplete account of the nature of identity, in particular its origins and the means by which it forms the basis of the contestation of European reforms in the 'mass arena'. These concerns may be addressed by understanding identity as being constructed through everyday, 'banal' processes, in particular through public and private discourses. The contestation of identity can also be re-understood in this context: as a discursive process that is undertaken in the mass arena. This chapter critically re-examines the domestic politicisation model proposed by Hooghe and Marks (2009), and proposes a new model of domestic politicisation that incorporates the media as an actor. This Media Augmented Postfunctionalist (MAP) model takes into account the key issues arising from the theoretical discussion of the discursive construction of national identity undertaken in Chapter 1. It also incorporates the insights of the literature on the role of the media in mediating mass public debates, arising from the political communications theory tradition. This allows this new model of domestic politicisation to plot a course between that of the political science driven approach of the Hooghe-Marks model, and the communications theory driven approaches of models which concentrate on public communications and the public sphere.

The argument of this chapter is that the agency of the media must be taken into account in the postfunctionalist model. As the previous chapter showed, the media play a key role in the formation of national identity: they construct discourses of the nation that have far-reaching effects and which shape citizen attitudes and affiliations. This chapter will argue that the media also play an important role in the politicisation of European integration in the mass arena. The postfunctionalist model assigns to parties to most important role in this arena, arguing that they cue public opinion through framing European integration in terms of identity. However this ignores the role of intermediary actors, and particularly the mass media, in mediating the discourses of parties in the mass arena, as well as constructing their own discourses on European integration and identity. As Statham and Trenz observe, it is 'striking' that postfunctionalism has little to say about 'the role of political communication, nor the role of mass-mediated public debates' (2013, 149). Therefore, this chapter argues, it important to explore the role played by the media in the mass arena, since the constructive effects of their discourses may either cue public opinion in the same way as parties, or have a material impact on the efforts of parties to cue public opinion.

The chapter proceeds in four parts. The first part presents a revised model of domestic politicisation, that incorporates the media as a third actor in the politicisation process alongside political parties and citizens. This Media Augmented Postfunctionalist model re-conceptualises the idea of contestation in the mass arena as a mass-mediated public debate, in which the media act as an important actor in cueing and framing discourses which affect public opinion. Subsequently, these processes are examined in greater detail: the second section briefly discusses the key assumptions made about the media as a political actor in the model. The third section briefly discusses the implications of long-term constructions of national identity before examining the shorter-term impact of press involvement in issue creation, and in particular the role of the press in setting agendas and acting as a gatekeeper. Subsequently, the fourth section develops the account of the mass arena as a mass-mediated public debate, and argues that research into framing demonstrates that media effects are significant on both the importance and content of citizen opinions. As a result of this, it is argued that we must develop a greater understanding of the content and interaction between party and media discourses and the way that the contestation of Europe is subsequently played out in the mass arena. This section outlines the operation of some of the key mechanisms in this process: in particular how the press is influential in an agenda setting role, as a mediator of party discourse, and as a source of influential and widely reproduce frames that shape the discourse around European integration.

## **2.1 Media Augmented Postfunctionalism**

The account of the politicisation of European integration presented by postfunctionalist theory gives only limited treatment to the processes of the politicisation of identity, and how the tension between static identities and European reform is subsequently contested in the mass arena. As Chapter 1 showed, in the long-run formation of national identity, the media play a central role (Billig 1995; Wodak et al 2009). The argument of this chapter is that the media are a significant actor in the process of the politicisation of national identities in the short-term. The politicisation of European integration that leads to the creation of a ‘constraining dissensus’ on European integration requires the involvement of ‘politicisation agents’, or actors which drive the politicisation process, to engage the tension between relatively static identities and changing governance arrangements (Adam and Maier 2011, 432). As Chapter 1 showed, the primary politicisation agents in postfunctionalism are parties (Hooghe and Marks 2005; 2009). However, domestically, the other possible major actor in this process is the media (Kriesi 2008; Adam and Maier 2011). To address the role of the media in the

politicisation process, this section presents a Media Augmented Postfunctionalist model of domestic politicisation.

While the rationale for the inclusion of the mass media in a new postfunctionalist politicisation model is set out in full below, it can be summarised in four points. First, the central role of the media in the discursive model of national identity formation suggests that the somewhat simplistic assumption in postfunctionalism that individuals are cued by, primarily, political parties seems to ignore powerful causal mechanisms which shape national identity formation and its subsequent politicisation. The banal nature of identity construction elevates the importance of everyday discourses in constructing national identity, in the media and elsewhere. Everyday discourses, in newspapers, television, radio, books, and elsewhere construct the imagined national community, and rhetorically connect this construction with European integration (Schlesinger 1991; Law 2001; Hawkins 2012). Second, the media performs a crucial role in cementing the form of national identity, and its relationship to other forms of identity: including a European identity (Law 2001, 300). As Edensor (2002, 141) notes, ‘the mass media has proved to be the most important way of disseminating representations of the nation’. In addition to this, the media is also the arena in which different representations of the nation are publicly contested (Stevenson 2001, 5). Third, the experience of the mass media is deeply implanted into daily life - ‘embedding their temporal and spatial reception into the quotidian, and producing numerous context in which they are interpreted’ (Edensor 2002, 141). The mass media are a key source of the socialisation of national identity for the citizen, and thus the way that the media construct European integration in relation to identity is highly significant (Wodak et al 2009, 4). Fourth, as argued below, the agenda setting power of the media is also highly significant. For instance, in their widely cited study on Presidential campaign coverage, McCombs and Shaw (1972) found evidence that the media influence voters’ perceptions of which issues were most important in coverage of election campaigns. The salience of issues can be increased by higher levels of media attention, driving them up the political agenda (Zaller 1992; Baumgartner and Jones 1995).

As Statham and Trez (2013; 185) note, political science approaches, such as postfunctionalism, tend to focus on institutional political actors — in this case political parties — and their strategic interactions, without giving consideration to public debate. On the other hand, approaches arising from the communications tradition focus on public discourses, without considering how these are shaped by the institutional political context, power relationships, and how the media system interacts with the political system (Statham and Trez 2013; see also de Vreese 2007). An approach that combines these perspectives allows

for an understanding of the ways in which the strategic interaction of actors contributes to development of public debates, how these debates, conversely, shape the interactions of political actors, and how these processes produce outcomes which weigh upon policy makers.

The Media Augmented Postfunctionalist model adapts the domestic politicisation model presented by Hooghe and Marks (2009, 8-9). In a number of important ways, this model extends the Hooghe - Marks model of politicisation to incorporate the media as an actor, and which expands the conception of operation of the politicisation process beyond the two cleavages of 'identity logic' and 'distributional logic'. Incorporating the arguments made so far, this model proposes that we must take into account the factors which influence the contestation of European integration along these cleavages, and which influence the course of debate in the mass arena. Particularly, we must consider how party strategy is shaped by the forces outlined in Chapter 1 which are not considered by Hooghe and Marks. This requires the re-conceptualisation of the mass arena as the site of a mass-mediated public debate, in which the media is a third actor alongside political parties and citizens.

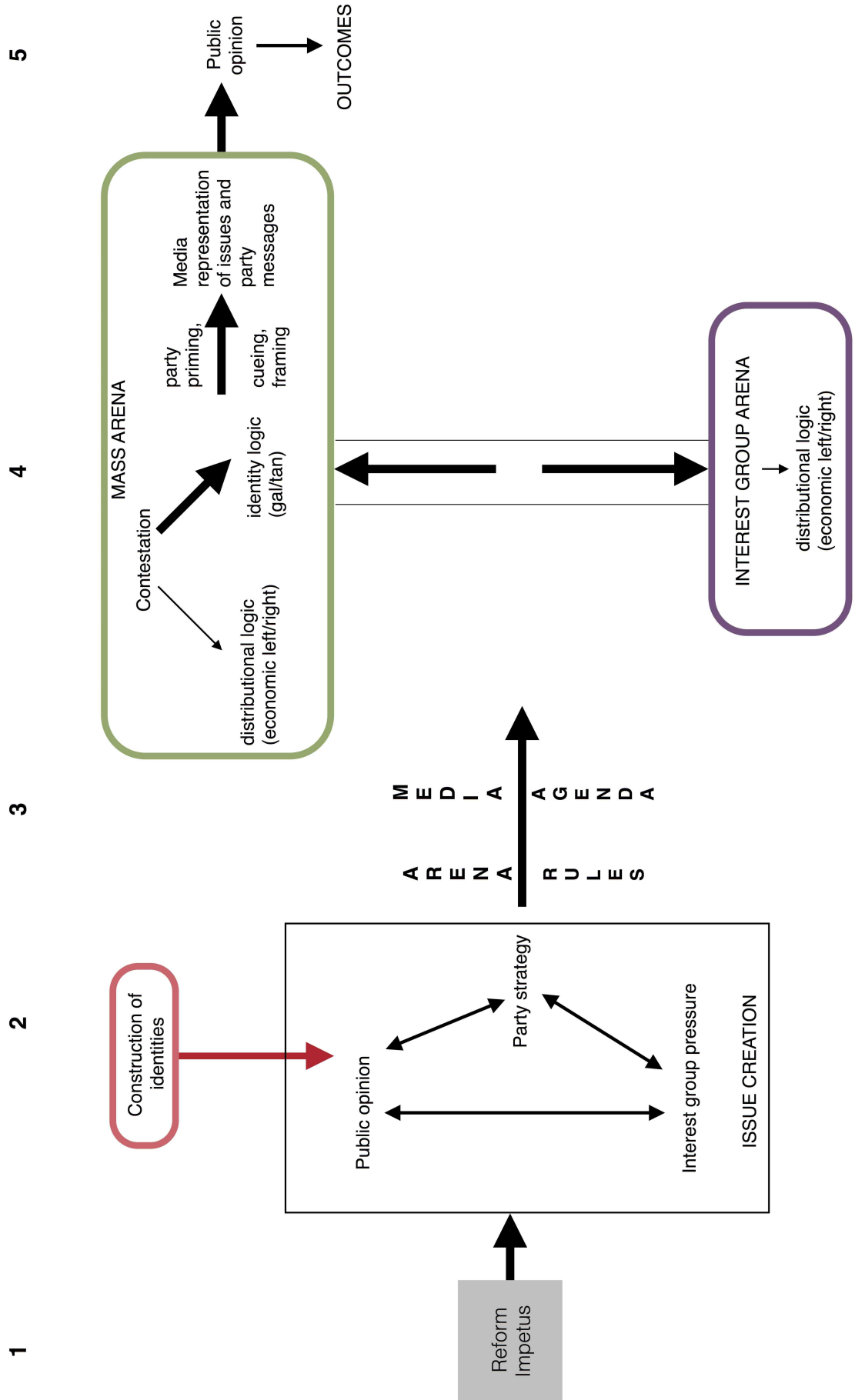
### *Model overview*

Figure 2.1 presents an overview of the MAP domestic politicisation model. The MAP model starts, at (1) in the same vein as the Hooghe-Marks model, with a reform impetus arising from a mismatch between functional efficiency and the form of current jurisdictions. At (2), there is issue creation, whereby political parties respond to public opinion and interest groups. Here, a new dimension, the structure of citizen identities, is added. The overall structure of identification towards the nation and Europe will influence both party strategy and public opinion: as argued above, states with a higher proportion of citizens that identify towards the nation are likely to have greater scope for Eurosceptical parties to frame and cue issue creation. In stage (3), formal arena rules constrain the overall choice of decision-making arena. These may, for instance, mandate a referendum or legislative debate to authorise reform.<sup>1</sup> While party strategy frames this arena choice, it is strongly influenced by media framing of European issues, and the gatekeeping role that the media has in regards to the political agenda. Here, parties may fail to push reform into the mass arena if the media are sufficiently independent in their agenda-setting, or are inclined to exclude the messages of entrepreneurial Eurosceptic parties in favour of incumbent, pro-European parties. In other words, the media may constrain parties in their attempts to push contestation into the mass

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, in the UK, the European Union Act 2011 requires a referendum in the case of the amendment or replacement of existing EU treaties, the transfer of specific powers or competencies to the EU, or other changes which alter the relationship between the UK and EU; including modifications to voting rules in the Council (Qualified Majority Voting), and membership of the Euro.

Figure 2.1 Media Augmented Postfunctionalist politicisation model



arena.

In the arena in which a particular reform issue is contested (4), outcomes are determined by the balance of contestation along either the logics of distribution (the economic left/right cleavage), or identity (the *gal/tan* cleavage). Outcomes are, in part, determined by arena choice. The mass arena yields a greater likelihood of a constraining outcome, as decisions contested along the lines of identity politics are more likely to produce opposition based around national identity (Hooghe and Marks 2006; 2009). Issues which reach the mass arena are contested in a *mass-mediated public debate* primarily along the *gal/tan* cleavage. This contestation is conducted in the media as well as directly through speeches, debates, and other forms of political action. Parties engage in this contestation by cueing, priming and framing the reform issues in order to engage identity politics: these messages largely reach the public via the media. The balance of contestation in that debate between distributional and identity logic is dependent on the framing of that issue by political actors including both parties and the media. The significance of the media in the mass arena is shown in figure 2.1 in two particular respects. These are (a) the representation of European issues by the media - which can influence contestation along both the left/right and identity cleavages - and (b) the construction of identity in relation to Europe in general and the reform issue in particular, which influences primarily the logic of identity. This model leaves unchanged the postfunctionalist assumption that if issues are contested only in the interest group arena, then distributional logic remains the main cleavage along which reforms are contested.

In the MAP model, the influence of party strategy is no longer the primary determinant of outcomes (5). The media play an important role in both creating the conditions in which party attempts at mobilising public opinion via the logic of identity against European reform may be successful, and in the contestation process in the mass arena. Following Statham and Trez (2013, 148-9), the mass arena of current postfunctionalist theory is re-imagined as encompassing a mass-mediated public debate, in which the strategic role of parties remains important, but is filtered through the media, and which engages identity logics through the prism of pre-existing media biases, identity constructions, and representations of European issues. The media thus emerge as a second actor in this new model: they influence the outcomes of the politicisation process at the key stages of both issue creation and issue contestation. The addition of this second actor raises questions about the strategic interaction between parties and the media. The ways in which parties are able to cue and frame public opinion depends on their ability to have this message carried to citizens via the media. These questions will now be addressed by unpacking, first, the role of the media at stage (2) of the model, and second, at stage (4) of the model. This will draw on chapter 1 and the formation of



national identities through ‘banal’ processes of socialisation, and on a discussion about the role of the press as a mediating force in public debates on the EU.

In the issue creation stage, the long- and short-term effects of the media become relevant. In the longer-term, the construction of national identity in public discourses influences the extent to which citizens in member states hold identities that are exclusively national, mixed, or exclusively European. These long-term effects of identity construction have the potential to profoundly affect the predictions of postfunctionalism. As Hooghe and Marks (2009: 22-3) note, ‘identities change slowly’, and thus as identity constructions change over time, so will the way that they constrain attitudes over European integration. This long term construction of the nation in relation to European integration, and the natural experiment presented by European integration has the potential to profoundly shift the debate on Europe: if citizens become less focussed on narrowly-national identities and embrace an allegiance to a wider European identity, then the scope for political entrepreneurs to mobilise the tension between exclusive nationalism and supranationalism will consequently lessen. While this long-term change is important for the future relevance of the postfunctionalist research, the primary relevance of this long-term identity construction for this thesis is in inculcating the identity structures within each Member State.<sup>2</sup> In the short term operation of the politicisation model presented here, the identity structure that influences issue creation at stage (2) is taken as fixed. As the previous Chapter argued, identity formation is a relatively slow process that entails the long-term development of solidarities over time (Wodak et al 2009).

Thus, the primary focus of this chapter, and this thesis as a whole, is to understand the significance of shorter-term effects of identity construction, particularly in the media, rather than the long term effects, which can be taken as given for the purposes of the model of domestic politicisation discussed here.<sup>3</sup> The short-term effects of the media in the issue creation stage are primarily centred around the extent to which issues become prominent: in order to engage public opinion and push decision making into the mass arena, actors must turn European reform into a salient issue before the public. This is achieved by increasing the prominence of European integration, however this relies on being able to make such reforms a part of the political agenda. The agenda-setting powers of the media are significant here, and are thus incorporated into the MAP model.

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<sup>2</sup> As the previous chapter noted, the construction of national identities is a long-term process. While we assume that actors can

<sup>3</sup> The long-term effects of media constructions of identity are potentially highly significant, and a locus for potential future research.

In stage 4, the contestation stage, European reforms are debated in the mass arena. In the MAP model, the question of how contestation in public discourse is undertaken is investigated. The current postfunctionalist literature assumes that once an issue reaches the public arena, the ways in which attitudes towards European integration are constrained depends on party cues: since contestation is along the lines of identity politics, the mobilisation of opposition to Europe will employ the framing of discourses in terms of national identity. However, as the previous chapter argued, this assumption ignores the role of the media in mediating those messages, and producing cues of their own. Thus, the contestation stage is re-imagined as a process by which parties must pass their messages through the media, who modify those messages, and who produce messages of their own (this is termed the *mass-mediated public debate*). Thus, the MAP model goes further than the Hooghe-Marks model in that it begins to consider the mechanisms of contestation in the mass arena. It is to this contestation that we now turn: first, the underlying assumptions of the model are elaborated in more detail, before the contestation stage is developed with reference to the communications studies literature.

## **2.2 Underlying assumptions: the nature and role of the media as actors**

In order to unpack the Media Augmented Postfunctionalist politicisation model, it is necessary to discuss the nature of the media actors being introduced into the model. The MAP model presented here makes a number of assumptions, derived from the existing literature on media behaviour, about the role of media actors in the politicisation and contestation process. The first of these is that the media are an important actor in the mass arena, and play a role as an ‘intermediary actor’. The news media remain the best resource for citizens to access information about politics, observe debates, and evaluate the actions of governments: especially in foreign affairs, the news media remain the primary source of information for citizens (Gavin 2000; Hawkins 2012). In the case of European integration, the media are a contributor to public knowledge of, and attitudes towards it (De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006; Lubbers and Scheepers 2010; Boomgaarden et al 2013). As the previous chapter argued, the media play a role in constructing connections between political objects and identity - connections which postfunctionalist theory argues shape the influence of identity on public opinion (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 12). The media act as a mechanism to control access to information and messages, and media attention is a prerequisite for parties to reach the electorate with their messages: this is particularly important when parties wish to mobilise particular issues (Van der Pas and Vliegthart 2015; 1).

Recent research has re-evaluated the linkage role that the media play in the process of communication between parties and the public (Thiel 2011, 128). The way in which major newspapers frame and instrumentalise the EU ‘shapes the attitudes of opinion makers and ordinary citizens alike’ (Thiel 2011, 8). Crucially, the role of the media can be seen as proactive, ‘enabling collective actors and social movements to voice their demands and challenge executive power’ (Koopmans and Statham 2010, 4). Journalists ‘enter the political debate as actors by commentating and opinion-leading’, providing a forum for ‘deliberative exchanges between policy makers and civil society, under the watchful gaze of an attentive public’ (Koopmans and Statham 2010, 5-6). While parties may be effective at mobilising some public opinion directly, this direct connection with mass publics is often restricted to elections: it is sporadic and often overshadowed by citizen concern with other issues (Schmitter 2009, 212). In contrast, the public frequently receive information from the media about national identity, European integration, and public debates on these matters. As the primary source of citizen information on European affairs, the media clearly matters in shaping and forming public opinion on it (Hawkins 2009; 2012).

One important facet of the agency of the media is that the media must not be understood as a single actor. Rather, we must consider the extent to which the media is a collection of independent actors. Instead of a single entity, we must understand the media is a group of organisations, competing with each other for attention in a variety of ways (Strömberg 2004; Wolfsfeld and Sheafer 2006). The mass media has emerged as an ‘autonomous power centre’, in reciprocal competition with other centres of power, but also in competition with other media actors (Swanson and Mancini 1996, 11). Moreover, the mass media landscape consists of many different forms of media, including newspapers, television, radio, and, increasingly, the internet. If we consider the UK case, newspapers, just one part of the media, must be understood not just as a sector (or indeed sub-sectors of tabloid, quality, or mid-market publications), but as a group of up to ten competing actors.<sup>4</sup>

This proliferation of media actors raises questions about the motivations and objectives of those actors. A pluralistic view of news production would assume that the particular coverage given to issues depends on the type of media organisation, and the perceived interests of their audience: what is deemed ‘newsworthy’ depends on the assessment made of the demand for a certain types of news from audiences (Temple 2008, 115). Media organisations are incentivised to modify their content and develop a distinctive place in the market in order to pursue an audience and share of the market (Hamilton 2007). However, the overt political agendas of many news organisations seems to belie this purely economic view. To use the UK

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the UK newspaper landscape, including the circulations of the national daily newspapers and their political affiliations.

as an example, there is a clear divide between the broadcast media and newspapers in the extent to which overt political agendas drive the focus and content of news coverage (McNair 2009). Whereas the broadcast media are subject to restrictions on political content, do not carry political advertising, and are bound by a principle of ‘impartiality’, the press are characterised by clear political partisanship, and the ‘perennial’ search for a competitive advantage over their rivals (McNair 2009, 36; Daddow 2012, 1221). In the UK, this competition between newspapers has led to the increased sensationalisation of news on EU-related topics, as ‘Euroscepticism has become big business’ (Daddow 2012, 1221). This is driven by the ideological commitment and commercial priorities of newspaper proprietors, who have sought to take advantage of the relatively low levels of knowledge of the EU in the UK (Spiering 2004, 138).

### *The positions of media actors*

The underlying factors that shape the orientation of media actors towards European integration are not well understood. Existing studies of the positions of media outlets on European integration tend to focus on sociological theories of media ownership (Price 2010; Daddow 2012). One key influence is the priorities of proprietors, especially those of newspapers (Arsenault and Castells 2008; Daddow 2012). In particular, the influence of Rupert Murdoch has been examined by a number of scholars who use his ownership of various television, newspaper, and online news sources as an example of how media organisations can pursue political goals on behalf of their owners (Anderson and Weymouth 1999; Anderson 2004). Arsenault and Castells (2008, 508) argue that Murdoch ‘holds power in the global network society’ due to his ability to ‘connect the programming goals of media, business and political networks’, a power that gives him and his organisations the ability to influence public opinion. This power has been linked directly to his newspapers’ coverage of European affairs. As Rowinski (2014, 5-6) argues, Murdoch’s newspapers make their support for political parties contingent on those parties’ policies, particularly on Europe, where Murdoch has pledged to oppose those political parties that do not pursue relatively Eurosceptic policies.

The most important element of the relationship between the orientations of media outlets, their owners, and the extent to which they present news coverage biased towards a Eurosceptic portrayal of EU affairs for this study is the effects that the behaviour of media outlets have on the politicisation process. For the purposes of this study, a number of assumptions will be adopted in order to simplify the analysis of this behaviour. First, it is assumed that media organisations have positions on political issues, either explicit or implicit,

and that these are expressed discursively. This can be observed most obviously in media systems where outlets endorse particular political parties explicitly at election times (and, often, continue this support during non-election times).<sup>5</sup> The measurement of the explicit political positions of media outlets is a relatively undeveloped field: while much effort has been made by social science to develop schema for the measurement of the political positions of parties, legislatures, individual politicians, and legislatures, there has been little attention paid to those of the media (Ho and Quinn 2008, 354). The most clearly available indication of the positions of UK media can be derived from their political endorsements. It is assumed here that these endorsements represent the *general* political orientations of UK newspapers, although we must be careful to differentiate between endorsements of parties at election times, and support for particular policy positions.

Second, we assume that the positions of media outlets on the fundamental axes of interest here - support for European integration, *gal-tan*, and economic left-right - can be identified on these axes, and are relatively stable and consistent. In the case of newspapers, a variety of viewpoints may be expressed by columnists and commentators, however the overall editorial direction of the publication tends to be well-controlled, and the output of news consistent in its direction and stance, especially in the case of partisan media (Levendusky 2013). More partisan news organisations tend to carefully construct consistent messages which present the news as a ‘package’, carefully designed to help consumers make sense of the world (Levendusky 2013, 612). The relationship between these relatively steady editorial orientations and positions of newspapers along political axes — left-right and *gal-tan* in this case — is not well understood in the literature. Studies of partisan media organisations have shown that favouritism towards one party tends to be associated with the presentation of particularly well-defined political positions, either a ‘liberal or conservative vision of the news’ (Levendusky 2013, 612; Jamieson and Cappella 2008). If we apply the same assumptions made by postfunctionalist theory for political parties, then newspapers with a general orientation towards the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension ought, in the same way as the other significant actors in this model — individuals and parties — to be more likely to be opposed to European integration (see Hooghe and Marks 2004; 2009). This association is strongest for *tan* parties, which have been most effective at connecting European integration to their core concerns (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 17). We must expect, if this relationship holds, that newspapers that take positions towards the *tan* end of the *gal-tan* dimension are the most likely to adopt strongly Eurosceptic positions and seek to connect these views to their positions on other key *tan* issues, particularly an emphasis on national identity. A weaker association exists between *gal* parties and support for European integration, especially when

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<sup>5</sup> Chapter 6 gives a breakdown of UK newspaper endorsements and how they have changed over time.

combined with a left- economic orientation (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 17-18). A second interesting influence on positioning to consider is the populist nature of actors: populist parties (especially populist *tan* parties) are more likely to connect Euroscepticism to their *gal/tan* policy positions (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002; Kriesi et al. 2008; Börzel and Risse 2009). Translating this to media actors, we can predict that populist media outlets are more likely to adopt Eurosceptic positions, especially when they are orientated towards *tan* political positions. Chapter 4 discusses this further, and it is shown that at least in terms of the positions of their readers, newspapers follow a similar pattern to parties: an orientation towards the *tan* pole of the *gal/tan* dimension is associated with increased levels of opposition to European integration.

To this end, and with these assumptions now in place, the mechanics of the MAP model presented here will now be discussed in further detail. In particular, we will now turn to the operation of specific mechanisms by which the press exerts influence over the process of the politicisation and contestation of European integration. There are three effects which are of greatest interest to this study. First, the extent to which the media act as either an ‘agenda-setter’, or as a ‘gatekeeper’, as part of the politicisation process: in other words, the extent to which the media are able to either introduce issues to, or exclude issues from the public and political agenda. Second, the positions of media outlets in relation to European integration and the extent to which there exists competition between outlets and different positions is important since the language and frames adopted by the media carry significance for the ways in which the public receive and interpret messages about European integration. Especially significant in this regards are the connections made by them mass media between European integration and the nation. Third, the influence of the media’s representation of political actors and their positions on the contestation of European integration. If the media can alter the substantive character of the debate through their representation of parties, politicians, and their messages, then we must pay attention to the ways in which this is achieved, and the potential impacts on outcomes that this behaviour implies.

### **2.3 Agenda setting and gatekeeping**

The extent to which actors can influence what issues reach the public agenda, and how those issues are discussed, is significant for stages (3) and (4) of the MAP politicisation model.<sup>6</sup> This section discusses the ability of actors — parties and the media — to influence which issues are debated publicly (i.e. acting as gatekeepers), what relative importance they are

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<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this discussion, the ‘public agenda’ is defined as the set of issues debated publicly, and contested by actors in the mass arena.

given, and how they are debated (i.e. setting the agenda). This is significant because politicisation of issues is largely facilitated through communicating with the public through the media: attention in the media is associated with increased levels of politicisation, and is a route to influencing the public agenda for political parties (Hutter and Grande 2014, 1003). In order to explore the role of the media here, it is necessary to discuss two possible functions of media agency: agenda setting and gatekeeping. As the existing literature shows, there is more evidence to support the existence of a significant gatekeeping role for the media, although gatekeeping is closely related to the concept of agenda setting in that it involves the determination of the issues to be addressed on the public agenda.

Agenda setting can work in two directions. Politicians and parties may attempt to influence the media agenda via what Walgrave et al (2010) call 'agenda-feeding'. Here, there is a large body of evidence to show that parties, and in particular governments, are effective sources of news coverage. Governments, parties, and individual politicians use their journalistic contacts to attempt to influence the news agenda, which in turn influences the political agenda within legislatures and more broadly (Althaus 2003; Davis 2009). Davis, for instance, argues that in the UK, back-bench MPs pursue an 'agenda-feeding' strategy in order to increase their influence on the agenda within Parliament itself - bypassing their limited direct influence on the managerial structures of their own parties by using the media to draw attention to issues that they feel particularly strongly about, or which might be particularly advantageous to their own position (Davis 2009, 211-212). The most prominent politicians are most able to exert this influence, since they fulfil the criteria of newsworthiness (Cook 1989). This relationship has also been shown to hold for governments, which have a particularly powerful influence on news coverage since they provide the most 'efficient, reliable, and legitimate means' for registering socially significant events (Althaus 2003, 381).

Importantly for this study, the ability of politicians to influence the media agenda seems to increase during election times. During the 'short campaign' period of several weeks before the day of an election, the ability of parties to set the agenda seems to substantially increase (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006). A number of studies have found that, during campaigns, the impact of the media on the agendas of parties is much more limited than during 'normal', non-election periods (Dalton et al. 1998; Norris et al. 1999; Brandenburg 2002). One explanation of this is that the behaviour of both the media and parties changes significantly during electoral periods due to the changed context of their interactions (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006, 97). Not only does the makeup of the political agenda change — government and legislatures, with their own agendas, fade into the background as political parties take centre stage — but parties seek to influence the public agenda in a direct and determined way

(Dalton et al. 1998; Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006). This is achieved through political speeches, daily press briefings, staging events, press releases, and the widespread issuing of provocative statements: parties become more effective and powerful sources during election times (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006, 97-8). During elections, parties also increase their direct contact with citizens, with increased advertising, direct canvassing, flyers, public speaking tours, and, in the UK, party-political broadcasts. Subsequently, we should expect the ability of the media to influence the politicisation process, and act as a constraint on issue creation, to be more pronounced during ‘normal’ politics, than during elections.

Media and political actors are engaged in ‘a battle for issues, frames and access’ (Walgrave et al 2010; see also Norris et al 1999; Althaus 2003; Entman 2003; Walgrave and Van Aelst 2011). Of interest for the present thesis is the finding of several existing studies that, under specific circumstances, the media are able to exert considerable influence on the political agenda: an agenda setting power that runs in the opposite direction to that of politicians (Green-Pedersen and Stubager 2010). The extent to which the news media is independent from governments in particular has been a source of considerable debate in the political communications literature (for an overview of this debate, see Althaus 2003). There is evidence that media organisations act with significant independence in regards to parties and governments: locating and airing oppositional voices is a fundamental part of news creation, and this discourse is ‘often initiated by journalists’ rather than simply passed on by them, creating an important venue for dissent from the narratives of governments and parties (Althaus 2003, 404). Parties and politicians adopt issues due to the media attention that they have received: high profile media coverage is likely to attract attention from political parties, who feel that they must address issues raised by the media (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006). This may or may not be a deliberate attempt to exercise influence on the political agenda - the media may make a deliberate decision to give high levels of coverage to certain issues, or may react to events (Boydston et al 2014).<sup>7</sup> Following from this, it has been shown that the more partisan the media, the more likely it is that journalists and news organisations will attempt to exert influence upon the political agenda in a deliberate way (Daddow 2012).

The extent to which the media are able to influence the political and public agenda, and therefore the issue creation process, appears to be contingent upon a number of conditions (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006). Importantly, the ability of the media to influence the agendas of political parties is conditional upon the interests of those parties: media attention towards a particular issue tends to attract attention from political parties that have an interest in pursuing the politicisation of that issue (Green-Pedersen and Stubager 2010, 664). On the other hand, if

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<sup>7</sup> A useful distinction is drawn within some of the literature between *institutional-driven* and *event-driven* news, see Wolfsfeld and Sheafer (2006) and Livingston and Bennett (2003).



the media focus on an issue that is not ‘owned’ by a particular political party, then that party is unlikely to change its agenda to react to the media attention (Green-Pedersen and Stubager 2010, 667). Thus, in the context of this model, we might expect that a media that devotes attention to European issues will influence the agendas of Eurosceptic parties that would benefit from the politicisation process, thus reinforcing the politicisation process as party strategy responds to the media attention and seeks to engage in issue creation.

The contingency of the agenda setting power of the media highlights the importance of news actors also behaving as gatekeepers to the mass arena, or, alternatively, in an *agenda-constraining* manner (Shoemaker 1991; Walgrave et al 2010, 5). Only a proportion of the considerable volume of issue messages generated by political parties actually receive media coverage. News media have the power to include or exclude issues, thus constraining the political agenda in a negative way (Butler 1998). The real power of the media in the field of agenda-setting may lie in its ability to exclude issues from the public agenda, therefore. This is a negative power: in ‘denying access and in forcing politicians to react on issues’, the media has the ability to deny parties the chance to prime and cue public opinion in order to achieve issue creation (Van Praag and Brants 1999: 199). There is also a competitive aspect to the gatekeeping function of the media: parties and politicians compete in order to gain the attention of, and access to, the media and the subsequent framing of issues (Williams and Delli Carpini 2000). If Eurosceptic parties are unable to outmanoeuvre their opponents to gain access to the media, or the biases created by ownership and other factors discussed above do not favour Eurosceptic parties, then attempts to take advantage of potentially favourable public opinion and cue opposition to European reforms may fail. The entrance of issues into the mass arena is influenced not just by the formal arena rules which determine the location of issue contestation, but by the power of the press to determine the extent to which these issues reach the news, and thus enter the realm of the mass-mediated public debate.

The plurality of media organisations operating in the marketplace suggests that we should expect a considerable variation in the influence of gatekeeping depending on the media being studied. The extent to which media outlets report on particular topics depends on the resources, routines, and editorial priorities of each outlet (Livingston and Bennett 2003, 368). What is less clear is whether we should expect the disposition of news outlets towards reporting European integration issues to be influenced by their political orientations - either attachment to a particular political party, or on the *gal-tan* or left-right dimensions. Broadly, we expect that newspapers will follow the pattern of parties, and therefore we should expect newspapers that are towards the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension to be more likely to report on European integration, especially when entrepreneurial political parties attempt to force

issue creation. We also expect that this coverage will be principally negative or critical in nature, in the case of *tan*-leaning publications, since the political agenda of the media organisation will be served by a portrayal of European issues that supports that adopted by *tan* political parties (see *frames*, below). We expect the reverse to be true for *gal*-leaning publications.

The implication of this agenda-setting role and gatekeeping function is that the ability of political parties to create issues is not as straightforward under the MAP model as in the Hooghe-Marks model. There are clear implications for the operation of the model if media organisations are able to either introduce an issue onto the political agenda, leading to politicians being forced to respond, or to exclude an issue from the agenda. The exclusion of issues from public agendas could result in the attempts of parties to either politicise European integration, or for pro-European (governing) parties to effectively contest the narratives of entrepreneurial parties, to fail to reach the public. While parties may try to cue opposition, this process is likely to be unsuccessful if they fail to receive attention in the media, since their ability to reach a large-enough section of the public will be impaired. Thus the gatekeeping function of the media becomes vital - parties which are unable to generate press coverage for their messages are unlikely to succeed in issue creation. The matter of who introduces issues, driving the issue creation process, is difficult to measure — political news creation is often a shared endeavour between media and politicians — however, as the next section argues, the content of reporting, and the way in which party messages are reported, is potentially even more important than gatekeeping in influencing the outcome of debates on European integration.

## **2.4 Contestation and the mass arena: mechanisms**

The most important area in which the MAP model of domestic politicisation proposed in this chapter differs from the Hooghe-Marks model is in the contestation of European reforms in the mass arena. Political entrepreneurs, principally parties, thus must construct connections between national identity, cultural and economic insecurity, and EU enlargement (Hooghe and Marks 2009).<sup>8</sup> Politicisation is assumed to almost always lead to the constraint of policy making (Statham and Trez 2013). However, in the MAP model, the media play an important role in mediating these discursive constructions from parties.

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<sup>8</sup> Although it is acknowledged that political entrepreneurs could conceivably be actors other than political parties, this thought is not examined any further (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13).

While party messages have various avenues to reach the public, including publications, speeches, and direct voter contact (e.g. canvassing), the primary force for the generation of public opinion is the media. As Zaller notes, what matters for the formation of mass opinion 'is the relative balance and overall amount of media attention to contending political positions' (1992, 1). Mass opinion is formed from the connection of information and predisposition (Zaller 1992, 6). In this case, the predisposition of citizens towards European integration is determined largely by their identity. We must investigate the information that they receive, through the media and from parties, in order to understand how identity is mobilised and used to contest European integration within national polities. The MAP model thus expands the conceptualisation of the mass arena. Rather than simply determining the conflict structure of debates on Europe, the MAP model takes the process one step further, defining the mass arena as the site of a mass-mediated public debate, in which political parties are an important actor, but not the only actor which has influence on public opinion. Once the issue at hand has become contested in the mass arena, the modified model proposes that the ability of parties to influence the contestation process is constrained by the media: parties must rely on the media to communicate their messages to the public, thus being subject to the ways in which the media represent their messages. Public opinion is also influenced by the ways in which the media represent European issues, independently of party messages. While issues that reach the mass arena have, by definition, become politicised, the extent of that politicisation, and the constraining effect that it will have on policy-makers, is contingent upon the character of the debate.

Evidence for this argument can be drawn from existing studies of the connection between media reporting of European integration and public opinion. Analysing the link between elite and mass conceptions of Europe, Díez Medrano (2003, 110) claims that 'the existence of a permanent dialogue between journalists and the rest of the population with respect to European integration is reflected in the strong similarity between their images of European integration and European institutions'. Testing this idea empirically, Bruter (2005) presents experimental data to show that identification with Europe is influenced by messages from the media and the use of symbols of EU institutions. Bruter argues that the perceptions of participants of the integration process when exposed to good or bad news about Europe has a significant impact on, particularly, the civic component of a sense of 'European identity' (Bruter 2005, 125-7). Being systematically exposed to 'bad news' about European integration damages citizens perceptions of Europe, and they are less likely to identify with Europe as a result (Bruter 2005, 126). This influence gives the media a 'destructive' potential, since reporting of Europe which consistently frames European integration in terms of bad

news — giving preference to negative stories and ‘exaggerat[ing] for effect’ — can alter the perceptions of readers or viewers (Daddow 2012).

The MAP model suggests a number of ways in the mass arena in which the media play a role, therefore. The first is in mediating, through reporting, the messages of parties on European integration - the priming, cueing, and framing of identity by that postfunctionalism argues is vital in constructing connections between identity and European reform is dependent largely on the media to transmit these messages to the public. Second, in their reporting of European issues, the media construct discourses which influence public opinion, since positive or negative framing of Europe has a demonstrable effect on citizen support for the EU (Van Spanje and De Vreese 2014). This is particularly significant in the connections that media construct between the nation and European integration. Finally, they set the terms of debate through their strategic interactions with party discourses. Understanding the ways in which the media matter in the mass arena requires us to unpack the ways in which media reports on Europe affect the attempts of parties to cue and frame public opinion in debates on European integration in the mass arena: these mechanisms are now discussed in detail.

### *Framing and re-framing*

Frames are of particular importance in understanding the ways in which the media influence public opinion, and mediate the messages of political parties. A significant body of research has concentrated on the role of media in framing issues, a research agenda which follows the work of Goffman (1974), and the concept of frames has been widely incorporated into research into media discourses (Fairclough 1995, 2000; Wodak and Chilton 2005; O’Keeffe 2006; Wodak et al 2009). Frames can be defined as ‘central organising ideas’ that provide a coherent way of organising a set of ‘idea elements’ (Ferree et al 2002, 105). Frames may be thought of as like ‘a picture frame, it puts a border around something, distinguishing it from what is around it’ (Gamson 2004, 245), or as as ‘schemata of interpretation’, which allow one to ‘locate, perceive, identify, and label’ social objects and events (Benford and Snow 2000, 613). In framing, discourses selectively emphasise and evaluate certain aspects of a ‘perceived reality’, making them more salient than other aspects (Hanggli and Kreisi 2010, 142). Juan Diez Medrano (2003) has applied frame analysis to the way European integration is framed in in-depth interviews, history textbooks, newspaper reports from 1949-1997, and other cultural materials in the UK, Spain, and Germany. He argues that ‘frame analysis provides us with a powerful analytical tool to explain attitudes’ as ‘people’s attitudes and behaviour’s attitudes and behaviour toward objects or problems depend on how they conceive of, frame, or represent them’ (Diez Medrano 2003, 5, 7-8). Thus, frames promote particular

definitions, interpretations, moral evaluations, or treatment recommendations for the item described (Entman 1993, 51-2). Frames actively construct the meaning of the reality that they describe, therefore. In news media, frames serve to organise and structure the presentation of issues to the public (Schuck and de Vreese 2006, 6). News frames are, by nature of serving as a coherent storyline or organising idea for a story, more than simply an isolated argument or position, but a ‘coherent and construction of an issue’ which have a ‘powerful effect’ on public opinion, and shaping meaning and understanding in political debate (Pan and Kosicki 1993; Schuck and de Vreese 2006, 6).

Following Lecheler and De Vreese (2012: 187), we can identify the two most important effects of framing on the formation of public opinion: 1) the importance of beliefs, and 2) the content of beliefs.<sup>9</sup> The selective nature of frames — stressing certain aspects or features of reality over others — is argued to lead to individuals holding the considerations suggested by that frame as more important than others, meaning that they are applied when forming an opinion (Nelson et al 1997; Schuefele 2000; Lecheler and de Vreese 2012). Framing impacts the importance of certain beliefs by altering the ‘weight’ of considerations in the minds of individuals, increasing their importance over others (Druckman and Nelson 2003, 731). Thus, we might expect that media frames which either privilege or exclude identity considerations impact on the ability of parties to effectively communicate their identity-based messages to the public, and influence the outcomes of debates.

The content of beliefs is also affected by framing effects. New beliefs may be added to an individual’s belief set, thus generating a persuasive effect as a result of the new content added (Lecheler and de Vreese 2012, 187). This content effect is particularly significant in affecting the opinions of individuals with more moderate levels of political knowledge, suggesting that individuals who are less well informed are more likely to be persuaded by media coverage of issues than those with a pre-existing high level of knowledge (Slothuus 2008). The effect of frames on individual’s opinions can also be observed in situations where individuals are exposed to unfamiliar information, leading to adjustment of their beliefs on the topics in question and more detailed cognitions of those topics (Lechler and de Vreese 2012, 188; see also Shah et al. 2004). This relationship also holds for low-importance issues, which are found to be especially mediated by belief content effects (Lecheler et al 2009). This suggests that media framing can have a significant affect on the content on citizen beliefs on European integration, even if the relative importance of European integration is held to be low. The

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<sup>9</sup> A third effect, accessibility, occupies a controversial position in the literature on framing effects. Accessibility is closely related to agenda setting and priming in that it makes considerations in the minds of individuals more salient (Chong and Druckman 2007). It can be argued that framing is distinct from accessibility effects - and the apparent lack of an accessibility effect of frames sets frames apart from agenda setting and priming (see Scheufele 2000).

importance of media framing is also highlighted by evidence from voting behaviour that suggests that the media play a particularly important role in countries where political parties exhibit a greater degree of competition on EU issues. Voters exposed to positive media framing of the EU, in terms of the beneficial nature of EU membership for that country, are less likely to vote for Eurosceptic parties (Van Spanje and De Vreese 2014: 325).

As a result, we move from the existing postfunctionalist view whereby it is political parties that frame the ways in which citizens discuss European integration, to a view which incorporates the insights of political communications research and re-imagines the contestation of European integration as a mass-mediated public debate. Contestation takes place as part of a public discourse which contains three players: parties, media (in particular, journalists), and citizens. The news media plays an active role in framing public policy issues, alongside that of parties, in a process of strategic interaction: it is an 'integral part' of the process of shaping public debate (Pan and Kosicki 1993, 70). The formal arena rules may affect outcomes somewhat, here. In a referendum situation, there are more likely to be direct contacts between parties and citizens - e.g. through direct campaigning, leaflets and pamphlets, television broadcasts/live debates. For reforms that are not contested in this way, but are still contested in the mass arena, parties may be less likely to directly contact citizens about the reform issue, but instead reach citizens through the media.

Taking these arguments into account, we can identify a number of features of the media discourse which ought to be of importance for the contestation of European integration in the mass arena. The first is the prominence and content of reports on European integration: the media must provide a visible platform in order for debates on Europe to take place. We must therefore pay attention to the form and content of discourses on Europe in the media, since this content has the potential to directly influence public opinion (Zaller 1992: 42-44). In particular, we must understand which frames are employed in the media discourse, and how these frames are deployed in different media outlets.<sup>10</sup> The content of these discourses must be examined particularly for its use of the logics of identity: how media refer to the relationship between identity and European integration, and how they construct the significance of the nation, ought to be important if identity is indeed the most important variable in shaping the conflict structure.

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<sup>10</sup> The audience of these outlets is also important. A simple study of media discourses may uncover a plurality of frames across different media outlets, however these outlets reach audiences of greatly differing sizes: outlets with large audiences are more likely to exert an influence on public opinion.

### *The content of media frames and the role of national identity*

The content of media frames is important for our understanding of the ways in which contestation and politicisation take place in the mass arena. As key elements in the formation of citizen's attitudes towards European integration, frames 'mediate the effect of micro and macro sociological factors', allowing us to 'improve our explanations of people's attitudes' and the variations between them (Diez-Medrano 2003, 6). The frames chosen by media are significant precisely because of the fact that they are likely to be the primary means by which citizens form their opinion of European integration, a political process with which they are unlikely to have any direct day-to-day contact. Two types of frames are particularly important for this study: valence frames and identity frames.

Recent research into *valence framing* shows that valenced (or positive and negative) frames have 'considerable effects' on perceptions, judgements, evaluations, and behaviour (Schuck and de Vreese 2006, 6-7). Positive or negative frames have been found to affect the judgement and evaluation of situations and issues, in part due to the context of risk. Where potential outcomes are presented as positive, individuals are more favourable towards a decision or change, and where they are presented as negative, they are less favourable (Schuck and de Vreese 2006). In the context of European politics, this clear distinction between positive and negative is likely to be less distinct. Strongly negative news on the EU has been shown to be associated with lower levels of support for European integration (Norris 2000). The concepts of 'threats' and 'benefits' are often highlighted in the literature as an alternative to the more simplistic positive and negative frames (McLaren 2002; Schuck and de Vreese 2006; Hawkins 2012). Schuck and de Vreese (2006) argue that two frames on EU enlargement are important: (1) EU enlargement as opportunity for Europe, and (2) EU enlargement as a risk for Europe. Importantly, negative framing is shown to exert a stronger effect on support for European integration: while opportunity framing is associated with greater support for enlargement, and risk framing is associated with opposition to enlargement, this effect is more significant for risk (Schuck and de Vreese 2006, 21). The greater emotional and personal involvement of risk framing is held to explain this stronger association: people are more affected by negative framing due to the stronger emotional response that they experience. This suggests that even a balance of opportunity and risk framing in press reports could produce an impact on public opinion that was negative in direction (Schuck and de Vreese 2006, 22). The effect of negative frames on public opinion may be conditional on the visibility of those frames, however. In order to have a short-term impact on public opinion, frames need to be visible and evaluative (De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006: 430).

As a result of this, we must pay attention to negative and positive representations of European integration and their consequences. In particular, the concepts of ‘threats’ and ‘benefits’ appears to be useful in this regard. The way in which these frames relate to the economic left-right or gal-tan dimensions is not well understood, although Maier and Rittberger (2008, 249) argue that there is a subjective difference between valence frames and the construction of identity frames which are focussed on the ‘formation of symbolic boundaries’. Respondents’ enlargement attitudes respond differently to socioeconomic and identity-related frames, with valence framing being more closely associated with economic issues (Maier and Rittberger 2008). Valence frames may be present in making positive or negative evaluative claims in relation to the outcomes of membership of the EU for the national community, however. This supports the postfunctionalist claim that left-right and identity politics exert quite different effects on public opinion on the EU. As a result, empirical investigation of the content of media frames should carefully consider the differences between the valence and identity frames, and how these are related to each other.

We must also consider how the mass media construct their own connections between identity politics and European integration. As the previous chapter showed, the media play a role in the long-term formation of national identities; however, they also play an important short-term role. The concept of the nation is well established in the discourses of media outlets, in the same way that it is in the discourse of politicians (Wodak et al 2009, 74-5). The role of the media in identity construction includes the daily invocation of the nation and its symbols to citizens, reinforcing the narrative of the nation (Billig 1995). In the relatively short-time time frame that is the concern of the MAP model, discourses on identity in the mass media are important in framing debates on European integration. This claim follows from the postfunctionalist literature, which emphasises the construction of connections between static identities and changing European governance structures, and this claim is supported by the literature on the discursive construction of national identity. Discourses on the nation are constructed in forms that differ depending on the purposes (or ‘social macro-functions’) of those discourses, and may serve to either reinforce and perpetuate existing identities, or to transform or challenge them (Wodak et al 2009; 189).

Existing research into discourses of national identity in a range of contexts have highlighted a number of features that are common to the construction of the nation. One of the most important of these is the framing of the nation as the only legitimate form of political authority (Hawkins 2009; 2012). The attachment of a group identity to the nation has a strong impact on the perceptions and attitudes of citizens (Ellemers et al 2002). Key to this, and drawing from social identity theory, is the construction of ‘in-’ and ‘out-groups’ and the



language of ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Li 2009, 104). These discourses are expected to associate different characteristics to these groups - the in-group is defined by its differences from the out-group. In particular, we would expect that media discourses will attach positive characteristics to the in-group addressed in those discourses, and will apply negative characteristics to out-groups, mirroring the way that individuals apply ‘mental labels’ to their own group membership (Scheepers et al 2002; Klingeren et al 2013, 693). For the purposes of this study, the ways in which these constructions of the nation are developed in relation to the concepts of Europe, European identity, and European integration are centrally important. How do discourses of national identity in the media construct the nation and its relationship to the EU, and is this portrayed as a relationship in which membership of one group is exclusive of membership of the other? If national identity is constructed in this exclusive sense, then we might expect that more citizens will hold such an exclusively national view of their identity, and thus be more susceptible to being cued into opposition of European integration through invocation of the nation. Of particular interest in this context is the concept of sovereignty and how it is deployed in the discourse in relation to contested European reforms. Previous studies have argued that sovereignty is an important component of identity discourses, as an expression of the primacy of the national community as the ‘natural’ form of political organisation (Anderson and Weymouth 1999; Hawkins 2012).

The expectation of the MAP model is that *tan*-leaning outlets will emphasise discourses of identity over economic discourses, and that these discourses will emphasise the boundaries between the national in-group and the EU, make connections between the nation and European integration, and seek to defend the national community. That is, we expect that media outlets follow the pattern that postfunctionalism expects of parties. Thus, the valence and identity frames of the media are important for developing our understanding of the linkage between political parties and the public. As discussed above in relation to the gatekeeping role of the media, the extent to which the framing of the media reflects the framing of political parties is also relatively unknown.

#### *Interaction between politicians and the media - setting the terms of debate?*

We must also consider the interaction between the messages adopted by politicians and those adopted by the media. If media outlets reproduce the frames adopted by politicians and political parties, then we would observe a pattern of similarity between the ways in which these two actors engage in discourse on Europe. A pattern of similar frames — both general and issue-specific — adopted by both media and parties would suggest that the messages of

parties will be able to reach the intended recipients (the public) with more ease than if the pattern of framing of debates on European issues in the media is strongly divergent between the media and parties. In other words, if parties and the media use common frames of reference, and common language on Europe, and adopt broadly similar language and positions, then parties' messages on Europe will be largely echoed in the media and stand a greater chance of exerting the desired effect on citizen attitudes. On the other hand, where these frames are strongly different, we might expect parties' messages to be 'lost' in the media discourse (Maier and Rittberger 2008).

Media adopt their own frames and biases to the reporting of party discourses, and this has a direct effect on the strategies of parties (Goffman 1974; Scheufele 1999). As well as influencing the views of citizens, media effects influence *how* politicians communicate, as well as *what* politicians communicate - although existing studies suggest that this influence is greater on the latter (Van Aelst et al. 2008, 494-5). Reporting may be critical of the way that parties discuss Europe, and thus frame their messages in a way that is likely to reduce the effects of those messages on the importance and content of citizen beliefs (or indeed reinforce the beliefs of citizens in the *opposite* direction to that intended). Thus, the similarities and differences between the frames used by media and parties (both incumbent, pro-European and entrepreneurial, Eurosceptic parties) can provide insight into the ways in which media affect the ability of parties to successfully cue and frame public opinion to meet their strategic objectives. The greater the mediation of party messages — in particular the way that they are reported and framed by the media — the greater the importance of understanding the ways in which the media construct discourses on Europe, and the content of these discourses. The less critical media are of party messages, the closer to the Hooghe-Marks model the dynamics of contestation are likely to be - since party messages are more likely to reach the public in the way that the parties intend. However, the greater the extent to which media frame party messages in the context of their own editorial agenda and biases, then the more likely that the influence of the media becomes important as a source of frames and cues on Europe independent of party frames.

Perhaps the most important question in terms of the operation of the postfunctionalist model is: are the media able to change the substantive terms of the debate through the changing of framing? The substantive character of debates is of central importance to determining whether those debates have a constraining effect on policy making (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Where the media are able to change the character of debates, by presenting issues in frames that are different to those of politicians, then we can expect that the existing model will fail to adequately explain the process of politicisation and constraint. Hooghe and Marks (2005;

2009) assume that debates in the mass arena will be biased towards identity. However, this is only the case if the media report parties' identity focused discourses in the terms that they are presented by parties. On the other hand, if the media are able to determine the frames that are dominant in the debate, then this measure of control is taken away from parties, substantially constraining the ability of parties to set the terms of the debate, and thus for entrepreneurial Eurosceptic parties to strategically frame the debate in terms of national identity.

If the media set the terms of the debate, not parties, then we might expect that the substantive character of the debate in the mass arena will limit the agency of parties in constraining policy makers (or, alternatively, in effectively contesting Eurosceptic messages). We expect that the media will frame European integration in line with their own positions on the EU. Thus, the MAP model assumes that pro-European mass media will reframe Eurosceptic negative messages, or will evaluate them negatively, while emphasising pro-European party messages and positively evaluating them. Conversely, we expect that Eurosceptical mass media will reframe pro-European messages to fit their own agenda, and favour the messages of Eurosceptic parties on European integration over those of pro-European parties. This has a number of potential consequences for the operation of debates. For example, in a member state with a media that tends towards *tan*-leaning, populist media organisations, parties that seek to oppose the discourses of entrepreneurial Eurosceptic parties will find their message far harder to deliver, given the likelihood that it will be framed in terms of identity politics regardless of the carefully-constructed message that they seek to craft. Conversely, if the media are able to shift the terms of the debate in the mass arena from identity politics to more conventional left-right politics, by framing politicians' statements in these terms (even if the statements are themselves originally framed in terms of identity), then the expectation that entrepreneurial political parties are able to effectively control the terms of debate becomes no longer valid. Instead, the linkage between parties and the public — the media — assumes far greater importance in determining the outcome.

The extent to which the media are able to determine the frames which structure debates on European integration in the mass arena, determining the substantive character of debates, seems to be important in shaping the outcomes of the politicisation process, therefore. Rather than the inevitable constraint that public debate in the mass arena seems to suggest, this raises the possibility that mass-mediated debates are not necessarily, in themselves, constraining. Instead, the content of media coverage is important in determining whether or not identity discourses are able to effectively mobilise opposition to European integration. As de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2006, 431) observe, while the 1999 Danish election campaign for the European Parliament was characterised by positive messages from political parties, the tone

of media coverage was somewhat negative. This demonstrates that media framing that is independent from that constructed by parties is possible. If the media do not follow the framing of parties, and instead fit the messages of parties into pre-existing frames or narratives, then this may affect the ways in which messages are received by citizens, influencing the outcomes of debates.

As a result of these considerations, the MAP model may produce different explanatory outcomes to the Hooghe-Marks model. The outcomes of mass-mediated debates are contingent on the interaction between three actors, here, and thus allows for an added degree of complexity in the explanations we can produce for particular outcomes. This model, for instance, allows us to consider beyond the case of a Eurosceptic party using identity to cue opposition to European integration in a conceptually straightforward mass arena. The strategic objectives of the media may conflict with those of parties, producing a much less-straightforward discourse than might be predicted by the Hooghe-Marks model. Alternatively, the MAP model allows us to consider the role of incumbent pro-European parties that seek to challenge politicisation and anti-European discourses in the mass arena. The new model suggests that these parties may struggle in environments with a Eurosceptic media, where the terms of reference in debates have already been established by long-running, entrenched patterns of discourse on Europe that privilege the nation as the preferred means of political organisation, and ways of discussing the EU which emphasise the costs over benefits of membership, and the threat to national sovereignty and distinctiveness over the opportunity of forging a broader association around a common European identity. This is a scenario about which the existing postfunctionalist framework has less to say, since the primary impetus lies with ‘political entrepreneurs’ and these are inevitably Eurosceptic parties. Conversely, the importance of the origin and content media frames in shaping public opinion suggests that where either the content of media frames is positive, or the media are able to shift the framing of debates from *gal-tan* to left-right issues, entrepreneurial parties are less likely to be able to produce the desired constraints on policy-makers than the Hooghe-Marks model predicts.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter presented an alternative *Media Augmented Postfunctionalist* model of domestic politicisation. This model incorporates the role played by the media in two important regards. First, in acting as gatekeepers or agenda setters that influence which issues reach the public agenda and which are contested in the interest group arena. In some circumstances, it was

argued, the media may be able to shape arena choice, which in turn influences the ability of parties or other actors to mobilise support or opposition for European jurisdictional reform. Second, the media play an important role in the contestation of European reforms in the mass arena. This chapter re-conceptualised the mass arena in the postfunctionalist model as a 'mass-mediated public debate' in which parties fight to mobilise public support for their positions through cueing and framing Europe - via the medium of the mass print, broadcast, and electronic media.

A discussion of the mechanisms by which the mass media participate in the mass-mediated public debate revealed a number of phenomena of potential significance for the MAP model. Specifically, these were, first, the gatekeeping function of the mass media: the media were argued to play an important role in determining access to the mass arena and, consequently, the content of the mass-mediated public debate. Second, the role of framing and re-framing was discussed, and it was argued that framing effects have a substantive impact on how the messages of parties are received by the public, and cue public opinion. Third, the construction of national identity and identity frames in particular were highlighted, and it was argued that the media may play a key role in constructing connections between the identity and European integration, especially in light of their role in the long-term construction of national identities. Finally, the strategic interaction between parties and the mass media and consequent mediation of party messages was argued to be significant, since the extent to which the media are able to influence the overall structure of the debate is key to determining the subsequent outcomes.

The significance of these findings for the postfunctionalist research agenda can be seen in the potential for divergence from the predictions of the postfunctionalist politicisation model. Until now, postfunctionalism has predicted that party strategy is sufficient to prompt the creation of a constraining dissensus on European integration. However, the MAP model holds that media actors have the potential to affect the outcomes of the contestation of Europe in the mass arena through their reporting. This raises the possibility that parties may find their messages on Europe ineffective, or alternatively may enhance the ability of insurgent entrepreneurial parties to reach the electorate with Eurosceptical messages far more effectively than analysis of their strategic interactions may predict.

These findings suggest a number of avenues for investigation: we must ask a number of questions of the available empirical evidence in order to explore the relationship between parties, media, and citizens in the mass arena. This chapter has identified four key areas of interest, each of which is associated with an expectation or hypothesis that will be subsequently investigated in Part

II of the thesis. The first was how mass media organisations fit into the postfunctionalist model as actors in the mass arena. If media follow the same pattern as parties, whereby their *gal-tan* position structures their position on European integration, then this is significant for the postfunctionalist research agenda, since it would suggest that media fit into the wider model, and confirm the importance of the identity variable. As the discussion above showed, we would expect that media actor positions on European integration would be structured in the same way as party positions on European integration.

The second area of interest is in how newspapers frame European issues. A small number of studies have examined the framing of Europe in the media in the UK: further evidence is required in order to explore the ways in which media approach the reporting of European integration in the context of the postfunctionalist framework and the central role of identity in mobilising citizen opinion. This leads to questions about the similarities, differences, and interactions between media and party discourses on European integration. Of particular interest, discussed below, are the means by which parties and media frame issues in the mass arena. How do those frames vary between newspapers, and how do they compare with parties? Two expectations or hypotheses were associated with this area. First, that newspaper discourses will construct connections between national identity and European integration in the same way as parties; and second, that newspapers would contest European integration through discourses on the nation and seek to cue citizen attitudes - establishing their agency as political entrepreneurs in their own right.

Finally, we must investigate whether the media can change the substantive terms of the debate in the mass arena. The character of debates, and the dimension along which it is contested — *gal-tan* or left-right — is crucial for determining outcomes. If the media are able to change the way issues of European integration are discussed by shifting the framing of discourses from one dimension to another, or by reframing party discourses to match their own agendas, then the agency of the media in the mass arena will be crucial for the operation of the postfunctionalist model. Therefore, The final hypothesis is that there will be evidence that newspapers are able to substantively alter debates through their reporting of party discourses.

The second part of this thesis develops an account of some of these processes through the means of a case study of the UK during the period of Labour government, 1997-2010. It deploys the theoretical framework developed in part one to identify evidence from both party and media discourses on Europe in order to map the ways in which the mass media behave in relation to the contestation of European integration and to establish the extent to which the predictions made here about the role of the media are supported by evidence from the UK

case. Specifically, it will consider the ways in which the mass media represent the EU in reporting, how they respond to party discourses on European integration, and how they frame debates on Europe. It is intended that this approach will provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the interaction between parties, media, and citizens in the mass arena.

### Chapter 3

#### Methods and Methodology

This chapter sets out the methods employed in the empirical, Part II of this thesis, and details how debates on European integration in the mass arena, outlined in the previous chapter, will be examined. In seeking to understand the role of mass media as actors in this space, the empirical part of this thesis must address a number of key research areas that arise from the discussion presented in the previous chapters. First, we must understand what positions media actors take in the debate, and how these relate to those taken by political parties. Second, we must understand the content of media discourses on European integration, how these discourses represent European integration and the EU, and how these discourses connect European integration and the nation. Third, we must understand how the public discourses of political parties interact with and are represented in media discourses; specifically how the media act as mediators in debates in the mass arena, and how they reproduce and recontextualise the messages of political actors.

The previous chapter identified a number of hypotheses or expectations that provide the specific focus of Part II of the thesis. These hypotheses are based on the review of postfunctionalist theory, national identity theory, and the literature around the mediating role of the press in public debates presented in Chapters 1 and 2. To recap, these can be summarised as follows:

- a) that newspapers positions on European integration are structured in the same way as political parties, i.e. by the *gal-tan* dimension;
- b) that mass media discourses construct connections between national identity (i.e. the *gal-tan* dimension) and European integration;
- c) that mass media contest European integration through discourses on the nation and seek to cue citizen attitudes;
- d) that there will be evidence that the mass media were able to substantively alter debates through their reporting of party discourses.

These hypotheses are addressed in Part II of the thesis through an examination of evidence from the UK during the New Labour governments of 1997-2010. Specifically, Part II analyses evidence from nine major national newspapers, as well as from party discourses, in the UK. To examine the hypotheses, this thesis adopts two primary research methods. The first a quantitative analysis that employs existing, large-scale survey research in order to estimate the



positions of media and their audiences. This method addresses the first hypothesis about the structure of the mass-mediated public debate and the position of the press within that debate. The second method is focussed on addressing the final three hypotheses. The final two chapters of this thesis employ critical discourse analysis to develop a detailed understanding of content of media discourses on European integration in the UK press and in key speeches by UK party leaders, in order to test how the press construct discourses of national identity and European integration, and how they mediate party discourses.

This chapter also describes the selection of sources and the methods used to analyse them. The chapter begins by discussing the selection of the UK during the New Labour governments of 1997-2010 as the case study to be examined in Part II of the thesis. To address the research questions, two categories of primary sources are selected: newspapers, as the source of media discourses; and speeches by party leaders, as the source of party discourses. Chapters 5 and 6 of the thesis analyse data from nine national UK newspapers and speeches by four party leaders. Chapter 4 of the thesis analyses the overall structure of the positions of these nine newspapers on European integration and other relevant dimensions.

The present chapter proceeds as follows, therefore. Section 3.1 outlines the mixed methods approach adopted by Part II of the thesis, and discusses some of the theoretical considerations inherent in adopting critical discourse analysis. Section 3.2 examines case-study selection, discussing the selection of the UK between 1997 and 2010 as the case study for the empirical chapters, and outlining some of the existing literature on the UK's engagement with the European Union. Section 3.3 outlines the first method and the methodological reasoning behind employing survey data to estimate the newspaper positions. The remainder of the chapter then discusses then discusses the second method; section 3.4 outlines the sources for the critical discourse analysis and how these sources were selected, while section 3.5 discusses how the texts were read, coded, and interpreted.

### **3.1 A mixed-methods approach**

A mixed-methods approach to examining the hypotheses summarised above is adopted by this thesis. Specifically, two primary research methods are used: a quantitative examination of evidence about the structure of the mass media (specifically the press) in the UK, and a qualitative discourse analysis of the content of mass-mediated debates. This section outlines the overall research strategy, and then discusses some of the theoretical considerations of the use of discourse analysis.

The first method is concerned with understanding the structure of media positions on European integration in the UK. This question is addressed using an approach that employs existing, large-scale survey research in order to estimate the positions of media and their audiences, the results of which are described in Chapter 4. This method analyses the data from the British Social Attitudes Survey (BSA) to measure the positions of newspaper readers on European integration, as well as the positions of newspaper readers on the two political dimensions in the MAP model: left-right and *gal-tan*. Using the mean positions of the readers of newspapers as a proxy for newspaper positions, it then measures the association between these dimensions. This provides a generalisable measure of the structure of actors in mass-mediated debates that is independent of the content of those debates.

The second method is focussed on addressing the later three hypotheses: in Chapters 5 and 6, critical discourse analysis is deployed in order to develop an understanding of the content of media discourses on European integration, and how they interact with the discourses of political parties. This addresses the detailed content and character of mass-mediated debates, and the roles of actors within these debates. It does this by examining data from nine UK national newspapers, drawn from the UK between 1997 and 2010, and from five major speeches by the leaders of the Labour and Conservative parties during this period. The articles and speeches are examined in detail, individually, to gain an understanding of the context, content, and purpose of each text. The method for this is set out in section 3.5, below.

The two methods selected have been chosen to provide a view of the evidence available on the UK case that provides an insight into the overall distribution of mass media (in this case, newspaper) positions on European integration — to provide an indication of the structure of the mass-mediated public debate — and which offers a detailed account of the content and character of those debates and the interactions between parties and newspapers in the mass arena. In combining a quantitative analysis of large-scale survey data with a detailed critical discourse analysis of specific texts that form part of the mass-mediated public debate, this approach seeks to achieve both breadth and depth. The quantitative analysis of newspaper reader positions offers an opportunity to construct a reproducible and generalisable measure of where newspapers and their readers stand in the overall structure of debates on European integration. The qualitative discourses analysis provides an in-depth, detailed account of the specific content of these debates, how actors construct European integration, and the relationship between different actors and discourses. This data provides specific evidence from a particular place and time, the UK between 1997 and 2010, providing a deep insight into that case. It also observes patterns of behaviour that are common across newspapers and

specific cases that provide a degree of generalisability. This combination of methods also has the advantage of a degree of ‘triangulation’, allowing for the findings from one method to both inform and confirm the other (see Greener 2011, 195-6). In this case, as the following chapters show, the findings from the analysis of newspaper reader positions inform the subsequent analysis of the content of discourses, and provide confirmation for some of the findings presented in those chapters in regards to the link between newspaper reader positions and discourses.

In designing a method to analyse the content and character of debates on European integration in the UK, one important consideration is how discourse analysis relates to other forms of enquiry, and how these two methods ‘fit’ together. The choice of discourse analysis was informed by the findings of the literature review and theoretical framework presented in Chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 showed that postfunctionalist European integration theory argues that the constitutive nature of party discourses on European integration are significant for the construction of public opinion, in particular the mechanisms of priming, cueing, and framing. Political entrepreneurs mobilise the tension between national identity and European integration through constructing discourses which connect these two factors (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13). Chapter 2 showed that national identity can itself be understood as being discursively constructed by social actors in diverse ways in public, media, and private discourses. In light of this, discourse theory will now be discussed in the context of the methods used in this thesis, in order to clarify how this thesis understands discourse and its relationship to the world

### *Discourse theory and approaches to discourse analysis*

A wide literature has developed that uses the term ‘discourse’ in a range of ways, including spoken and written language (Foucault 1972), as well as other forms of semiotic activity that can include visual images and non-verbal forms of communication (Fairclough 1995, 54; Wodak et al. 2009). In this thesis, the term ‘discourse’ is used primarily to indicate spoken and written language. There is no clear agreement on the precise definition of ‘discourse analysis’ or ‘discourse’ (De Cillia et al 1999). Discourse theory itself is divided into many strands, traditions, and forms, reflecting different disciplines and ontologies. However, broadly, one can argue that ‘the discourse analyst examines the ways in which structures of meaning make possible certain forms of conduct’ (Howarth 1995, 115). At the heart of the discourse analysis paradigm is the assumption that discourses constitute a form of social practice. Discourse theory ‘investigates the way in which social practices articulate and contest the discourses which constitute social reality’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 3). All objects are objects of

discourse, and the meanings of objects depend upon the socially constructed system of rules that signify differences (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000).

This definition leaves open the possibility of understanding all social phenomena as discourse. Post-structuralist discourse theory, forming part of the ‘third generation’ of discourse theory, takes an expansive view of discourse (Howarth and Torfing 2005). For example, Derrida holds that ‘everything became a system where the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences’ (Derrida 1970, 252). The social world is seen as no longer being fixed with reference to a determining centre, rather it is understood as a process of the endless displacement of ‘limited and provisional centres’ (Howarth and Torfing 2005, 9). Post-structuralists reject the idea of structure as a closed and centred totality. For instance, Laclau and Mouffe argue that there is no distinction between the discursive and non-discursive (1985). Even an apparently non-discursive phenomena such as technology is interpreted as having been constructed in systems of discursive difference, and Laclau and Mouffe argue that discourse is co-extensive with the social (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; see also Howarth and Torfing 2009).

However, this perspective on discourse often appears to ‘fall into the trap’ of suggesting that ‘social life is nothing but discourse’ (Daddow 2011, 80). Alternative approaches to discourse analysis offer an account of discourse which is more consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapters 1 and 2, and with the account of the construction of identities provided by Hooghe and Marks (2009). Specifically, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a perspective that provides the discourse analyst with an account of discourse that is rooted in a critical realist approach (Howarth and Torfing 2005, 7). CDA understands discourse as one element of social practice, one that has a causal relationship with other aspects of social life, and which runs through social practices. Discourse can therefore be understood as the means by which communicative practices help to shape the way in which we interpret and experience the world; discourse forms cognitive frameworks through which we experience and interpret the world, providing structure, meaning, and forming belief systems. Discourse can be understood, therefore, as the ‘dimension of society where meaning is structured’, and knowledge about particular objects is systematically organised, delimiting what we know and do not know about an object (Waeber 1996: 5). Discourse, rather than constituting all social phenomena, is rather a system of rules of signification that ‘actively mediates between people and social reality’ (Cabrera 2005: 22).

The most significant proponent of CDA, Norman Fairclough, has established a framework for the analysis of media discourses (1995), and political discourses (2000), which provides the basis for the analysis of discourse in this thesis. This framework fits closely with the assumptions found in the work of the theorists of national identity discussed in Chapter 1 (for example, Billig 1995; Wodak et al 2009). Fairclough argues that discourses have ‘causal effects’, which can bring about changes in our knowledge, and shape our beliefs, attitudes, and identities (2003, 9). Discourses, in this account, can include linguistically mediated practices that include speech, writing, images, and gestures, which are used by social actors to produce and interpret meaning (Howarth and Torfing 2005). Fairclough argues that texts ‘contribute to changes in people (beliefs, attitudes, etc.), actions, social relations, and the material world’ (2003, 9). Language is always constitutive of social identities, social relations, and systems of knowledge and belief (Fairclough 1995, 55). Discursive practices are considered to be ideological in nature, in that they contribute to the ‘naturalisation of contingently constructed meanings’ (Howarth and Torfing 2005, 7-8). As a result, discourses can operate in ways that are both transformative, creatively changing the ways in which we think about the world, and which reinforce existing social identities, relations, and belief and knowledge systems in a more conventional manner. Discourses reinforce the political and social order, and transform it, therefore.

CDA offers a *critical* approach precisely because ‘critical discourse practitioners see the analysis of political discourse as an essentially critical exercise’ (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 17). Through the analysis of political discourse from a critical perspective, CDA provides a means to uncover the reproduction and contestation of political power through discourse. Importantly, it also characterises political discourse as being attached to specific political actors, including individual politicians and citizens, institutions, and organisations (van Dijk 1997; Fairclough and Fairclough 2012). These actors are engaged in political processes and events, and CDA places emphasis on the context of these events to understand discourses. Thus, discourse can be understood as taking place in political contexts that provide the means for actors to ‘exert their agency’ and which ‘empower them to act on the world in a way that has an impact on matters of common concern’ (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 18-19). These contexts may be strongly institutionalised, such as in parliament or government, or less strongly institutionalised settings such as social media. Fairclough gives emphasis to the idea of ‘politics as action’, and in particular the background of institutions in which human agents operate. CDA is also focussed on the analysis of *relevant* features of discourse: those which are pertinent to the purpose or function of the political processes or events being analysed (van Dijk 1997, 38; Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 18).

In both the practice of politics and government, language is central to the operation of those practices. Fairclough argues that:

Political differences have always been constituted as differences in language, political struggles have always been partly struggles over the dominant language, and both the theory and practice of political rhetoric go back to ancient times (Fairclough 2000, 3).

As part of his Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, Fairclough understands government as a form of social practice, in which communication is a central component of the policy-making process. In his study of the New Labour governments, Fairclough argues that parties must build coherent and distinctive representations of the world — through discourses — that constitute their world view. These representations include discourses of ‘the economy, of work, of crime, of the family’ and ‘of politics and government as ways of changing the world’ (Fairclough 2000, 21). Discourse is understood as running through all the elements of government as a social practice, as part of the performative characteristics of that social practice: ‘part of the way in which particular people perform in particular positions in the practice’ (Fairclough 2000, 145). Government therefore cannot, and does not, happen without discourse, which is part of the ‘action, style, and performance’ of government (Fairclough 2000). Specifically, Fairclough identifies three key features of the discourse of parties: a) how it contributes to the process of governance (if the party is in power, as New Labour was in this period) or what action it takes; b) how it represents the social and political world, and; c) how it projects a particular identity and connects this to particular values (Fairclough 2000, 13-15).

This forms part of Fairclough’s emphasis on the relevant features of discourse. In the case of political speeches, for example, he argues that the focus of analysis should be on ‘the purpose of the speech, what it is designed to achieve’, since this may be ‘to convince an audience that a certain course of action is right or a certain point of view is right’ (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 18). Understanding the purposes and argumentative nature of political texts is central to Fairclough’s framework, since this is ‘key to being able to evaluate the political strategies they are part of’ (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 18). This emphasis on understanding the underlying strategies of political actors appears to position CDA as an especially useful methodology for the analysis of the politicisation of European integration, since the postfunctionalist model stresses the importance of the discursive strategies of actors (and in particular, parties) in this process.

In applying CDA to media discourses, another set of considerations must be taken into account. Fairclough (1995) provides a framework specifically for the analysis of media discourse, which highlights some of the distinctive features of media discourse, and the relationship between politics and communication in the mass media. The media, according to Fairclough, is placed between public and private discourse, transforming the sources of public discourse into new forms for domestic consumption (Fairclough 1995, 63). The mediating position of the media and 'socially adjacent' orders of public and private discourse is key to understanding the media's own patterns of discourse construction, and the internal and external relationships between these patterns (Fairclough 1995, 63-4). The media have 'major impact' on the boundaries between public and private, and between institutions and individuals, and the advance in mass media technologies have made hitherto largely inaccessible public events (such as parliamentary debates) accessible to the public for private consumption (Fairclough 1995, 37). An important part of the media discourse and its external relationships is the inherent tension in the public sources of media discourse, and its intended private audience. The media discourse is shaped by the often contradictory nature of these two poles: the relationship between public and private discourses is played out in the discourse of the media, as the boundaries and connections between them are continually redefined and redrawn.

The representation of public discourse in media texts is a key consideration for this analysis. Fairclough notes that 'a very high proportion of media output... consists of the mediation of the speech or writing of, mainly, prominent people in various domains of public life' (1995, 79). News media weaves together the representations of the discourse of several different actors, mediating different voices and formulating representations of actions and thoughts. For Fairclough (1995, 5), three key sets of questions about media discourses are important:

- 1) how is the world represented (for instance events, objects, or relationships);
- 2) what identities are set up for those involved? (for instance reporters, audiences);
- 3) what relationships are established between those involved?

The way in which public communicative events are transformed and recontextualised by the mass media is 'the interesting question' for this framework (Fairclough 1995, 41). Fairclough notes that communicative events are recontextualised differently depending on the 'goals, values, and priorities' of the media discourses within which they are recontextualised, which in turn raises questions of truth, bias, and manipulation (Fairclough 1995, 40-41). Fairclough includes these transformations and recontextualisations of discourse under the heading of 'representations'. This is a key question for the research questions being studied here. As the

previous chapter argued, the ways in which the discourses of parties are mediated or represented by the mass media — how these discourses are transformed and recontextualised — is centrally important for our understanding of how European integration is politicised.

Fairclough's framework closely fits with the postfunctionalist view that policy makers must make decisions about policy — in particular European reforms — through a process which is discursive, with outcomes decided, critically, by arena choice and the form and content of public debates. These debates, conducted in part through the public discourses of parties, are key to understanding the way in which policies are formed. Fairclough's framework allows an analysis of these debates in a way that acknowledges the dialectical relationship between discourse and structures of power, and which provides the analyst with tools to uncover these power relationships (Fairclough 2001, 31).

### **3.2 Case Selection: the UK between 1997 and 2010**

The particular case selected for analysis in Part II of the thesis is that of the United Kingdom between 1997 and 2010: during the 'New Labour' administrations of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. In light of the recent UK referendum on membership of the EU, the UK seems to be a particularly apt case for the study of the politicisation and contestation of the EU. Indeed, membership of the EU is one of the longest-standing and most contentious issues in UK politics (Hawkins 2012, 561; Oliver 2015; Goodwin and Heath 2016). This section briefly reviews the literature on the case of the UK in Europe, arguing that identity politics play an important role - reinforcing the suitability of the UK as a case study. It is shown that many studies have argued that the UK's 'difficult' relationship with arises from British history, geography, and party politics. The role and nature of elite and public debates on Europe have also been interpreted as important to shaping British attitudes towards European integration. These studies are evaluated, and it is argued that postfunctionalism has the opportunity to locate arguments about the importance of identity to opposition to the EU in the UK. This argument is substantiated with polling evidence from the Eurobarometer, which indicates that the UK has a significant proportion of citizens who identify strongly towards the nation. This makes the UK an ideal case-study for understanding how, within a postfunctionalist framework, the contestation of Europe through the cleavage of identity is significant for constraining policy makers, since the high levels of exclusive national identity in the UK would suggest that policy making is particularly hampered by opposition to the EU.<sup>1</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> A suspicion that appears to have been borne out by the result of the 2016 EU membership referendum.



relatively high levels of contestation of the EU in the period studied also provide a good test of the MAP model presented here.

*History, geography, and identity: British 'exceptionalism', 'awkwardness', or 'semi-detachment'*

The argument that the UK represents a particularly distinctive or exceptional case in terms of its relationship with European integration has been made in much of the literature Britain and Europe. One of the ways that this argument has been advanced is through analyses of British policy and policy-making on European integration. A common theme in this literature is the idea that British policy makers have had a difficult or 'awkward' relationship with their European counterparts, that Britain is somehow 'semi-detached' from Europe, or 'on the edge' of Europe (George 1992; Chrisholm 1995; George 1998; Young 1999; Geddes 2004; Wall 2008). Much of this literature follows the notion, articulated by Roy Jenkins ten years after the UK first joined, that British policy towards and engagement with the EU and its predecessors has been characterised by 'the half-hearted involvement of one of its most powerful members' (Jenkins 1983, 150). Explanations for the this 'awkwardness thesis' concentrate on a number of key arguments. These include: British history, and the legacy of empire and of the First and Second World Wars; Britain's geographical position at the edge of the European continent; Britain's unitary parliamentary state and an emphasis on the concept indivisible sovereignty in the Westminster system; and, the terms in which the UK joined the European project. Further explanations include the role of parties and successive governments in managing the UK's relationship with the EU and its predecessors.

Historical arguments about the British relationship with Europe largely concentrate on the UK's imperial past and the legacy of this relationship in the attitudes and approaches of both elites and citizens. The descent from global power to regional European power is argued to heavily influence the self-perception of policymakers and the public in the UK - the long-standing image of Britain as a major power is held to be responsible for the 'reluctant' nature of Britain's engagement with European integration (Gowland and Turner 2014). This 'empire within' has shaped the British state and left policymakers stuck 'between Europe and America' - as successive governments have struggled to reconcile the desire to maintain a 'special relationship' with the United States and the pragmatic requirement to engage with European politics and the integration process (Gamble 2003, 61). This legacy is argued to be a causal factor in the development of contemporary Euroscepticism in the UK. For instance, Gifford (2008, 851) argues that Euroscepticism in the UK has developed into a 'distinctive and powerful national movement' that is part of a British post-imperial crisis. This has made

Britain exceptional because of the extent to which Euroscepticism has entered in to the mainstream political debate, becoming a popular issue since the 1970s, and underpinned by Britain's imperial legacy and the lasting impact on attitudes that this legacy creates (Gifford 2008, 867).

Some studies in this vein make an explicit connection between contemporary British identity and Euroscepticism. Britishness and a strong sense of British self-identity is arguably important at the elite level - for UK policymakers to mobilise support for governmental action and to give those actions meaning (Gaskarth 2013, 61). Identity has identified as an important factor for both elites and the public. For instance, contemporary Conservative Party discourses have emphasised the 'Otherness' of Europe using particularly articulations of 'Anglo-Britishness' - a discourse complicated by the increasing multi-national direction of the UK (Gifford 2010, 336). This highlights the complicated picture of contemporary 'British' identity, as national sentiment in the constituent countries of the UK has increased.<sup>2</sup> The English element of this British identity is seen to be the most important source of Eurosceptic sentiment in the UK: as a new English nationalism has emerged that defines itself in opposition to the EU (although often obscured by defences of 'Britain', rather than England) (Wellings 2010). These accounts often emphasise the role of sovereignty, and the nature of the UK constitution, as a central element of nationalist discourses on Europe in the UK (Forster 2002; Wellings 2010). The uncodified nature of the UK's constitution, and the notion that it has evolved continually over more than 700 years — creating a direct link with the national past — is held to be central to nationalistic discourses which have been used to oppose European integration (Dewey 2009).

The historical legacy of the British constitution and the failure of successive governments to adequately adapt to membership of the EU are also held to be influential in the course of British 'awkwardness' towards Europe (George et al 1992; George 1998). George (1998, see particularly Ch. 9) argues that domestic political constraints based on attachment to national sovereignty (a legacy, it is argued, of imperialism and the experience of the Second World War), economic problems on accession, and a failure of the adversarial nature of British politics to react to the terms of debate among the original members have contributed to the perception of British awkwardness. However, George's conclusion that domestic political constraints seemed to be dissipating by the turn of the 21st Century (George 1998, 275)

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<sup>2</sup> There is only space for a brief discussion of the complicated nature of British identity here. The English nature of 'British' identity has been a focus of a great deal of recent scholarship. For instance, see Fenton (2007) on the idea that England is actively resisted as an identity by young people, Abell et al (2007) for a discussion of the imagination of Englishness as a 'void', Bryant (2008) on the politically fragile nature of Englishness. Opposing views on the existence of English nationalism at all can be found in Scruton (2001) and Kumar (2003), while McCrone (2006) argues that English nationalism is alive, but hidden.

appears to have been confounded by increasing opposition to European integration in the years since (Ford and Goodwin 2014). The issue of national sovereignty and the terms of British entry to the EC/EU is held, rather, to be an outstanding and unresolved issue: one that has led to the perpetuation of a ‘nation state mindset’ (Liddle 2014, 256-7). Wall (2008) argues that the issue of sovereignty is central to understanding the perception of the UK’s relationship among both elites and the public. The failure of policymakers (with the notable exceptions of Geoffrey Howe and Tony Blair) to address the issue of sovereignty has meant that ‘many in Britain would see concessions on matters of EC competence, not as sensible measures for a specific purpose, but as the first steps on a slippery slope’ (Wall 2008, 206).

The literature on the effect of British participation in European integration on UK political parties is also instructive in its emphasis on the divisive nature of Europe for both Labour and the Conservatives. The changing nature of the support for European integration among UK parties reflects the changes described by Hooghe and Marks (2009) across Europe: opposition to UK membership was concentrated in the Labour Party in the 1970s and 1980s, before becoming associated with nationalist sentiments within the Conservative Party from the 1980s onwards. This has had an effect of, over time, creating divisions in both the Labour and Conservative parties (Turner 2000; Bale 2011, 2015). The scholarship on the dynamics of European policy within the two largest UK parties has been accompanied with a recent interest in the rise of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), which is committed to UK withdrawal from the EU. The electoral success of UKIP during the 1997-2010 period, and afterwards, has led to a focus on UKIP as the electoral articulation of Euroscepticism (Ford and Goodwin 2014). The rise of UK as a potentially ‘entrepreneurial’ party highlights the cross-cutting nature of the contestation of European integration in the UK. As Goodwin and Ford argue, evidence suggests that UKIP have been successful in linking Eurosceptic sentiment to opposition to immigration and dissatisfaction with the established political class, thus mobilising citizens across more issues than simply ‘hard-Euroscepticism’ on what they call the ‘radical right’ (Ford and Goodwin 2014, see especially Ch. 7).

### *Elite and popular discourses*

The increasing visibility of UKIP as an example of a UK party as a ‘political entrepreneur’ highlights the importance of understanding the discourses employed to mobilise Eurosceptic sentiment. A number of studies have investigated the role of the media in the discourses on Europe in the UK. The issue of Europe has become increasingly visible in the UK media since the Treaty of Maastricht (Gamble 2003). In the present study, newspapers are chosen as the media to be examined. A number of reasons underlie this choice. First, newspapers are

especially relevant in the UK case due to the presence of far less perceptible bias in UK television when compared to UK newspapers (Carey and Burton 2004, 625). Partisan broadcasts in the UK are limited to party election broadcasts transmitted by all major channels, while legislation prevents the same partisanship found in newspapers on television news broadcasts (Carey and Burton 2004). Carey and Burton (2004) find that 'Britain's highly biased and partisan press' does have influence on the attitudes of readers towards Europe, but that this influence is contingent on partisan preferences (p. 638). Where readers receive mixed messages, they are less likely to be influenced by the press (Carey and Burton 2004).

The role of the media is also important given 'enduring low levels of support for European integration' in the UK (Hawkins 2012, 562). The influence of the media, especially the right-wing press, is argued to be significant given the latter's clear articulation of anti-EU or Eurosceptic opinion (Hawkins 2012). Existing studies have largely focussed on the visibility of the EU in the media, taking a quantitative approach. For instance, Firmstone (2004) studies the frequency of editorials on the EU in four newspapers to assess their agenda-setting role. Statham and Gray (2005) have compared reporting in two British newspapers with that in two French newspapers, finding that British coverage of the EU is largely internalised within the nation. These studies are largely concerned with finding evidence of 'Europeanisation' of media discourses, however. A relatively small number of studies have conducted qualitative studies of the substantive content of newspaper reporting. Diez Medrano (2003) argues that the framing of Europe in the British press is primarily as the 'other', and that media discourses are associated with both elite and mass attitudes towards the EU; however Medrano's study is only based on data from *The Economist* and *The New Statesman*, which are not mainstream daily newspapers. More recently, Oliver Daddow (2012) has argued in explicit postfunctionalist terms that the 1980s and 1990s were characterised by an attempt by the Murdoch-owned newspapers to create an environment of 'destructive dissent' after the 'permissive consensus' on Europe of the 1970s. Daddow's argument is not supported by clear empirical evidence to support his claim that 'the rise of the Murdoch empire' is 'perhaps the essential explanation' for this change, however (Daddow 2012, 1235). Anderson and Weymouth (1999), studying press discourses leading up the 1997 general election and 1998 UK Presidency of the EU, find that the tabloid press in particular are guilty of 'insulting the public' through the use of misleading and, at times, xenophobic characterisations of Europe. This is compounded by a preponderance of self-identifying Eurosceptic newspapers in the UK media market, which they argue presents to the public a skewed image of Europe which is inadequate in its informational accuracy and its stereotyping of peoples (Anderson and Weymouth 1999, 184-5).

The most comprehensive qualitative study of British press coverage of the EU to date is by Benjamin Hawkins (2012). Hawkins draws data from five UK newspapers, qualitatively analysing their coverage of the Treaty of Lisbon. Hawkins finds that the EU is discursively constructed as a 'foreign power', and also as a 'forum for inter-state bargaining' (Hawkins 2012, 573). The UK is constructed as part of 'a nationalist meta-narrative' (Hawkins 2012, 574). Importantly, Hawkins argues that the media acts to cue citizens responses and attitudes towards European integration and the EU (Hawkins 2012, 570-573). The press can therefore be seen as acting in the role of 'political entrepreneur'; fulfilling the same function that postfunctionalists argue political parties also play. Hawkins does not, in his analysis consider the presentation or content of government policy, and considers how public opinion and media debate influence this a key area for further research (Hawkins 2012, 574). None of these existing studies of the press locate their arguments in any theory of European integration that explains the significance of their findings, however. Anderson and Weymouth (1999) are interested in the 'misleading' nature of press coverage and the extent to which newspapers meet their responsibilities to readers. Hawkins (2012), meanwhile, presents a argument based on a discourse-theoretical approach, acknowledging the importance of media discourses for shaping the policy making environment, but without an explicit link to the overall course of integration.

The UK elite discourse is also an area of enquiry that is relevant to the case that the UK is a particularly significant one for the study of domestic contestation of Europe. Elite discourses in the UK appear to be characterised by an inability to 'move beyond the narrow modes of complaint, lecture and demand', according to the existing literature (Young 1999, 472). Liddle (2014) finds that UK elite discourse on Europe has concentrated on the concept of 'unfairness' - particular entrenched during the Thatcher period. The pro-European elite discourse, on the other hand, is argued to be dominated by the language of 'standing up for British economic and political interests (Liddle 2014, 255). These findings are especially relevant in the context of the New Labour administrations of 1997-2010. As Daddow argues, New Labour set about to pursue a more positive relationship with the EU, and to increase support for the EU amongst the British public through a discursive 're-construction' of the British relationship with Europe; a new 'logic of history' (Daddow 2011). Blair and Brown, tried to build a narrative of the British people 'making sense of their past'; which they viewed as a history that was essentially entwined with European history, and which made the British inseparable from their European neighbours. This vision is also seen as one where what Blair and Brown saw as British 'exceptionalism' and attachment to the primacy of the nation state was replaced with a recognition of the place of the nation in the international system. Daddow concludes that Blair and Brown's 'logic of history' failed to appeal to the British public, who

rejected their rhetorical construction of Europe and Britain's place within it (p. 238). Daddow's study therefore conceives of New Labour as a political elite facing the constraint of public opinion on Europe which was, at best, ambivalent. While Daddow acknowledges the role of the press in presenting what he calls the 'orthodox' view of British identity and history, he does not investigate how New Labour's discursive constructions of Europe were interpreted and presented by the press to the public. He also does not attempt to understand how public opinion and media debate influenced government policy. The connection between these seem important in the context of Hooghe and Marks' argument that elites have been forced to 'look over their shoulders' when making European policy. The role of the media as 'political entrepreneurs' fulfilling the politicising and cueing role warrants further investigation in order to understand how political elites are constrained in policy making on Europe, and how in the case of New Labour, their attempt to cue support for Europe was unsuccessful.

Evidence to support the idea that national identity is one of the most important factors affecting the UK relationship with European integration can be found in survey data. An examination of recent Eurobarometer data on identification with Europe is instructive in understanding why the UK is an interesting case, particularly in relation to identity. The results of Eurobarometer 81, conducted in June 2014, suggest that the proportion of people in all EU Member States who saw themselves as 'European only' remained very low: 2% of respondents. A further 6% of people saw themselves as European first, with some other nationality second. Nevertheless, 51% of respondents viewed themselves as having a particular national identity first, with a secondary European identity. The Eurobarometer results suggest that 59% of people living in the 28 EU member states possess some sense of European identity. A slightly higher proportion of people - 65% - felt that they were a 'citizen of the EU', in this Eurobarometer wave. This suggests that conceptions of citizenship do not necessarily overlap with possessing a European identity: one can feel that one is a European citizen without defining oneself as European. There was a positive association in the data between educational achievement and a sense of European identity: those who had studied to the age of 20 or beyond were more likely to identify as European in some sense (either 'national and European', 'European and national', or 'European only') than those who left school aged 15 or younger - 69% compared to 42% (European Commission 2014, 12).

The data also show substantial variations between Member States. Spain and Germany were the countries with the smallest proportion of people identifying by only their nationality, both at 27% and significantly below the EU28 as a whole. Here, the contrast between the UK and other EU member states becomes apparent. In only two member states did more than half of

**Figure 3.1: Percentage of Eurobarometer respondents identifying as their nationality only or as either ‘national and European’, ‘European and national’, or ‘European only’**



the population identify only with their nationality: the UK with 64%, and Cyprus with 52% (European Commission 2014, 11). This sets the UK apart from other EU Member States. As figure 3.1 shows, the structure of identification in the UK is quite different from other EU states. Not only is the proportion of ‘nationality only’ identifying citizens higher, the proportion of citizens who hold any kind of identification with Europe is, at 33%, much lower than any other EU country. Only 2% reported that they felt European first and British second, and 1% identified as European only. While these percentages are not greatly different from the EU28 averages for the final two categories — 6% of all EU28 respondents identified as European followed by their nationality, and 2% as European only — the percentage of Britons identifying only with the nation is both the highest in the EU28, and significantly higher than the EU28 mean of 39%. This is significant, because it marks the UK out as an interesting case

to test the importance of identity in conflict over European integration. We would expect that opposition to European integration arising from exclusive identification with the nation ought to be most clearly identifiable in the UK, as the EU state with the lowest proportion of citizens who identify themselves as European. If indeed postfunctionalism is correct, and identity is the decisive factor in explaining constraints on policy makers in regional integration, then the UK should exhibit the widespread politicisation of Europe, conflict structured by identity in public discourses, and evidence of attempts by entrepreneurial political actors to engender this politicisation in order to further their own agendas.

The British example presents an interesting test-case for postfunctionalist explanations of the constraining nature of identity on European integration. Much of the literature, outlined above, on the UK's relationship with Europe agrees that the British have been reluctant Europeans, characterised by awkwardness and half-hearted commitment to the European project. Some studies associate this trend with nationalistic sentiments, others attribute it to a failure of parties and governments. While we have some empirical evidence of the elite discourses on Europe in the UK over time, the evidence available of the content and qualities of mass-mediated debates is much less comprehensive, and crucially, does not locate itself within a theoretical framework that answers what Risse (2009) calls the 'so what?' question.<sup>3</sup> While a number of studies identify discourses on Europe in the UK that link nationalism and European integration, a deeper understanding of these debates, and how they are contested, will allow us to understand the process by which postfunctionalists argue decision making is constrained. As a case of a member state with distinctive and particularly exclusively national patterns of self-reported citizen identification, the UK appears to represent an important location to test the theoretical framework that postfunctionalism provides.

### **3.3 Method 1: Measuring the positions of media actors**

Chapter 4 sets out to address the first hypothesis, concerning the positions of newspapers on European integration, by measuring the positions of newspapers by proxy of the positions of their readers. A number of factors led to the decision to approach this hypothesis in this manner. As Ho and Quinn (2008, 335) observe, media organisations do not indicate their positions in ways that are as readily discernible as individuals; they do not cast votes in directly observable ways, while endorsements provide 'only sparse information about underlying political preferences'. Tone, emphasis, and coverage are all more difficult to

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<sup>3</sup> In other words, one which connects the content of media discourses with a theory of how these discourses affect the outcome of policy making on the EU.



measure than directly expressed preferences, and may diverge from the explicit positions of media outlets (Ho and Quinn 2008. 335). While later chapters examine in detail the content of newspaper and elite discourses, the task of Chapter 4 is to develop a more generalisable measurement of newspaper positions. This is necessary because the study of discourses does not provide an easily comparable way to measure newspaper positions, and it also does not allow for an easy measurement of Hooghe and Marks' proxy for identity - the 'new politics' or *gal-tan* dimension. A further problem is the generalisability of such measurement beyond the present study. As section 3.1 argued, discourse analysis is, inevitably, subjective in its judgements, relying on the analyst to interpret the data. This method does not allow for an easily generalisable comparison between newspapers in the UK, and those of another EU member state, for example. Thus, in order to develop an understanding of the overall structure of the political positions of British newspapers on European integration, an independent measure of newspaper positions is required.

One way to achieve this is through an expert survey method (Benoit and Laver 2006). The Chapel Hill Survey, used to measure the position of political parties on European integration, is one key example of this (Hooghe et al. 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2009). However, the historical nature of the data, and the constraints of this thesis mean that such a method is impractical. While expert surveys offer the advantage of the provision of a systematic underlying structure for cross-country analysis (Benoit and Laver 2006, 3), this is less relevant in the study of one country. A problem also arises in the case of this study, since the temporal distance from the start of the time period examined is already almost two decades. It would be problematic to expect even an expert to give estimates of the new politics and European integration positions of newspapers in 1997 from the vantage point of 2016; there are likely to be very few experts who would be able to provide an accurate assessment of the positions of newspapers 19 years hence. Although the intention here is to compare the results of analysis of data on UK newspapers with Hooghe and Marks' model of parties, there are a number of reasons for adopting a different approach. Rather than measure directly the editorial positions of newspapers, the mean positions of readers for each newspaper are calculated instead.

There are a number of reasons for the adoption of this approach. In particular, the use of data from readers also allows us to capture the reader side of the newspaper-reader relationship in a way that alternatives do not. By understanding the elements of the positions of readers, as well as the differing compositions of reader attitudes for each newspaper, we can understand the audience to which newspapers are writing. Since the postfunctionalist model aims to understand the relationship between nationalist discourses and Euroscepticism amongst

voters, this is especially relevant. As Benoit and Laver (2006, 63) argue, mass survey research presents problems when asking respondents to estimate the positioning of political actors, however they are more useful in telling us how citizens perceive positions, and how they are positioned themselves. By concentrating on citizens' underlying values and their explicit views on European integration, we can understand how the readership of each newspaper is composed, their position on European integration, and on other relevant dimensions.<sup>4</sup>

### *Data*

Contemporary survey evidence covering the attitudes of the readers of the newspapers studied here is readily available from the British Social Attitudes Survey, allowing the development of measures to estimate the positions of newspaper readers on a number of relevant dimensions. The aim of the analysis is to create measures of newspaper reader positions along the three dimensions measured by Hooghe and Marks (2005); support for European integration, (economic) left-right position, and 'new politics' (*gal-tan*) position. Data to measure all three dimensions are available from the British Social Attitudes survey, which also asks respondents to identify which newspaper they read regularly. Chapter 4 analyses responses to the BSA survey from the years in which the survey asked respondents about their newspaper reading habits and the required attitudinal questions. These were the years 1997-2006 and 2008. The data set assembled had a sample size (N= 16726), of which 53.1% were regular readers of newspapers (N= 7658). Three measures of position are thus constructed from the mean responses of readers of each of the nine newspapers analysed in the empirical part of this thesis. This allows for a comparison of the left-right and *gal-tan* positions of the readers of each newspaper, and of the support of newspaper readers for European integration.<sup>5</sup>

### **3.4 Method 2: Deploying discourse analysis to study media and elite discourses**

Chapters 5 and 6 present a critical discourse analysis of the content of discourses in the mass arena, studying both mass media and elite discourses in order to address the final three hypotheses outlined above. Having set out the theoretical considerations inherent in employing discourse analysis to study media and elite discourses, this section sets out the ways in which this method is deployed in practice. CDA is deployed to analyse two classes of data: press reports drawn from nine major UK newspapers from two election periods — the

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter 4 discusses in more detail the relationship between newspapers and their readers.

<sup>5</sup> Chapter 4 gives a full account of how these attitudinal scales were constructed from the BSA data.

2001 and 2005 UK general elections — as well as five major speeches by UK party leaders and the subsequent press reporting of them.

The mass arena, as understood in this thesis, represents the diverse range of locations where public debates on European integration occur. These locations include the print media (including newspapers, books, and magazines), broadcast media (including radio and television), and the internet, with its associated outlets including social media. The considerable diversity of sources available, greatly increased by the advent of the internet and the growing availability of instantaneous communications, presents a large body of discourse available. As indicated above, the press has been chosen as the mass media actor to be investigated in this thesis. In addition to the considerations set out above in relation to the literature on the UK case, a number of additional factors influenced the choice of newspapers as the mass media actor to be examined in this thesis. First, this choice follows the majority of the existing literature on media discourses on European integration in the UK, and studies of media representation of the EU in particular (for example, Anderson and Weymouth 1999; Hawkins 2009, 2012). As the previous chapter indicated, newspapers are an important site of contestation. This is particularly the case in the UK, where broadcast media are more restricted in their partiality. Newspapers are important sites of production and reproduction of discourses, and act as intermediaries between the public and private realms. In the UK, newspapers are considered to be agenda setters, exerting considerable influence on the overall news cycle (Anderson and Weymouth 1999). Additionally, as Chapter 1 noted, newspapers are an important site of the construction of national identities. Newspapers also offer distinct practical advantages in conducting a discourse analysis, which requires that discourses be closely analysed in textual form: in presenting a large body of text, they are ideal objects of analysis for the discourse analyst.

As Chapter 2 argued, these mediated debates also feature attempts by policymakers to directly intervene, in a variety of ways, to set the agenda, or influence the content or framing of debates. One way to understand the complex dialectic between the public discourses of parties and the media discourse is to study the speeches given by politicians as examples of direct interventions into debates. Speeches represent an attempt by parties to construct particular representations of European integration, at a particular time, and offer a good fit with the postfunctionalist framework, in that they are often a means by which parties attempt to directly contest or politicise EU integration. In this case, speeches by party leaders were selected. This decision was taken for a number of reasons: leaders were considered most likely to attract press attention through their speeches, while the statements of leaders were also considered to be most likely to be a clear statement of party policy. While parties consist

of a diverse range of individuals fulfilling different functions, and even constructing a range of discourses, it was considered most likely that party leaders would give the ‘definitive’ statements of official party policy.

### *Sample selection*

The aim of this study is to examine the politicisation and contestation of European integration in the UK, and in particular the use of discursive strategies relating to national identity by the media and by political parties. As noted above, the Labour governments between 1997 and 2010 offer a particularly interesting and useful case study in this regard. New Labour, and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown in particular, sought to ‘sell the idea of a European future’ to the British people, embarking on a ‘propaganda offensive’ in order to ‘convert a hesitant, broadly Eurosceptical public’ into a people happy to support British membership of the European Union (Daddow 2011, 1). Within this general time-frame, the choice of specific cases was driven by the desire to test the case of a period of high contestation of European integration. As Chapter 2 noted, the postfunctionalist model is particularly suited to periods where specific reforms are to be contested. While there are a number of possibilities during the 1997-2010 period, including British presidencies of the EU in 1998 and 2005, the Constitutional Treaty (later Treaty of Lisbon), the negotiations on the UK budget rebate, or the 2004 accession of ten countries to the EU from Central and Eastern Europe. The last three of these events in particular received considerable attention in the UK press. However, of these examples, only the formulation of the Constitutional Treaty / Lisbon Treaty fulfils the requirement of the contestation of specific reforms in the UK. The case of the Treaty negotiations has been studied by Hawkins (2009; 2012), who, as noted above, provides the only significant recent study of media representations of Britain and the EU.

Elections were chosen as two of the primary case studies due to the nature of elections as periods of high general political contestation - an increased focus is given to politics in the news and this provides useful data. Elections are also periods which test the idea that the media can influence mass-mediated debates. As Chapter 2 argued, the media are likely to have *less* influence on debates during election time, since parties ramp up their attempts to influence the agenda, and increase their direct contact with the public (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006). Thus, if the media are able to exert influence on public debates on European integration during election periods, we would expect them to be able to influence the agenda during ‘normal’ politics too. The cases selected for the analysis featured in Chapter 5 of this thesis were the 2001 UK General Election and the 2005 UK General Election. The 2001 UK General Election featured high levels of contestation about proposed British membership of

the single currency, and the opposition Conservative Party stood for election with a manifesto that opposed British membership of the Euro, while promising to participate in no further European integration (Conservative Party 2001). The governing Labour Party promised in its manifesto to hold a referendum on Euro membership, and to campaign for joining, if economic conditions were right (Labour Party 2001). This pledge was also symbolically important to Tony Blair, who viewed Euro membership as a key part of his ‘project’ to convince the British public of the merits of the European Union (Daddow 2012; Rawnsley 2010). In contrast, the 2005 UK General Election offered less contestation about the EU specifically, while seeing high levels of contestation on (the often related issue) of immigration and asylum. This election therefore offers a contrast with the 2001 case, enabling an investigation of the differences between a period of very high contestation of European integration, and a period of relatively high contestation, whilst holding the background condition of a general election period, and the discursive patterns that this produces, constant.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of the speeches studied, these are drawn from points throughout the period, offering ‘snapshots’ of reporting from 2001, 2004, 2006, and 2009. This allows for a view into discourses on European integration, in particular around the speeches, at different times and in different contexts. This is a desirable side-effect of the choice to select speeches for analysis according to their status as the ‘best attempts’ by party leaders to articulate a discourse on European integration, since these speeches come at times of both high and low contestation of Europe, are delivered to different types of audiences, and for different purposes (see below).

### *Selection of newspaper articles*

In order to examine a representative sample of articles from the British press in the time periods selected, articles were drawn from nine of the daily national newspapers then in circulation. These were *The Daily Express*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Sun*, and *The Times*.<sup>7</sup> A tenth daily national newspaper, *The Daily Star*, carries only limited political coverage, and a pilot of the method found very little useful data in this publication. Topologies often divide the British press into publication types; typically ‘tabloid’ or ‘mass-market’ newspapers (*The Daily Mirror*, *The Sun*), middle-market newspapers (*The Daily Express*, *The Daily Mail*), and

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<sup>6</sup> A detailed discussion of the context of these two elections can be found in Chapter 5.

<sup>7</sup> *The Independent* ceased publication of its print edition in 2016, continuing as an online-only publication.

‘quality’ or ‘broadsheet’ newspapers (*The Daily Telegraph*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Sun*, *The Times*). The decision to take a wide sample of newspapers aimed to reflect the diversity of newspapers, their political positions, and readerships. While other studies take a smaller sample of newspapers that is claimed to be representative of the wider UK press (for example Hawkins 2009; 2012), the decision to study the most well-read and influential publications in order to gain a comprehensive sense of the state of newspaper discourses on European integration. The focus here is on national newspapers, and where they publish separate editions for Scotland or other parts of the UK, on their London editions. The decision to exclude regional and Scottish, Welsh, and Northern-Irish newspapers stemmed from a desire to study discourses aimed at a UK-wide audience. While this relatively ‘wide’ sample of newspapers necessitates a drawing articles from a more limited timeframe in order to keep the total sample size manageable, the decision to study nine newspapers allows for a more thorough comparison between publications, and gives a fuller sense of the ‘big picture’ of the UK press.

**Figure 3.2: Circulation of 9 major national daily newspapers in the UK, 1997-2010.**

Newspaper	1997 Circulation	2001 Circulation	2005 Circulation	2010 Circulation
Daily Express	1,241,336	979,042	949,238	674,640
Daily Mail	2,344,183	2,479,768	2,409,121	2,120,347
Daily Mirror	2,442,078	2,149,422	1,748,327	1,218,425
Daily Telegraph	1,129,777	1,022,263	920,745	691,128
Financial Times	326,516	478,161	422,519	390,315
Guardian	428,010	410,152	376,816	302,285
Independent	288,182	223,645	257,100	185,815
Sun	3,877,097	3,636,561	3,382,509	3,006,565
Times	821,000	734,220	660,713	185,815
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,898,179</b>	<b>12,113,234</b>	<b>11,127,088</b>	<b>8,775,335</b>

While the total circulation figures of the newspapers declined in the 1997-2010 period, newspaper circulations remained relatively stable through for most of the publications up to 2005, with the *Financial Times* and *Daily Mirror* showing modest growth in this period. After 2005 circulation figures show a significant decline, although the total 2010 circulation of 8.77 million for these nine publications remains substantial. The structure of the UK press is significantly skewed towards publications that are editorially right-leaning (see figure 3.2). Typically, while the *Guardian*, *Independent*, and *Mirror* are considered to be left-leaning, the remainder are considered to be positioned to the right-of-centre (Anderson and Weymouth

1999; Hawkins 2009). Additionally, while the *Mirror* is positioned as a left-of-centre tabloid newspaper, there is no equivalent publication in the mid-market. The ‘quality’ section of the market is also dominated by right-leaning publications, with the combined circulations of the *Guardian* and *Independent* being less than that of the *Telegraph* alone, for instance.

The articles for each time period were collected from the Nexis UK database. The following search query was used: ‘EU OR Euro\* OR Europe!’, in order to collect the widest possible range of articles. The use of wildcards ensured that terms such as ‘European Union’ or ‘European Commission’ were included in the search. In the case of the articles analysed alongside leader speeches, an additional search was run using the name of the speech-giver, to ensure that no relevant articles were missed. These search terms produced a large number of irrelevant articles, which, for instance, mentioned a quantity of money in euros. Articles were read manually to ensure that all relevant articles produced by the searches were collected. Articles that referred to European integration, the European Union, European institutions, treaties, or politics were retained, along with articles that referred to Europe as a geographic, political, or cultural entity. Searches did not include the sports, classifieds, or supplements sections, in order to restrict the sample to news, editorial, and opinion articles.

In the case of the two general elections studied, articles were drawn from the final 14 days leading up to the day of the election. This covers the concluding period of the ‘short campaign’, and allows for an in-depth study of a representative cross-section of articles. In this instance, a focussed, deep sample was judged to be preferable to selecting fewer articles over a longer period, or reducing the number of newspapers studied. This allows for a greater depth of understanding of the variations in reporting of the same events, and also allows for the analysis of *all* articles mentioning the EU, European integration, Europe in general during the sample period. In the case of the speeches studied, these articles were also drawn from 14 day samples. This includes two days before the delivery of the speeches, in order to catch any reporting of the lead-up to speeches, and then the subsequent reporting and analysis of speeches over the following days. This period was chosen in order to capture any ‘pre-coverage’ of the speech, in which the speech was reported before delivery, often as a result of parties’ publicity efforts and the release of the full text of the speech (commonly on the day of delivery), or excerpts of the speech in advance. The twelve day period after the delivery of the speech allows for the capture of the key reporting of the speech and subsequent analysis, opinion, and editorial items (which may, for instance in regular columns, be published at fixed intervals).

A total of 1587 articles were included in the sample as a result of this process. This represents a considerable body of text from each publication. As figure 3.3 shows, the number of articles from each newspapers differs significantly, indicating the varying levels of coverage given to UK membership of the EU, and European integration in general. The articles varied, as might be expected, in length, as well as the extent to which they discussed the topic of interest.

*Figure 3.3: Articles sampled, by newspaper.*

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>2001 General Election</b>	<b>2005 General Election</b>	<b>William Hague Speech, 2001</b>	<b>Tony Blair Speech, 2001</b>	<b>Michael Howard Speech, 2004</b>	<b>Tony Blair Speech, 2006</b>	<b>Gordon Brown Speech, 2009</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Daily Express</b>	36	29	3	4	2	0	6	80
<b>Daily Mail</b>	78	58	10	9	2	2	6	165
<b>Daily Mirror</b>	71	25	5	5	1	0	1	108
<b>Daily Telegraph</b>	113	70	12	11	4	2	6	218
<b>Financial Times</b>	171	111	8	10	2	5	4	311
<b>Guardian</b>	136	71	16	12	2	3	10	250
<b>Independent</b>	101	79	8	10	5	4	3	210
<b>Sun</b>	65	23	6	7	1	1	3	106
<b>Times</b>	96	91	9	6	4	3	4	213
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1587</b>

### *Selection of speeches*

To complement the analysis of newspaper articles, five key speeches made by leaders of the Labour and Conservative Parties were analysed, alongside the newspaper articles reporting them over the subsequent two weeks (see above). Speeches are understood, in the postfunctionalist context, as attempts by political parties to influence arena choice and to participate in mass-mediated public debates: in the context of the analysis in the present thesis, speeches are understood as tools used by parties to attempt to cue citizen opinion and to guide or influence the outcome of policy-making (either in government or opposition).

In selecting speeches, the aim was to ensure that speeches were selected from the notable ‘best attempts’ of leaders to articulate their positions on European integration, in order to select from cases where leaders attempted to use their speeches to set or alter the political



agenda. According to Charteris-Black (2014, xvi), political speeches can be broadly defined as either ‘policy-making or ‘consensus-building’. Policy-making speeches are those which are concerned with the making of political decisions, while consensus-building speeches are those which are concerned with establishing shared values. Of this second category, consensus-building speeches are often associated with very specific events such as the build-up to war or the election of a leader (Charteris-Black 2014, ch. 1). In line with the objective to analyse speeches that aimed to influence the politicisation process, the speeches were chosen were of the policy-making type. Inevitably, this typology is not strictly binary: policy-making speeches usually attempt to establish a consensus, while consensus-building speeches usually attempt to establish policy frameworks (Charteris-Black 2014). By focussing on the ‘best attempts’ of leaders to make ‘policy-making’ speeches, we are able to analyse the features of these speeches, and the nature of their reporting in the press in the cases where politicians are most likely to be able to play the role that postfunctionalism suggests. If politicians are not able to successfully frame European integration and cue public opinion at their ‘best attempts’ to do so, then we assume that they are unlikely to be able to do so at other times. Thus, the analysis of the subsequent discussion of each speech aims to interpret how successful speeches were in affecting the mass-mediated debate, by analysing the ways in which the speeches were reported.

During the 1997-2010 period, the Labour Party was led by Tony Blair (1994-2007), and Gordon Brown (2007-2010). The Conservative Party was led by William Hague (1997-2001), Iain Duncan Smith (2001-2003), Michael Howard (2003-2005), and David Cameron (2005-2016). The extent to which leaders gave major speeches on European policy during their time in office as party leader varied. For example, while Tony Blair gave a large number of speeches wholly or in part dealing with European policy during his time as prime minister, Gordon Brown gave only two major speeches on European policy during his three years as prime minister. Of the speeches given by Labour Party leaders (and consequently, as prime minister), two speeches were selected by Tony Blair — one given in 2001 in Edinburgh during that year’s election campaign, and one given in 2006 at the University of Oxford — and one by Gordon Brown, given in 2009 to the European Parliament. Two speeches were selected from those given by leaders of the Conservative Party: one by William Hague to the Conservative Party Conference in 2001, and one given by Michael Howard at a European Parliament election event in 2004. These choices reflect the desire to select speeches given in a range of contexts and at times of both high and low general salience of European integration on the political agenda.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Further details about the specific cases selected are contained in Chapter 6.

### 3.5 Textual analysis method - deploying discourse analysis

The method for analysing and coding the texts was based upon three key considerations. First, was the emphasis placed upon framing by postfunctionalism, which is held to make considerations about European integration salient, and cue opposition. Chapter 2 discussed some of the literature on framing analysis in more detail. Thus, the frames that texts employ were one of the primary objects of analysis. The second consideration was the construction of identities, discussed in Chapter 1. As the key explanatory variable in postfunctionalism, the construction of identities in the texts, and particularly the links construction between national identity and European integration, is central to developing a clearer understanding of the role of media discourses. Finally, these considerations were guided by the discourse analysis framework provided by Fairclough (1995; 2000; 2003). Taking the considerations noted above, and the research areas identified by Chapter 2, into account, the following features of Fairclough's framework for discourse analysis therefore seem to be the most important for the present study, and are prioritised in the analysis of the texts:

#### 1) *Framing*

The analysis of framing allows the analyst to understand how the features of the discourse that surround the main messages — reporting in the case of the newspaper articles, and the primary arguments in the case of speeches — influence the way in which that discourse is represented. Framing can manipulate the reader (or listener), through ordering voices and the elements of discourses to subject them to social control (Fairclough 1995, 83-4). Chapter 2 set out some of the ways in which research into framing effects have demonstrated the substantive impact of framing on audiences. Thus, understanding the way in which discourses are framed, where they are situated, and how they privilege certain representations over others, is a key objective of the analysis.

#### 2) *Narratives*

Narratives, or 'pre-genres', constitute a significant proportion of media output (Fairclough 1995). The central narratives of the texts can be understood the way in which the authors of those text to a) recount a 'story', series of events or purposeful social activities in a certain way; and b) present that story, in the way that is organised and realised in the text (Fairclough 1995, 91). The act of news reporting, or indeed giving a speech, centrally involves telling a story - recounting past events, but also interpreting them and presenting them in such a way to encourage the audience to see those events from a particular perspective. Narratives thus form

part of the way in which texts represent events and ideas, and include evaluative judgments that may have a substantive impact on the readers' interpretation of those events or ideas (Fairclough 2003). Texts may try to fit newly presented ideas or events into a pre-existing narrative, interpreting them through the lens of existing ways of thinking.

### *3) Representations of objects, events, and identities*

Texts, and particularly media texts, do not simply 'mirror realities', but rather they construct versions of reality that are contingent upon the position, interests, and objectives of their authors (Fairclough 1995, 104). The way that identities, events, and objects are represented in the texts studied here is central for understanding the logics and motivations of the choices made by authors. Understanding the language of the text is an important part of this study of representations. The emphasis here is on the high-level: the motifs and descriptions used in individual texts, and across bodies of texts, that imply a common way of understanding or representing a particular object, event, or identities. Some specific features that are considered include language choice (vocabulary, metaphor), and features such as metonyms and collocations: these are identified as important by Fairclough (1995).

### *Process*

After selection, sources were imported into nVivo and were then coded manually and with assistance from keyword searches. The choice to code the sources largely manually was motivated by the desire to become deeply familiar with the body of text, and to ensure that the meanings of the texts were interpreted as part of the coding process. A number of codes were established initially, based around the research questions. These included those key to the research questions; for instance, where the theme of national identity, the nation, or Britishness occurred, these were coded under these headings. Texts were coded in regards to their themes, frames, narratives, descriptions, and specific language. Codes were also created for specific people, events, and places, to aid the comparison between individual texts. Many of these codes emerged directly from the text, and the method incorporated a reflexive approach that developed around the context of the articles and speeches being analysed. For example, the term 'Eurocrat' emerged in a number of articles. This was coded as a new code and a search conducted using nVivo to find all the specific instances where this term and its variations were used. Computerised word counts were also employed to discover the most frequently used terms in order to guide the qualitative analysis.

Particular attention was paid in the coding to the key issues arising from the research questions. The texts were read to assess how they discussed Europe, European integration, or the EU; how they constructed connections between the EU and the UK; whether their assessment of their topic was positive or negative; and, to what extent European integration was their focus. Focussing on the linguistic characteristics, texts were also read with a view to understanding how they framed Europe / the EU / European integration, how they characterised it, and what specific words and phrases they used in his framing and characterisation. These features were coded, and the texts compared within and across the codes generated. The ultimate goal of the analysis was to uncover the assumptions and structures underpinning the texts, in order to understand their ideological and theoretical foundations.

While the overall pattern of the codes created gave a general sense of the key trends within the text, this high-level picture offers only modest advantages over computerised content analysis. Given the aim of the use of a discourse analysis methodology was to understand the meaning and context of the texts, a subsequent stage of analysis was undertaken to develop a more detailed understanding of the sources. The coding provided a guide for detailed re-reading of key articles, identified through the coding. This processes reviewed the most important frames, themes, narratives, and language used; the aim of the detailed re-reading was to gain a deeper understanding of the context and specific features of the texts. Fairclough's framework for discourse analysis, particularly in regards to the media, provided guidance for this detailed reading (Fairclough 1995). Focus was placed particularly on the devices identified in Chapter 2, especially the use of frames. This process was supported by the taking of extensive, detailed notes, which provided the basis for the analysis provided in Chapters 5 and 6. Texts were cross-compared to identify similarities and differences: particularly in the case of articles that were reporting on the same events, speech, or news story.

### *Reading texts in context*

An important consideration in the analysis of speeches is to take care to read and consider texts in the context of their creation and delivery. Each text or discourse act is located in a particular context, deployed for particular purposes, and is one part of a wider social practice that encompasses physical, sociological, and psychological elements (Epstein 2008; Fairclough 2000, 143). In the case of the newspaper articles and speeches analysed in this thesis, each text is located within a wider discourse, encompassing deeply-rooted mechanisms

of articulating meaning that are anchored in the practices of parties, individuals, media organisations, and wider society.

The analysis must consider, of course, that the texts analysed here are produced as part of processes that may involve more than a single actor. Speeches, for example, are not necessarily simply the work of a single politician, but rather may involve the contribution of (perhaps multiple) speechwriters, advisors, and other members of the party leadership. This means that while the words may be spoken by a particular politician, they are, in fact, the work of a range of actors in collaboration. For the purposes of this study, that is not a problematic feature of speeches, however. Here, we consider speeches as an attempt by *parties* to influence the contestation and politicisation process, through engaging in discourse in the mass arena. Speeches may be given to attempt to politicise European integration, to influence the outcome of debates, or to respond to the efforts of (Euro-sceptic) political entrepreneurs. For the analysis presented in the present thesis, what matters is *what* is said, not *who* wrote the particular text, since parties, not individual politicians, are the primary actor of interest in this context.

Similarly, newspapers are not the product of a single individual, but are instead the product of a process involving a number of individuals from reporter to editor to proprietor, and within an institutional context that can have a profound influence on the content of the discourses produced. However, as Fairclough notes, news texts are the result of a series of relatively predictable, stable processes that form part of a chain of events that lead from the events or ideas being reported to the private domain in which the discourses produced are consumed (Fairclough 1995, 37-40). However, it is by considering newspapers as an actor, with an agenda, that allows for the useful analysis of media texts in the present thesis. As Chapter 2 argued, media organisations are producers of discourse under a system of professional, institutional control. Much like political parties, they have systems and processes that regulate and construct an external discourse. While the role of the mass media differs in that the media are an intermediary between the public discourses of parties and the private sphere of those who consume media discourses, the factor of interest here is the ways in which this mediation occurs, and how the agency of media organisations impacts upon the politicisation process. Thus, the main object of analysis — the output of discourses produced by the media — gives us an insight into the ‘unseen’ practices of production, undertaken by a diverse range of internal actors, by seeking to uncover its underlying assumptions and patterns.

Particularly when reading newspaper sources, it is important to clarify which voices within the texts can be understood as the ‘authoritative voices’ of newspapers. In the same way that

party leaders have been chosen as the ‘authoritative voice’ of their parties, it is important to consider which discourses within newspapers, which frequently offer a range of discursive positions in their various articles and columns, are privileged over others. The decision was taken to consider, firstly, editorial and leader-column items as offering the most direct expression of the editorial ‘agenda’ of newspapers. Here, the position of the newspaper on particular issues is often expressed directly. In everyday reporting, the representations offered are also considered extremely important, since it is through this reporting that consumers’ perceptions of events are formed and shaped. Columnists are considered to be moderately less important, since these writers may contribute to a range of publications, but they nevertheless add to the diversity of ‘voices’ and constructions of representations of objects within the wider discourse of each newspaper. This can serve to expose readers to different constructions to those prevailing within a particular publication, adding an additional layer of complexity to an already densely layered and complex set of representations and meanings. However, in offering judgements about the general political positions or constructions of objects or events, articles by columnists are attributed less weight than editorials and everyday news reporting.

## **Summary**

This chapter has set out the methods and methodology employed by Part II of the thesis to examine the hypotheses set out in Part I. Two complementary methods are employed: a quantitative analysis of the positions of newspaper readers, and a qualitative analysis of newspaper reports and party leader speeches. The first method addresses the first hypothesis by examining the overall structure of the mass-mediated debate and the positions of newspapers within it: in doing so, it seeks to explore the relationship between the positions of newspapers on European integration and their positions on axes of both distributional politics (left-right), and new politics (*gal-tan*). The second method explores the remaining three hypotheses by deploying critical discourse analysis to examine in detail the content of newspaper and party discourses. The chapter discussed the methodological implications of deploying discourse analysis, and then set out the sources to be examined. Finally, it discussed the detailed method to be employed in the analysis of texts, and drew out some of the implications of this method.

**Part II**  
**Chapter 4**  
**The Structure of Newspaper and Reader Positions**

In order to understand the structure of press contestation of European integration in the mass arena, it is necessary to understand, first, where the readers of newspapers stand on European integration, and second if contestation and politicisation of Europe in the press is structured in a similar way to the same processes among political parties. In other words, do newspapers divide on the issue of Europe on an economic left-right basis, or is their support for European integration more closely associated with the green/alternative/libertarian (*gal*) – traditionalism/authority/nationalism (*tan*) axis? Directly measuring the ‘positions’ of newspapers in a quantitative manner is difficult, and is complicated by the fact that, unlike political parties, newspapers do not necessarily hold a single, fixed, position on the issue of European integration. As Chapters 5 and 6 go on to show, the discourses presented by the press can vary within individual publications. Measuring reader positions accurately is possible due to the data provided by large-scale attitudinal polling, however.

Therefore, this chapter will contribute to the task of more accurately mapping the structure of contestation over Europe in the press by, firstly, examining the editorial positions of newspapers on European integration, as well as their endorsements of political parties. Secondly, the attitudes of readers of individual publications are examined through the study of data drawn from the British Social Attitudes survey series. Thirdly, it will show that the attitudes of the readers of newspapers towards European integration do seem to, in some respects, follow the pattern found by Hooghe and Marks (2006) for political parties: support or opposition to European integration is more closely associated with their *gal-tan* position than their left-right position. This argument is supported by evidence of a relationship between the positions of newspaper readers and their positions on both a left-right and libertarian-authoritarian axis. Developing a comprehensive understanding based on quantitative data of the causal relationship between readers, newspapers, Euroscepticism, and the *gal-tan* axis is beyond the scope and resources of this thesis. However, this chapter seeks to begin to develop a way to compare the positions of newspapers and their readers in order to articulate the first steps towards understanding the wider structure of UK press contestation of Europe.

The chapter proceeds in four sections. The first section discusses the overt, editorial positions of newspapers on European integration and their endorsements of parties, to

give a general sense of the orientations of the publications studied here. The second section outlines the quantitative data and method used to measure reader attitudes, and discusses the link between readers' attitudes and newspaper positions. The third section discusses trends in Euroscepticism among the readers of the nine national daily newspapers, and this is followed by the fourth section, which presents data which suggest that the *gal-tan* dimension structures newspaper readers' positions on European integration to a greater extent than left-right dimension.

#### 4.1 Where do the newspapers stand on Europe?

While mapping the political positions of newspapers is not an easy task, one indication of their positions on European integration is their editorial support for major policies such as the euro. More generally, the political party endorsed by newspapers can also give a sense of the political orientation of that publication. It must be noted that, within each publication, there are often inconsistencies in the construction and treatment of certain issues, and a diversity of opinions expressed via editorials, regular, and guest columnists. In addition, during the period studied, the positions of newspapers do shift over time. However, one frequently followed editorial position of newspapers, their endorsement of political parties, is easily determined and is shown in figure 4.1. Typically, newspapers endorse parties in the run-up to elections in clearly-marked editorials. These editorial statements are often seen as indicative of the overall political orientation of the publication (Anderson and Weymouth 1999; Wring and Deacon 2010).

**Figure 4.1 Endorsements of UK newspapers of political parties at general elections, and support for UK membership of the Euro, 2001 general election**

	1979	1983	1987	1992	1997	2001	2005	2010	Supported Euro?
<b>Sun</b>	CON	CON	CON	CON	LAB	LAB	LAB	CON	No
<b>Express</b>	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	LAB	CON	CON	No
<b>Mail</b>	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	No
<b>Mirror</b>	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	Yes
<b>Telegraph</b>	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	CON	No



	1979	1983	1987	1992	1997	2001	2005	2010	Supported Euro?
<b>Independent</b>			None	None	LAB	None <sup>1</sup>	LIB	LAB / LIB	Yes
<b>Times</b>	n/a <sup>3</sup>	CON	CON	CON	None <sup>2</sup>	LAB	LAB	CON	No
<b>Guardian</b>	LAB	Alliance	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB / LIB	LIB	Yes
<b>Financial Times</b>	CON	n/a <sup>3</sup>	CON	LAB	LAB	LAB	LAB	CON	Yes

(Source: Wring and Deacon 2010, 444)

1. encouraged anti-Conservative tactical voting
2. endorsed specific Eurosceptic candidates by constituency
3. newspaper closed due to an industrial dispute

The 1997-2010 period saw considerable changes in the political party endorsement of UK newspapers. As figure 4.1 shows, several newspapers that had supported the Conservative Party switched their support to Labour: the *Sun* endorsed Labour at the 1997 general election, while the *Express* and the *Times* supported Labour at the 2001 general election. This represented a break from the pattern of press endorsements before this period, which had traditionally been largely dominated by support for the Conservatives. Indeed, between 1945 and 1997, only the *Mirror* consistently supported the Labour Party, while the Conservatives were supported at every election by the *Express*, *Mail* (with the exception of 1974 where it supported both the Liberal Party and the Conservatives), and *Telegraph*.

The 2001 and 2005 elections, analysed in Chapter 5, are two out of only three elections since 1945 where Labour has enjoyed the support of more than half of the UK's national newspapers, by circulation or by number of titles (the other being 1997) (Wring and Deacon 2010, 443). Thus, for the first time, Labour had a comparable level of support in the media to that enjoyed by the Conservative Party during their previous election victories, for example in 1992. However, the qualitative character of these endorsements was somewhat different in this case. Whereas the Conservatives received the 'enthusiastic' backing of their supporters in the press in 1992, and indeed in 2010, it has been shown that the support offered to Labour in the 1997-2005 period was far more moderate. Wring and Deacon (2010, 446) argue that 'these endorsements were characteristically weaker, more conditional and devoted to the leader rather than his party'. Indeed, the period between 2001 and 2005 saw a considerable weakening of support for Labour in the press. While some of the newspapers that had supported Labour in 1997 or 2001 switched to support the Conservatives, or the Liberal

Democrats, others 'were increasingly critical or demanded concessions' that antagonised Labour's traditional supporters in the press, meaning that by the 2005 general election, Labour 'had few allies' in the press, while the Conservatives had begun to regain some of the support they had lost (Bartle 2005, 43).

Nevertheless, the change in party support of newspapers that switched to endorse did not appear to precipitate a change in their orientation towards the EU and European integration to follow that of the Labour Party. Whereas only two newspapers supported the Conservatives at the 2001 general election, endorsing their manifesto promise to 'save the Pound', a majority of newspapers were opposed to membership of the euro. Figure 4.1 also gives a summary of the position of newspapers towards the euro at the 2001 UK general election, compared to their party endorsement. There is no clear pattern here: while none of the Conservative-endorsing newspapers supported euro membership, the Labour-endorsing newspapers were split evenly.

The considerations outlined here, including the strength of newspaper support for parties and their changing editorial endorsements, highlight the difficulty of using information from editorials alone to determine newspaper positions. These relatively crude categorisations also hide a considerable amount of nuance: political positions are better expressed as lying on certain dimensions. While support for Euro membership can be expressed as a binary choice, the overall support of a newspaper for European integration is certainly not a binary choice. It is even more difficult to determine the positions of newspapers on the axes of political orientation that postfunctionalists argue are significant for decision-making on European integration: the economic left-right dimension, and the 'new politics' (*gal-tan*) dimension (Hooghe and Marks 2005). While the following chapters explore the discursive construction of European integration in these newspapers in depth, this does not provide an easily comparable and generalisable measure of newspaper positions. Nor does this thesis set out to analyse in detail the left-right or *gal-tan* positions of newspapers through discourse analysis. The task of this chapter is therefore to measure the position of newspapers in a quantitative and comparable way, given the difficulty of determining this information from qualitative information alone.

## **4.2 Measuring positions: readers and newspapers**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the present chapter measures the positions of readers for each of the newspapers studied in this thesis, taking this as a proxy for newspaper positions. Rather

than measure newspaper editorial positions directly, this approach allows for the capture of the reader side of the newspaper-reader relationship in a way that other methods do not. This approach raises questions about the nature of the relationship between the positions of newspapers, and the positions of their readers. As Chapter 1 showed, studies of national identity formation have ascribed an important role to the media (Billig 1995; Anderson 2006; Wodak et al 2009). Meanwhile, Chapter 2 showed that the political communications literature presents a wide range of evidence to suggest that media have a meaningful effect on their audiences, detecting measurable effects in studies of framing and agenda setting (Norris et al 1999; Althaus 2003; Entman 2003; Walgrave and Van Aelst 2011). The extent to which newspapers influence the attitudes of their readers is contested: while some studies find evidence that newspaper discourses can influence attitudes significantly, others argue that newspapers simply reflect the attitudes and assumptions of their readership (Barker 1999; Newton and Brynin 2001; Ladd and Lenz 2009).

The literature on how and when the media, and newspapers in particular, influence their audiences has recently produced evidence to suggest a causal relationship between media discourses and public opinion. Much of the early work done on media messages, for many years, concluded that the media do not easily influence public opinion and voting behaviour (Berelson et al. 1954; McGuire 1986; Finkel 1993). However, more recently, a number of studies have overcome methodological barriers to find evidence of associations between exposure to news discourses and political opinions at the individual level (Barker 1999; Newton and Brynin 2001; Lawson and McCann 2004; Druckman and Parkin 2005). These studies, which looked at individual or limited-group effects, were more successful in detecting evidence of media influence. These studies overcome the difficulties of looking at overall public opinion, which is relatively stable in the short term, by focussing on data that directly links individuals with the media that they consume. This approach is more successful in capturing the effects of exposure to media than other methods, which may include residency in a country with a high level of readership of a particular newspaper, general political knowledge, or self-reported campaign attention; such measures introduce unpredictable biases (Ladd and Lenz 2009, 395).

There is evidence to suggest that there is an association between the media citizens consume, and the attitudes that they adopt: studies have found that the editorial position of publications influence the choice of citizens who chose to consume them (Miller and Krosnick 1996; Newton and Brynin 2001; Ladd and Lenz 2009), and that media outlets influence the opinion of their audience. Firstly, reader values tend to coincide with the newspapers that they choose to read. As Newton and Brynin (2001) find, there is a close association between the party

supported by newspapers and the party for which the readers of that newspaper vote. While voters are ‘not fools’, and do not believe everything they read in newspapers, they are likely to choose a paper which fits their own political inclinations - this association is particularly strong among readers of broadsheet newspapers (Newton and Brynin 2001, 282). The British case is particularly well suited for the study of associations between individual attitudes and media because the UK media environment allows for an accurate measurement of the exposure of individuals to media messages, particularly their consumption of newspapers (Newton and Brynin 2001; Ladd and Lenz 2009). Daily newspapers in the UK have national distribution and attract large readerships, allowing survey respondents to be easily connected with the contents of their chosen newspaper.

Several studies find that newspapers influence the attitudes of their readers. For example, Miller (1991) finds that right-wing newspapers are more likely to frame economic news in a positive way; reporting data such as employment and GDP figures, corporate profits, and other economic stories in a way that is more optimistic than their left-wing counterparts. He finds that economic optimism is higher amongst those who read right-wing newspapers, and that economic optimism tends to favour the Conservative Party, potentially influencing readers of those newspapers. Gavin and Sanders (2003) have found evidence that broadsheet and mid-market ‘black-top’ newspapers exert a statistically significant influence on the views of their readers. This influence is seen as being less clear among readers of tabloid newspapers, and is not repeated across all segments of the population (Gavin and Sanders 2003, 587). This influence, they argue, may have ‘important cumulative political significance’ in the medium- to long-term (Gavin and Sanders 2003, 588). In a wider study of 21 European countries, Azrout et al. (2012) find that media coverage affects support for EU enlargement. This association is particularly significant in strengthening existing attitudes; for instance people with already strong anti-immigration attitudes are found to be most influenced by exposure to negative content about immigration (Azrout et al. 2012, 701). Other studies find that at the individual level, newspapers do impact the voting intentions of readers. Studying the 1992 and 1997 UK general elections, Newton and Brynin (2001, 265) find that those voters who are ‘cross-pressured’ by their newspaper are more influenced in their voting intentions than those individuals whose politics are reinforced by their newspaper. In a similar vein, Gavin and Sanders (2003) have argued that these effects are more significant in the long term; voting preferences are more difficult to change than opinions, and the ‘steady drum beat of support’ for parties may have more influence than short-term changes in support.

Jonathan Ladd and Gabriel Lenz (2009) have conducted one of the most significant studies into media influence and voting. They take the switch in endorsements by several newspapers

at the 1997 UK general election to show evidence that news media ‘exert a powerful influence on mass political behaviour’ (Ladd and Lenz 2009, 394). Newspapers are shown to exert a good deal of persuasive influence on voting patterns. The effects of news endorsements and slant is estimated to have persuaded between 10% and as high as 25% of voters to switch their votes to Labour in those newspapers which changed their support from the Conservatives. This suggests a much greater magnitude of effects than other studies have found. For instance, Curtice (1999), finds that, while ‘the media can do more than set the agenda or frame issues’, the aggregate change of some papers persuading their readers to vote Labour was counteracted at the 1997 election by a similar process acting in the opposite direction among readers of Conservative supporting newspapers (Curtice 1999, 28). Newspapers were persuasive, he argues, but the pro-Labour majority in the press in 1997 was not able to avoid an overall decline in Labour’s electoral support from pre-election polls.

Thus there is evidence that there is a significant relationship between newspapers and the attitudes of their readers. Readers may choose newspapers that reflect their political opinions, but they are also influenced by the content of the newspapers that they read. This influence may reinforce their existing opinions, or indeed persuade them to change their vote at national elections. Given this relatively close relationship, the use of reader positions as a proxy for newspaper positions provides one route towards developing a quantitative, comparable measure of newspaper positions on political issues such as European integration. Combined with a qualitative analysis of newspaper discourses, to be presented in Chapter 5, this provides a means to give an assessment of the relative positions of the newspapers studied here.

### *Data*

As described in Chapter 3, a dataset was assembled from the British Social Attitudes Survey (BSA). Data were drawn from the 1997-2006, and the 2008 BSA datasets. These years comprise those in which respondents were asked questions relating to their support for the European Union, during the Labour governments of 1997-2010. A combined dataset of all the responses from these years allows for a large total sample size (N= 16726). Of these respondents, 53.1% were regular readers of *any* kind of newspaper (N=8888), and 45.8% (N=7658) were regular readers of one of the national daily newspapers included in this study, having reported that they read one of these newspapers at least 3 times each week.<sup>1</sup> When considered on an aggregate basis, there were sufficient respondents who reported to read each

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<sup>1</sup> Of the readers of newspapers other than the 9 major national dailies included in this study, the majority (N=736) read a Scottish, Irish, or Northern Irish newspaper.

newspaper (see table 3.1). Table 4.1 breaks down the total number of respondents for each year, which varies considerably. This is due to the format of the BSA; in some years, only a portion of the total number of respondents were asked questions on either the European Union, or on their left-right and libertarian-authoritarian position.<sup>2</sup> In several years, all

**Figure 4.2 Total Readers by year**

Year	Frequency	Percent
1997	513	6.7
1998	391	5.1
1999	371	4.8
2000	911	11.9
2001	423	5.5
2002	1242	16.2
2003	751	9.8
2004	993	13.0
2005	1393	18.2
2006	350	4.6
2008	320	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7658</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Figure 4.3 Total readers by newspaper, all**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percent
Daily Express	595	7.8
Daily Mail	1810	23.6
Daily Mirror	1952	17.5
The Sun	1952	25.5
Daily Telegraph	751	9.8
Financial Times	57	0.7
The Guardian	403	5.3
The Independent	168	2.2
The Times	583	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>7658</b>	<b>100.0</b>

respondents were invited to respond to these questions, yielding more numerous cases for those years

The BSA asks respondents to indicate if they read a newspaper more than 3 times each week, and which newspaper this is. Thus, it captures regular readers of these newspapers. It seems likely that regular readers more closely reflect the positions of their chosen newspaper in their own attitudes than those who do not regularly read the same newspaper, or who read one less than 3 times per week. While in most years there were sufficient respondents to provide a mean position for each newspaper, a number of years produced only a very small number of readers of the lowest-circulation newspaper examined, the *Financial Times*.<sup>3</sup>

The BSA also provides data on the general attitudes of citizens towards British policy on the EU. Respondents were asked to choose from a series of responses to the question ‘Do you

<sup>2</sup> This is referred to as ‘version A’ or ‘version B’; typically, 1/3 of respondents are asked to complete one version, and 2/3 the other, each year.

<sup>3</sup> However, all respondents who reported to be readers of the *Financial Times* are included in the aggregated results.

think Britain's long-term policy should be...' comprising the following items: (1) 'to leave the European Union', (2) 'to stay in the EU and try to reduce the EU's powers', (3) 'to leave things as they are', (4) 'to say in the EU and try to increase the EU's powers', or (5) 'to work for the formation of a single European government'. The mean response to this question from the readers of each newspaper is used to represent the position of the readers of that newspaper on the 'support for European integration scale'. Thus a 5-point scale of positions on European integration is created from the responses to this question. This 5-point scale is analogous to the 7-point European policy scale used by Hooghe and Marks (2004, 419). This scale is, for the purposes of estimating mean reader positions, taken as a quantitative variable. While it is possible to draw some inferences from the responses of the readers of each newspaper to this question, explored below, the relative positions of the mean response of the readers of each paper is more instructive of the overall structure of the press.

Since 1987, the BSA has also asked questions which provide a scale of social attitudes on a libertarian - authoritarian scale (which is used to represent the new politics dimension), in addition to questions which are used to generate an economic left - right scale. These are both also formulated on a 5-point scale. Both scales measure underlying dimensions of values: this rests on the assumption that there is a 'latent' attitudinal dimension that characterises the answers respondents give (Park et al. 2009, 238). Scores on the index are therefore a more reliable indicator of underlying attitudes than the answers to any single question. Both the left-right and libertarian-authoritarian dimensions are measured with a Likert scale. Respondents are invited to 'agree strongly', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree', or 'disagree strongly' to a number of statements. The score given for their left-right or authoritarian-libertarian position comprises a mean of their scores for the questions on the scale. The items were as follows:

#### Left-right scale

*Government should redistribute income from the better off to those who are less well off.*

*Big business benefits owners at the expense of workers.*

*Ordinary working people do not get their fair share of the nation's wealth.*

*There is one law for the rich and one for the poor.*

*Management will always try to get the better of employees if it gets the chance.*

#### Libertarian-authoritarian scale

*Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values.*

*People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences.*

*For some crimes, the death penalty is the most appropriate sentence.*

*Schools should teach children to obey authority.*

*The law should always be obeyed, even if a particular law is wrong.*

*Censorship of films and magazines is necessary to uphold moral standards.*

In the 1998 and 1999 surveys, the six-question formula for the libertarian-authoritarian scale was reduced to five questions.<sup>4</sup> This means that the libertarian - authoritarian scale for the years 1998-99 is not directly comparable to that for the remaining years included, however both variations demonstrate a similar level of internal consistency (Jowell et al. 1998, 241). The estimated position of the readers of each newspaper on the left-right, *gal-tan*, and Eurosceptic scales is derived from the mean of all the scores of all readers of each newspaper for these variables. Tests of reliability indicate that the 6-item standard BSA libertarian-authoritarian scale and 5-item scale demonstrate a similar level of internal consistency.<sup>5</sup> In the case of these two scales, they can be read as follows: on the left-right scale, a score of 1 represents the 'left-most' pole of the left-right dimension, while a score of 5 indicates the 'right-most' pole of the dimension; on the 'new politics' or libertarian-authoritarian scale, 1 indicates the most libertarian position on the scale (which approximates the *gal*-pole, for the purposes of this research), while 5 indicates the most authoritarian position on the dimension (representing the *tan*-pole).

### **4.3 Euroscepticism among newspaper readers**

The results of the quantitative analysis will now be described in detail. First, the positions of readers and non-readers of newspapers on European integration are described, and the changes over time of these attitudes are discussed. Next, the responses of readers when grouped by newspaper read are considered.

*Euroscepticism among the general population and newspaper readers*

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<sup>4</sup> The item 'the law should always be obeyed, even if a particular law is wrong' was removed in these years.

<sup>5</sup> The 1998 scales have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 for the left-right scale and 0.74 for the libertarian-authoritarian scale (Thomson et al. 2001, 30). This is considered 'respectable' for the libertarian-authoritarian scale and 'very good' for the left-right scale (Thomson et al. 2001, 30). The 2008 scales have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.80 for the left-right scale and 0.74 for the libertarian-authoritarian scale (Park et al. 2009, 239), indicating that the removal of one item had little impact on the reliability of the libertarian-authoritarian scale.



When comparing newspaper readers to non-readers, a number of interesting observations can be made. For the 11 years covered in the full dataset, the average position of newspaper readers on the support for European integration scale was 2.40. Non-readers were somewhat more supportive of European integration, with a mean position of 2.53. For the same period, we observe a notable difference in the positions taken by respondents on the 5-point support for European integration scale. Newspaper readers were somewhat more likely to wish to leave the European Union (19.9% of readers compared to 16.5% of non-readers), or to stay in the EU but reduce its powers (42.9% compared to 38.7%). Overall, 58.6% of non-readers wished to either leave the EU or reduce its powers, compared to 62.8% of newspaper readers. This suggests that newspaper readers were, overall, somewhat less in favour of European integration than their non-reader counterparts. Additionally, more non-readers than readers were in favour of leaving things as they are: 24.1% compared to 21.0%. Similar proportions of readers and non-readers supported increasing the powers of the EU or working towards a single European government. This suggests that those respondents that did not read a newspaper were moderately less Eurosceptic than those respondents who were regular newspaper readers, and were more likely to be in favour of retaining the status quo.

**Figure 4.4: Support for European Integration, newspaper readers and non-readers**

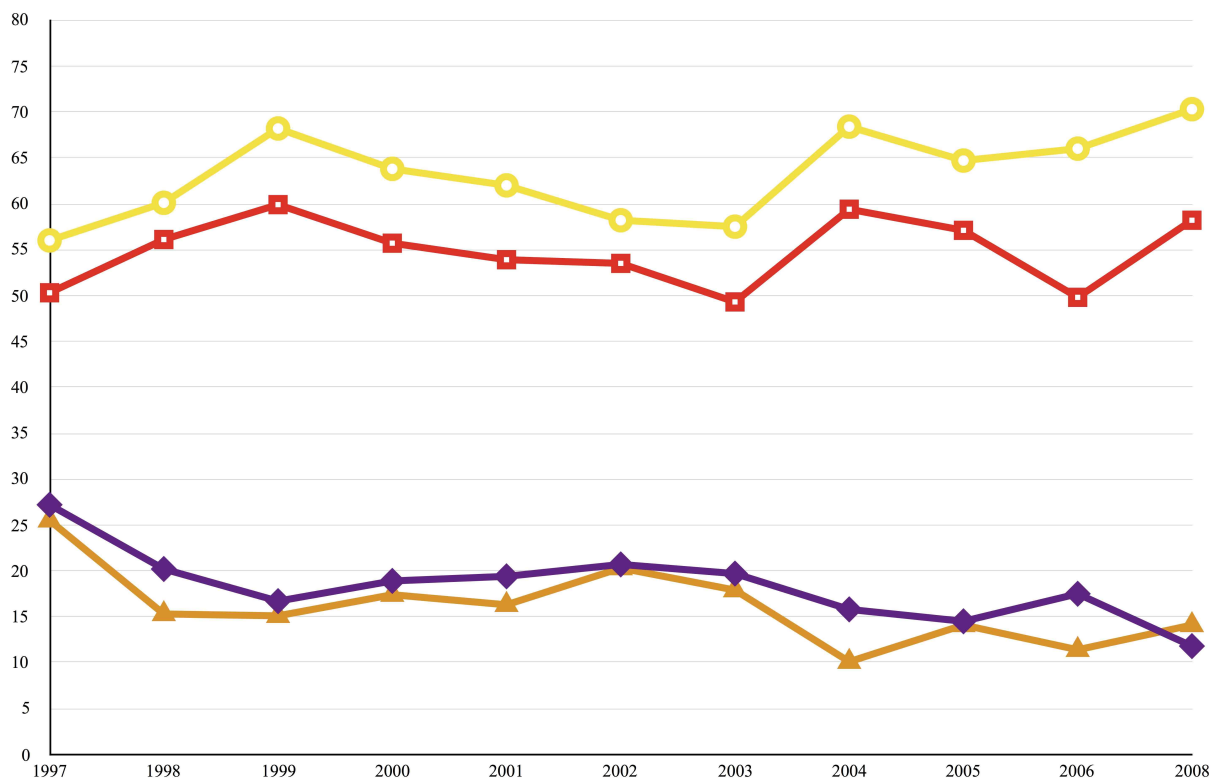


Figure 4.4 shows the change in these responses over time. It shows that newspaper readers were consistently more in favour of either leaving the EU or reducing the powers of the EU

than their non-newspaper reading counterparts, and that, relatively, newspaper readers were more Eurosceptic than those who did not read a newspaper regularly. Throughout, a greater proportion of newspaper readers supported policy positions that were clearly Eurosceptic, with the difference in percentage of reader and non-reader respondents selecting these options ranging from 4% (1998) to 16.2% (2006). The overall trend here is of an increase in support for either leaving the EU or reducing its powers, and a decline in support for deepening European integration. This trend is visible both among those who read a newspaper 3 times a week, and those who did not, with evidence of a consistently more-Eurosceptic attitude among those who were regular newspaper readers. Support for the status quo ante ranged from 15.6% in 2008 to a maximum of 24.6% in both 1998 and 2003.

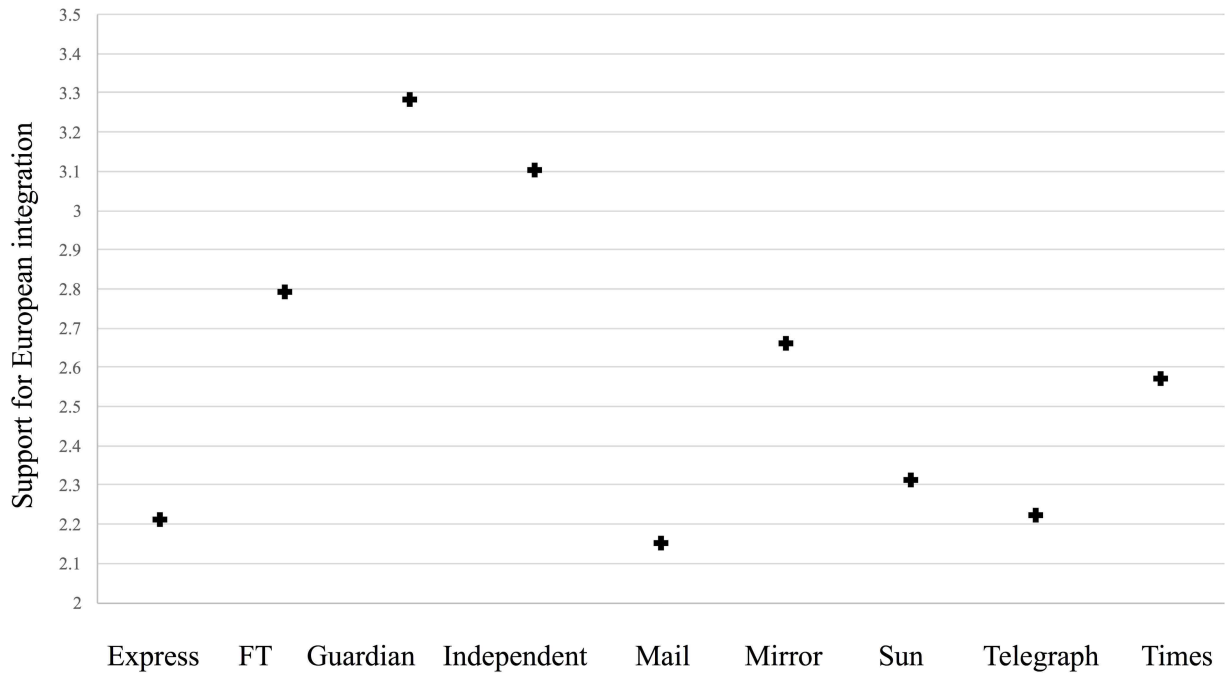
#### *Positions the readers of newspapers on the Euroscepticism scale*

When we consider only newspaper readers, it is clear that there are marked differences in the distribution of readers' positions on the support for European integration scale for each newspaper. Figure 4.5 shows the relative positions of the mean position of each newspaper on the resultant Euroscepticism scale, while Figure 4.6 shows a cross tabulation of the responses for the readers of each newspaper. We see strong evidence, when considering the mean positions of readers, that the readership of newspapers in UK is largely Eurosceptic. Only two newspapers have mean reader scores on the support for European integration scale that are greater than 3, these are the *Independent* and the *Guardian*. At 3.10 and 3.28 respectively, their position could be described only as moderately pro-European integration; even the readers of the most pro-EU newspapers are only marginally more favourable to European integration than simply supporting the current level of EU powers.

Four newspapers occupy positions in a cluster towards the Eurosceptic end of the scale. Readers of the *Daily Mail* are the most Eurosceptic of the newspapers included, with a mean of 2.15. In close proximity to the *Mail* are two other high-circulation tabloid newspapers, *The Express* and *The Sun*, with scores of 2.21 and 2.31 respectively. The *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* were consistently the two highest circulation newspapers in the UK from 2000 onwards: *The Daily Mail* overtaking the *Daily Mirror*, which was the third-largest circulation newspaper from 2000 onwards.

Between these two groups lie the readers of a further three publications: *The Times*, the *Daily Mirror*, and the *Financial Times*. Of these, the relative position of readers of the *FT* lies furthest towards the pro-European end of the axis, with a mean of 2.79. The *FT*, as discussed in Chapter 5, adopts an outlook that is positive towards European integration, with particular

**Figure 4.5: Mean reader position on the support for European integration scale**



**Key:**

**Non-newspaper readers**

□ 1+2

◇ 4+5

**Newspaper readers**

○ 1+2

▲ 4+5

regard to its business focus and concern for the fundamental freedoms (of labour, capital, people, and later, services) of the EU. Taken alone, the position of readers of the *Daily Mirror* is perhaps more surprising, given its generally pro-European editorial stance. However, when compared to the other mass-market tabloid newspapers here (the *Mail*, *Express*, and *Sun*), the readership of the *Mirror* is clearly more pro-European. This suggests that, again, one can reasonably argue that the attitudes of the readership of the *Mirror* ‘fit’ with the editorial line taken by the newspaper. Finally, *The Times* is located centrally within the distribution of mean reader positions along the scale, with a mean of 2.57. *The Times* has taken what might be termed a ‘soft-eurosceptic’ editorial stance, opposing membership of the Euro and advocating the reduction of certain EU powers, while being supportive of UK membership (Taggart 1998; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008). *The Times* is notable for having switched from a position of endorsing a number of Eurosceptic candidates at the 1997 general election, to supporting Labour in the 2001 and 2005 general elections, with the proviso that it was opposed to euro membership and Labour’s support for it.

When considering the breakdown of responses to the BSA question on European integration preferences used to calculate the Euroscepticism scale, a number of observations can be made. Particularly striking is the difference in the levels of support between the readers of different newspapers for the two ‘extreme’ options, ‘leave the European Union’ at one end, and ‘work for the formation of a single European government’ at the other. At two newspapers, more

**Figure 4.6: Cross-tabulation of responses to BSA European policy question by newspaper, 1997-2008 (excluding 2007) (Source: British Social Attitudes, 1997-2008)**

Newspaper Read	1 - Leave European Union	2 - Stay in EU and reduce EU powers	3 - Leave things as they are	4 - Stay in EU and increase EU powers	5 - Single European government	Total
Daily Express	131 22.0%	300 50.4%	96 16.1%	41 6.9%	27 4.5%	955 100.0%
Daily Mail	457 25.2%	916 50.6%	253 14.0%	115 6.4%	69 3.8%	1810 100.0%
Daily Mirror	209 15.6%	455 34.0%	402 30.0%	162 12.1%	111 8.3%	1993 100.0%
The Sun	515 26.4%	665 34.1%	545 27.9%	133 6.8%	94 4.8%	1952 100.0%
Daily Telegraph	138 18.4%	450 59.9%	59 9.2%	53 7.1%	41 5.5%	751 100.0%
Financial Times	4 7.0%	28 49.1%	8 14%	11 19.3%	6 10.5%	57 100.0%
The Guardian	7 1.7%	110 27.3%	98 24.3%	127 31.5%	61 15.1%	403 100.0%
The Independent	9 5.4%	53 31.5%	41 34.4%	45 26.8%	20 11.9%	168 100.0%
The Times	52 8.9%	311 53.3%	93 16.0%	86 14.8%	41 7.0%	583 100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1522</b> <b>19.9%</b>	<b>3288</b> <b>42.9%</b>	<b>1605</b> <b>21.0%</b>	<b>773</b> <b>10.1%</b>	<b>470</b> <b>6.1%</b>	<b>7658</b> <b>100.0%</b>

than a quarter of readers advocated leaving the European Union; 25.2% of *Daily Mail* readers, and 26.4% of *Sun* readers. Indeed, among the readers of the four mass-market tabloid newspapers, support for leaving the EU was generally higher than among the readers of quality broadsheet newspapers. The average support for leaving the EU among all tabloid readers was 23.0%, with readers of the *Mirror* being less favourable towards leaving, with 15.6% support.

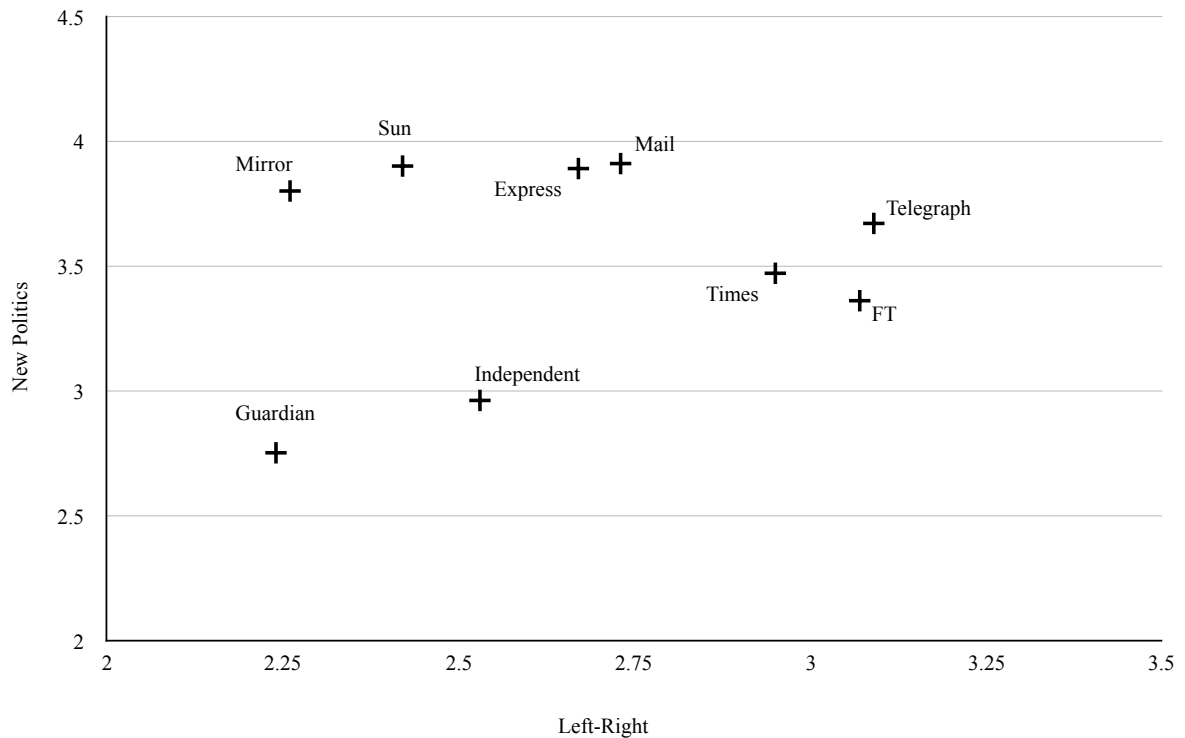
Staying in the EU while reducing its powers was option that attracted the greatest number of responses. 42.9% of newspaper readers chose this response. In the case of only two newspapers did the option to reduce the powers of the EU whilst retaining UK membership fail to attract a plurality of support among readers: *The Independent* and *The Guardian*. Readers of these two newspapers were, overall, more supportive of European integration than

those of any other newspaper. 15.1% of *Guardian* readers and 11.9% of *Independent* readers were in favour a single European government, and 31.5% and 26.8% respectively in favour of staying the in the EU and increasing its powers. Notably, a significant proportion of readers of both the *Guardian* and *Independent* were in favour of reducing the powers of the EU: 27.3% and 31.5% respectively. However, very few readers of these newspapers advocated complete withdrawal – only 1.7% of *Guardian* readers and 5.4% of *Independent* readers chose this option.

#### 4.4 Structuring mean reader positions: left-right or *gal-tan*?

Following from the evaluation of the mean positions of newspaper readers on a scale of Euroscepticism, the structuring factors of these positions will now be considered. The left-right and *gal-tan* dimensions will be evaluated as possible structuring dimensions. The left-right economic dimension is discussed first, and it is shown that there is not strong evidence for an association between the left-right dimension and support for European integration. The new politics, or *gal-tan* dimension is then considered, and it is shown that there is a much stronger relationship between the new politics axis and support for European integration. Firstly, the relationship between the two dimensions is briefly considered.

**Figure 4.7: Comparison of the left-right and new politics dimensions**



### *The gal-tan and left-right dimensions*

Figure 4.7 plots the mean position of the readers of each newspaper on the left-right and *gal-tan* dimensions. This chart demonstrates how the two dimensions appear to capture different aspects of readers' attitudes, and how the mean positions of readers' of the major newspapers differ on these dimensions. For instance, the mass-market tabloids (Express, Mail, Mirror, and Sun) occupy similar positions on the new politics scale – towards the *tan* pole in a narrow range of 3.80 to 3.91.

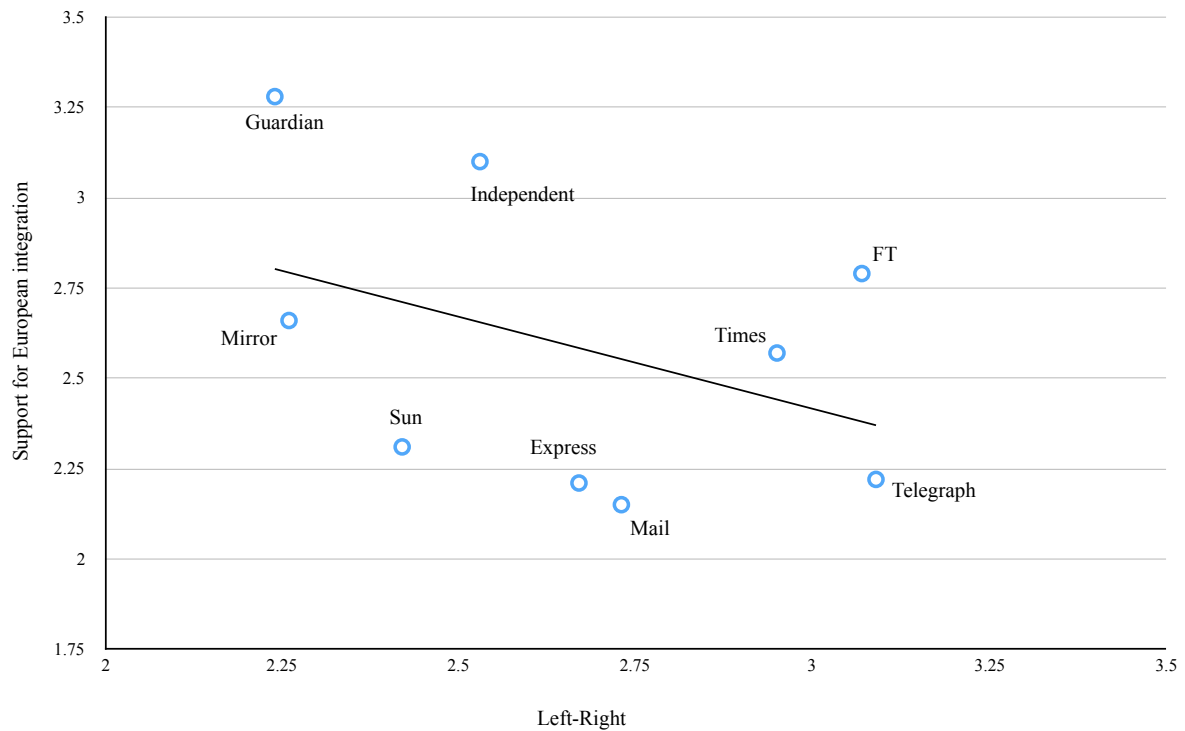
However, on the left-right dimension, they are much more dispersed, occupying a range of positions from 2.26 to 2.73. Whereas the mass-market tabloids do not seem to demonstrate an association between the new politics and left-right dimensions, we can observe from the chart a positive and linear relationship between the two dimensions for the broadsheet newspapers. This suggests that readers of the more right-leaning broadsheet newspapers are more likely to hold attitudes that are located towards the *tan* pole, while readers of left-leaning broadsheets are more likely to be oriented towards the *gal* pole.

### *The left-right dimension*

As discussed above, the left-right dimension has been shown to structure party positions on European integration, but that this association is weaker than with the new politics dimension. Controlling for new politics (*gal-tan*) also reduces the association between the left-right dimension and European policy (Hooghe et al 2002). For parties, Hooghe et al. (2002) show an 'inverted U' shaped curve, whereby support for European integration is strongest for 'mainstream' parties of the centre and weaker for parties on the far left and right. Parties at the extreme right and left are likely to oppose European integration, while parties covering the 'centre left', 'centre', and 'centre-right' are the most likely to support policies oriented towards European integration and co-operation.

Figure 4.8 shows the positions of readers of the newspapers in this study on the left-right and support for European integration scales. It is drawn with a linear line of best fit, showing a negative gradient and loose fit of the data points around the line ( $R^2=0.17$ ). An ordinary least squares regression does not find evidence of association at the 0.05 level of significance ( $\beta=-0.41$ ,  $p=0.28$ ). The 95% confidence interval is -1.53 to -0.51.

**Figure 4.8: Positioning of newspapers on European integration by the left-right dimension. Years 1997-2008 (excluding 2007)**



We can observe that, when structured on a left-right basis, the broadsheet newspapers in the sample generally exhibit higher levels of reader support for European integration than their tabloid counterparts, the exception being readers of *The Telegraph* who exhibit levels of support similar to those of their tabloid-reading counterparts. *The Mirror* is the both the most left-leaning tabloid newspaper in terms of its readership and has the highest level of reader support for European integration among the tabloids – higher than both *The Telegraph* and *The Times*. A number of features are notable in the positions of newspaper readers on the left-right scale. The most obvious is that the positions of readers are overwhelmingly centrist on the economic left-right scale, with a distribution toward the left. On first inspection, the positions of the readers of each newspaper appear to follow a pattern that reflects existing left-right classifications of UK newspapers (for instance, Wenzel et al. 2000; Hawkins 2012). The two rightmost newspapers are the *Financial Times* (3.07) and *The Telegraph* (3.09). The most left-wing publication is *The Guardian* (2.24), and close to this is *the Mirror* (2.26). The range is narrow, indicating a readership that is relatively tightly grouped together in terms of positioning on the left-right dimension. Less intuitive is the placing of readers of *The Sun* (2.42), which are to the left of those of *The Independent* (2.53).

One possible explanation of this unexpected result lies with the social composition of the readership of *The Sun* compared to its competitors. *The Sun* has a readership that is particularly working class – 64% of its readers are classified in what the National Readership

survey labels the 'C2DE' social grades, the highest of any national newspaper (NRS 2010). The working class are typically on 'the left' on issues of redistribution (Evans 2000, 51). The questions used to compose the left-right scale may contribute to this result. While one question directly taps into issues of redistributive justice ('government should redistribute income from the better-off to those who are less well off'), others may tap into aspects of class politics that are not strictly distributional. For instance, the final question, 'management will always try to get the best of employees if it gets the chance', may elicit more 'left-leaning' answers from respondents who do not occupy managerial occupations, and therefore fall in the C2DE social grades which comprise the majority of the *Sun* readership. The high proportion of working class readers of *The Sun* may therefore contribute to the relative position of *The Sun* being further to the left than, for instance, *The Express*. While both newspapers occupy a similar position in the market – as 'red top' or 'tabloid' publications (Wenzel et al. 2000, 260) – a greater proportion of the readers of *The Express* are classified in the upper 'ABC1' social grades (56%) than *The Sun* (36%). Readers of *The Mirror*, who occupy a position (2.26) somewhat to the left of *The Sun*, are composed of a similar proportion of working class readers (60%). A possible explanation for the somewhat more left-leaning position of *Mirror* readers lies in the long-term political affiliation of the two papers. While *The Mirror* has consistently supported Labour, *The Sun* switched from supporting the Conservatives to Labour in 1997, before reverting to endorsing the Conservatives in 2010.

The results for newspaper reader left-right positions show a less clear pattern than those for parties. With a much smaller data set, it is not possible to show if the structure of parties at the far right and left of the left-right dimension - demonstrating a sharp fall in support for European integration - would be replicated in the case of newspapers. Certainly, we simply do not have newspapers that occupy positions at either extreme end of the left-right dimension. While extreme parties oppose European integration because they oppose the ideology of the EU's construction - a 'market liberal project mitigated by some measure of regulated capitalism' (Hooghe et al. 2002, 969), there are no newspapers in this sample which are ideologically opposed to the economic centre-right, centre, and centre-left politics which have given rise to the EU. Similarly, the results for readers show that there is no major daily UK newspaper with a readership whose mean position would suggest they were radically opposed to the market liberal consensus. Whereas Hooghe et al. (2002) expect the support of parties for European integration to decline as their distance from the centre of the left/right dimension increases; we simply do not have observations at the far ends of the left-right dimension in the case of newspapers and their readers to test this hypothesis among newspapers.

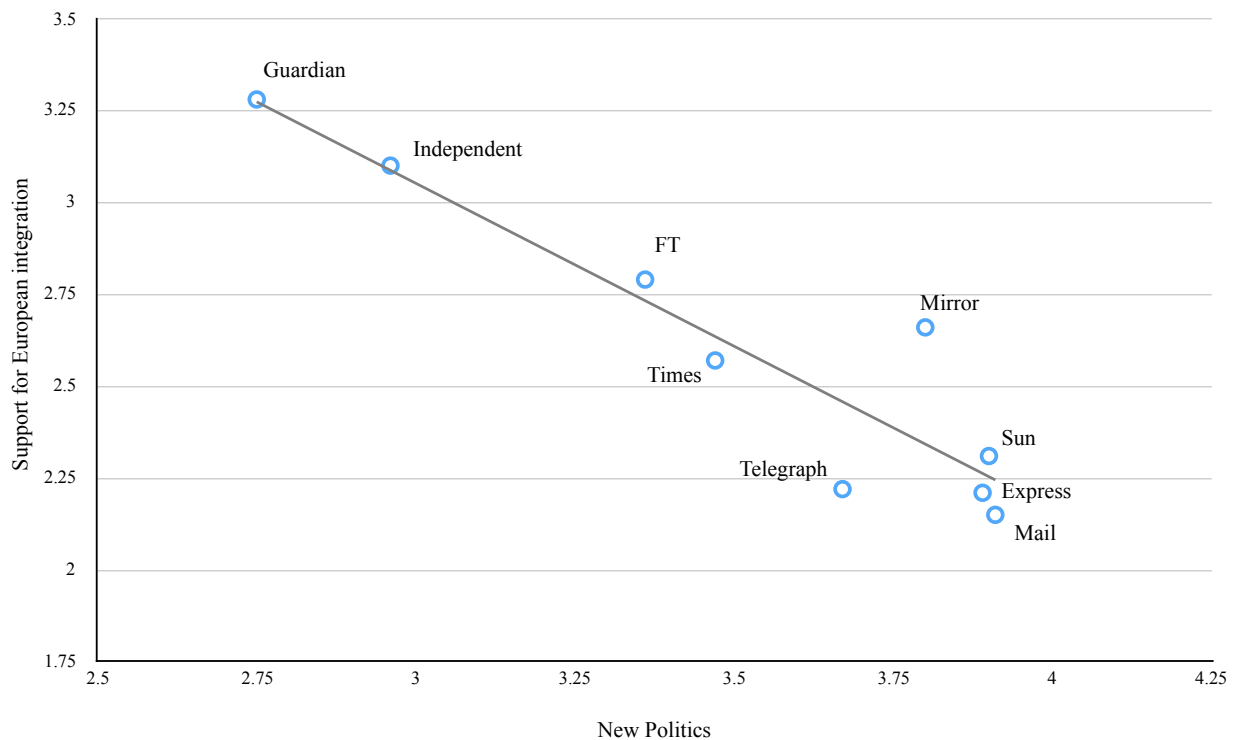


Thus structuring support for European integration via the left-right dimension does not show strong evidence of an association between the mean left-right attitudinal positions of the readers the major newspapers and their support for European integration. Rather, as the next section shows, there is stronger evidence for an association between readers' mean positions on the *gal-tan* dimension and their support for European integration.

*The 'new politics' scale*

Figure 4.9 shows the positions of newspaper readers plotted on the libertarian – authoritarian dimension with a linear line of best fit,  $R^2= 0.87$ . The linearity of this relationship is striking. The results of an ordinary least squares regression show evidence of a significant association between libertarian-authoritarian position and support for European integration a the 0.05 level of significance ( $\beta= -0.93$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). The 95% confidence interval is -1.20 to -0.57. Thus, there is evidence of a much clearer linear relationship between the mean position of newspaper readers on European integration and their mean position on the libertarian - authoritarian dimension than their position on the economic left-right dimension.

**Figure 4.9 Positioning of newspaper readers on European integration by the new politics (*gal-tan*) dimension, years 1997-2008 (excluding 2007).**



We can see that there is a negative relationship between authoritarianism and support for European integration. This is consistent with the finding of research into the new politics

dimension which shows that parties which are oriented toward the *tan* pole are ‘without exception highly Euro-skeptical’ (Hooghe et al. 2002, 977). It is interesting to note how the libertarian-authoritarian scale is similar to the left-right scale in terms of the distribution of positions. The range of positions along the libertarian-authoritarian scale is relatively small, at 1.16 – this is greater than the range of 0.85 for the left-right scale, but nevertheless still limited. We do not have, therefore, the same range of positions available to compare these results to those for parties, although a number of general comparisons can be attempted.

When these results are compared to those for the left-right dimension, we notice a considerable difference in the positioning of the readers of individual papers. On the libertarian-authoritarian scale, *The Sun*, which was located towards the left of the left-right dimension, has one of the most authoritarian reader positions on the libertarian-authoritarian scale. Similarly, the *Daily Mirror*, whose readers are more pro-European than the other tabloids, is positioned to the authoritarian side of the dimension here, in contrast to its position on the left-right scale. This supports the idea that while the left-right captures issues of redistributive justice, on which the C2DE majority of *Sun* and *Mirror* readers are likely to lean towards the left, the libertarian-authoritarian scale captures issues about which the readers of *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror* are more likely to hold authoritarian attitudes (Evans 2000, 52). We notice a particular cluster of three of these newspapers that are very close together on both the positions of their readers on European integration and libertarian-authoritarianism; the *Sun*, *Express*, and *Daily Mail*.

The readers of the four most strongly Eurosceptic newspapers, the *Sun*, *Express*, *Daily Mail*, and the *Telegraph* have an average score on the 5-point support for European integration scale of 2.22. *The Telegraph* is somewhat further to the libertarian, perhaps reflecting its broadsheet status and the demographic of its readers. Noticeably, all the tabloid newspapers in the sample score similarly for social authoritarianism, ranging between 3.80 for the *Mirror* and 3.91 for the *Daily Mail*. This suggests that readers of these newspapers are very similar in their underlying values on matters of social attitudes on the libertarian – authoritarian dimension. The readers of ‘quality’ or broadsheet newspapers have a much larger range of positions on both the European policy and libertarian-authoritarian scales. The most authoritarian and Eurosceptic broadsheet, the *Daily Telegraph* scores 2.22 on the European policy scale and 3.67 on the libertarian – authoritarian scale. The most libertarian and pro-European broadsheet is the *Guardian*, the readers of which score 3.28 and 2.24 on the same scales, respectively.

The mean reader positions of two newspapers stand out: the *Telegraph* and the *Daily Mirror*. In the case of the *Telegraph*, its readers are somewhat more Eurosceptic than the linear trend line would suggest: readers of the *Telegraph* score more highly for Euroscepticism than their mean position on the ‘new politics’ orientation might otherwise predict. However, the editorial line of the *Telegraph* is strongly Eurosceptic, as Chapter 5 shows. Similarly, readers the *Daily Mirror* have a similar mean score on the new politics scale to the readers of the other three mass-market tabloids (the *Sun*, *Express*, and *Daily Mail*), while scoring more highly for support for European integration than the readers of other tabloid newspapers. The *Mirror*, as Chapters 5 and 6 show, generally frames Europe in a more positive way than the other mass-market tabloids, while consistently supporting Labour and endorsing membership of the EU throughout the period studied.

In common with the data for the left-right dimension, we do not have data for either the far-*gal*, or far-*tan* ends of the new politics dimension. Thus, we are unable to test if the finding for parties of a fall in support for European integration for parties that score very highly for the *gal* orientation are replicated in the positions of newspapers; there simply is no newspaper which has a readership that falls in this category. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that the new politics dimension seems to provide a stronger structuring dimensional axis than the left-right dimension. We see a much stronger association between the mean positions of the readers of the 9 major national daily newspapers studied here on European integration with libertarian-authoritarianism than with the left-right attitudinal dimension. This seems to hold for the readers of all newspapers included, and presents a similar finding to existing research into party positions – the new politics dimension is the most significant factor in structuring positions on European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2004).

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has presented a number of data that give an initial picture of the structure of newspaper positions on European integration. The hypothesis that newspaper positions are structured in a similar way to the positions of parties is supported by this data. The *gal-tan* dimension appears to structure the mean positions of newspaper *readers* to a much greater extent than the left-right dimension. Whereas we see only a weak relationship between the left-right dimension and readers’ mean positions on European integration, there is a much stronger association between the *gal-tan* dimension and support for European integration. This supports the idea that the underlying assumption of postfunctionalism, that nationalism and national identity are the structuring factors behind contestation of European integration,

holds for newspapers as it does for parties. This is potentially significant for the development of postfunctionalist models: newspapers are conceptualised in the Media-Augmented Postfunctionalist model presented in this thesis as key actors in the mass arena, and the results of this chapter show that conflict between them appears to be structured along the same dimension as the conflict between parties.

Through the use of BSA data, the measures of newspaper (reader) positions developed here represent a first step towards a generalisable measure of the left-right, *gal-tan*, and support for European integration dimensions. Further research will be required to validate this method and advance further the research agenda of postfunctionalism in this area. This could focus on attempting to gather data around the causal relationship between newspaper positions and reader attitudes – perhaps utilising data from longitudinal studies – such that that carried out by Ladd and Lenz (2009). A wider comparative study of the attitudes of readers of newspapers across the EU might also provide data to show whether the apparent relationship shown in this chapter between *gal-tan* and support for European integration holds for the readership of newspapers across other European countries. Finally, studies undertaking a systematic quantitative coding of the positions of newspapers on European integration and the left-right and *gal-tan* dimensions would be welcome in order to more directly measure the relationship between these variables for the newspapers themselves, rather than focusing on readers. Possibilities for data collection in this area include quantitative content analysis and coding, or alternatively an expert survey in the manner of the Chapel Hill dataset (Bakker et al 2012).

In the setting of the present thesis, this chapter provides important context for the discussion of the content and structure of newspaper discourses that follows, however. If the data here is interpreted in the postfunctionalist framework set out in Chapters 1 and 2, this leads to the expectation that the *tan*-leaning newspapers will also contain the most eurosceptic discourses. If newspapers do, in fact, behave like parties and cue opposition to European integration through the construction of public opinion, then we would expect to see a greater concentration of Eurosceptic discourses in those newspapers that had a readership further towards the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension. Additionally, we might expect that, as Chapters 1 and 2 predict, these discourses will contain nationalistic constructions, that connect a defence of the nation with opposition to European integration. Conversely, we would expect newspapers located towards the pro-European integration and *gal* poles of the dimensions measured here to contain discourses that were more pro-European, and which did not feature nationalistic constructions of the relationship between EU member states and supranational governance structures. The following chapter will, therefore, investigate this relationship by

conducting an analysis of the discourses of the nine newspapers studied here, in order to develop a detailed understanding of the content and character of those discourses.

## Chapter 5

### The Construction of the Nation and European Integration in the UK Press

This chapter addresses the content of newspaper discourses on European integration in the UK. Following from the findings of Chapter 4, it seeks to understand how European integration is constructed in British newspapers. The particular focus of this is in addressing two hypotheses raised by the previous chapters. In Chapter 2, the importance of understanding how the media construct identity in relation to European integration was highlighted. The media play a central role in the discursive construction of national identity in public discourses; therefore, it was argued, media discourses may be significant if they construct connections between the nation and European integration, in the same way that postfunctionalism claims that parties do. Chapter 2 outlined the Media Augmented Postfunctionalism (MAP) model, which incorporates media actors into the postfunctionalist framework. This chapter seeks to build on the findings of Chapter 4 to analyse the ways in which newspapers behave as political discursive actors in the mass arena.

Drawing from Chapter 4, this chapter seeks to understand if discourses on European integration follow the political positions estimated for newspapers and their readers. The previous chapter explored the relationship between the average positions of readers of major daily UK national newspapers on three spectra: support for European integration, left-right orientation, and libertarian-authoritarian orientation (used in this instance as a proxy for the *gal-tan* dimension). These showed a stronger relationship between the *gal-tan* position of readers and their position on European integration, than between their left-right position and support for European integration. This relationship reflects that described by postfunctionalism between political parties and their position on the *gal-tan* spectrum, and demonstrates significant differences between the readers of the major UK newspapers on these measures. This chapter seeks to test if the discourses of newspapers reflect these reader positions estimated from the British Social Attitudes survey. Specifically, the chapter seeks to explore two aspects of the MAP model: the relationship between the *gal-tan* dimension and Euroscepticism in newspaper discourses, and secondly the use of discourses of the nation and the construction of national identity which link to these dimensions. It therefore seeks to test the assumption that newspapers have positions on European integration that are linked to their *gal-tan* orientation, and if the discourses on Europe connect European integration and the *gal-tan* dimension (specifically issues surrounding identity), in the same way as parties.

To address these questions, this chapter presents an analysis of the content of newspaper discourses on Europe and European integration through a discussion of a detailed study of a large number of articles taken from nine leading UK national newspapers.<sup>1</sup> The sample examines articles from two time periods: the 2001 UK general election, the 2005 UK general election. These time periods are of particular interest because they cover two contrasting sets of circumstances. In the case of 2001, the EU, and membership of the euro in particular, was highly contested and a focus of electoral competition at the general election. In 2005, the topic of European integration was not highly visible at the general election, and was less salient an issue for both voters and parties (Whiteley et al 2005).

In order to develop a clearer understanding of the ways in which media exert influence upon the character and outcomes of debates on European integration, the chapter examines the language and frames employed by the newspapers studied using the methodology set out in Chapter 2. The discourses of the newspapers are examined, with particular focus on their discursive construction of European integration and the nation, and the ways in which they draw connections between these dimensions, is examined through close analysis of the text of articles. Figure 5.1 shows a breakdown of the articles examined. The chapter first maps distinctive differences between the pro- and anti-European discourses present within the texts examined. It is argued that the *gal-tan* orientation of newspapers is associated with their discourse on Euroscepticism. Discourses that opposed European integration were associated with *tan*-ish discourses on the nation, and in newspapers that Chapter 4 found to be positioned towards the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension. These newspapers engaged in discourses that questioned the legitimacy, scope, and operation of the EU. These discourses frequently made connections between national identity and the European integration, seeking to discursively construct the EU as a ‘threat’ to the British nation and to UK sovereignty. In contrast, newspapers that had an orientation that was either towards the *gal* pole on the *gal-tan* dimension, or were located centrally on the dimension, were less likely to engage in these identity-focussed discourses. Nevertheless, some of the language of Euroscepticism so readily identified in the *tan*-leaning publications studied here was also often found in the pro-European discourses too. The evidence suggests that negative representations of the EU, especially when discussing the operation of the EU’s institutions, are common across the press in the UK. This confirms the findings of previous studies which have suggested that ‘the parameters of the debate about the EU in the UK follow a broadly eurosceptic agenda’ (Hawkins 2009, 235), and suggests that the structure of the UK press has the potential to alter the outcomes of debates on European integration by limiting the ability of pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 3 outlines the full methodology of the sample, including the methods of analysis used and the dates of the articles examined.

European parties to influence the content of debates and the dimensions along which they are contested.

These claims are developed by first, examining the content of newspaper discourses on European integration. It is argued first that, Europe is constructed as the ‘Other’ to the British in discourses in the UK press. The next section argues that the imagery of the nation and national identity is used to cue opposition to European integration by several of the newspapers examined, both reproducing the discourses of Eurosceptic parties and engaging in their own discursive constructions of European integration as antithetical to the nation. The argument here is that the nation is privileged as the only legitimate form of governance, and the EU is constructed to be a ‘threat’ to this legitimacy. This is achieved through a ‘sovereignty’ frame that emphasises the loss of national sovereignty to the EU. In section 5.4, the next most significant frame, that of ‘democracy’ is discussed, and it is shown that the idea that the EU is anti-democratic can be found across the press, with a particular focus on the *tan*-leaning newspapers. Through these discussions, a pattern emerges of a distinctive, Eurosceptic discourse that is present in the newspapers closet to the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension. Section 5.5 discusses the treatment of economic debates, which section 5.6 discusses the possibility that some newspapers attempted to depoliticise European integration. In the final section, the 2001 and 2005 general elections are compared, and it is argued that the discourse in 2005 did not connect European integration with immigration, which is surprising in the context of subsequent UK debates on the EU.

*Figure 5.1 Articles analysed by newspaper and year*

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>2001 General Election</b>	<b>2005 General Election</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Daily Express</b>	36	29	65
<b>Daily Mail</b>	78	58	136
<b>Daily Mirror</b>	71	25	96
<b>Daily Telegraph</b>	113	70	183
<b>Financial Times</b>	171	111	282
<b>Guardian</b>	136	71	207
<b>Independent</b>	101	79	180
<b>Sun</b>	65	23	88
<b>Times</b>	96	91	187
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>1424</b>



## 5.1 Constructing the nation: ‘us’ and ‘them’

The main respect in which we expect the newspaper discourses to be differentiated according to their general *gal-tan* and Euroscepticism orientations is in their treatment of national identity. As Chapters 2 and 4 argued, the association between nationalist discourses and Euroscepticism ought to hold, at least in a general sense, in press reporting of European integration if the same patterns of contestation observed in parties along the *gal-tan* axis are to be found among the press. Indeed, this pattern was clear in the analysis, with some caveats. The first notable aspect of the discourse on identity and European integration is the way in which Europe is frequently constructed in a number of newspapers that adopted Eurosceptic positions, as Britain’s ‘Other’. This pattern of discourse, noted in of previous studies on discourses in the UK (Hawkins 2009; 2012; de Wilde et al 2013), has a number of significant characteristics, which this section examines. Conversely, we see a discourse on the nation and ‘otherness’ that is less consistent in the pro-European newspapers: largely avoiding the language of ‘us’ and ‘them’, while adopting some of the same motifs as the Eurosceptic newspapers.

At the most basic level, a discourse that positioned Britain as separate from the EU and from Europe: politically, geographically, and socially is present in a significant number of the articles examined, particularly in newspapers that adopted Eurosceptic positions. These discourses construct Europe as the ‘Other’; an external and separate group from which the British are excluded. The frequency of this construction — which dominated the *tan*-leaning press coverage of European affairs — gives an indication of the discursive landscape in which *tan*-leaning press discourses seek to appeal to those citizens who hold a strong or exclusive form of British national identity. The relationship between the EU and the UK is presented in terms of opposition, of exclusion, and of hierarchy. Through the repeated and sustained construction of Europe as something separate from the UK, through the terms of apartness and otherness, the *tan*-leaning press is able to perpetuate the notion that Britishness and Europe are incompatible.

The EU is constructed as the ‘other’ to the British in-group through discursive devices which separate Britain and the EU at the basic linguistic level. For example, references to ‘the EU’ tend to refer to not the European Union as an international organisation of which the UK is a part, but rather as a separate entity with which the UK engages in a bilateral relationship, akin to another state (see also Hawkins 2009). The term ‘the EU’ frequently refers to the rest of the EU, excluding the UK, or simply to the institutions of the EU, from which the UK is often constructed as being excluded. Related to this is the use of metonyms to homogenise

European institutions or states. The word ‘Europe’ is frequently used as shorthand for the European Union, and thus references to, for instance, ‘withdrawal *from* Europe’ (*Times*, 7 June 2001) are not uncommon, conflating Europe as a geographical location and Europe as a political entity. Frequently, both the terms ‘EU’ and ‘Europe’ were employed to signify the rest of the EU, excluding Britain, with which the UK was seen to have a relationship.

This construction of ‘Europe’ as a quite distinct entity to the UK contributes to the idea that Britain is not European, and is separate in a physical as well as political sense. Indeed, many newspapers constructed ‘Europe’ — either the political organisation or the geographical continent — as a place to which one might visit from the UK, and not as something to which the UK belonged. For instance, the sense that ‘Europe’ is another place, separate from the UK, can be seen in the following example:

‘The rebate was won after the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, claimed the UK was paying a disproportionate amount of money *to* Europe to subsidise *its* agricultural industry.’ (*Telegraph*, 31 May 2001)

Similarly, references to ‘our relations *with* Europe’ (*The Times*, 5 June 2001), ‘engagement *with* Europe’ (*Express*, 30 May 2001), ‘Britain’s tax burden... fast converging *with* Europe’, and ‘political and economic links *with* Europe’ (*Telegraph*, 29 May 2001), perpetuate this ‘us’ and ‘them’ discourse. Similarly, the *Telegraph* was able to speak about the number of refugees ‘coming to Britain compared to the number coming to Europe’ (2 May 2005), the *Times* of ‘surrendering sovereignty *to* the EU’ (29 April 2005), and the Daily Mail of ‘a letter from the Prime Minister *to* the EU’ (23 April 2005). This trend can also be observed in articles not reporting on politics. For instance references to ‘holidaymakers *to* Europe’, and references to how banking arrangements differ from those in Britain ‘in most European countries’ (*Express*, 6 June 2001).

One particular metonym, ‘Brussels’, is frequently employed to refer to either the European Commission in particular, or the European Union in general. In the sample, all the newspapers studied used ‘Brussels’ as a metonym, and often in a pejorative manner. Indeed, the term was used a total of 597 times, across all newspapers, in the coverage of the 2001 and 2005 general elections: this was more often than the term ‘European Commission’ (used 297 times), for instance. This indicates the prevalence of this term as a shorthand for the European Union. The use of the term ‘Brussels’ acts in a similar way to the use of ‘Europe’ to mean the EU, constructing the EU as a coherent and singular actor with which the UK has a relationship in the model of bilateral inter-country diplomacy. Similarly, the use of terminology such as ‘euroland’ has an equivalent effect, separating the UK from states within the euro by

suggesting their homogeneity; this particular word being used by the *Daily Mail*, *The Times*, and *The Sun*.

The term 'Brussels' is loaded with another layer of significance in these discourses, beyond a simply metonymic shorthand for the EU or the European Commission. Rather, Brussels is a term used to signify the claimed hierarchical relationship between the UK and EU, which is held to hold power and influence over the UK: a distant capital from which the UK is increasingly ruled. Frequently, 'Brussels' is used to symbolise this hierarchy in discourses which focus on sovereignty and the undermining of the nation (more on which below). The EU is constructed as an external level of governance, over which the UK has little control. For instance, this was referred to in terms of 'giving the EU greater power over us' (*Sun*, 6 June 2001), or as 'the EU blueprint, which would hand Brussels powers over Britain' (*Sun*, 30 April 2005), while Britain is shown to be 'forced to accept' decisions of 'EU judges' (*Mail*, 28 April 2005).<sup>2</sup> This hierarchical relationship between the UK and EU is almost always framed in terms of sovereignty, and the 'transfer' of powers from the UK to the EU (or demands for the opposite). The sovereignty frame is discussed in detail below. The way that transfers of powers are described in this way assumes a dichotomy between the UK and EU, rather than envisaging a 'pooling' of sovereignty or the participation of the UK in decision-making within the EU. This emphasises the separation between the two levels, and enhances the idea of the EU as an external 'other' to the British in-group.

This pattern of discourse was particularly prevalent in a number of newspapers: specifically the *Mail*, *Express*, *Sun*, *Telegraph*, and *Express*. These are also the newspapers which have the most *tan*-leaning readership, suggesting that the expected relationship between readership and content holds in this regard. Among these newspapers, 'Europe' was constructed with a good degree of consistency as a foreign entity, of which the UK was not a full part. This group of newspapers share a common discourse in regard to the way that they locate the EU as an 'Other' to the UK, while being distinctive in other aspects of their general positions (for instance the *Sun* endorsed Labour in 2001 and 2005, while the *Express* did in 2001: the others supported the Conservatives throughout), and in aspects of their discourse on the EU, as shown below.

In the other newspapers studied, there is a less consistent pattern in the way that 'Europe' is presented in relation to Britain. Among the more pro-European newspapers, we see a general pattern of discourse that constructs national identity as being compatible with European

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<sup>2</sup> This article confused - deliberately or otherwise - the European Court of Human Rights with the EU. This distinction rarely made explicit in the *Daily Mail*.

integration, but with some inconsistency: the language of eurosceptic nationalist discourses was adopted in some of the articles studied, albeit to a milder degree than in newspapers that adopted the most ‘*tan-ish*’ discourses. The framing of the UK in relation to the EU in the *gal-*leaning press followed a pattern that was less clear, but which generally portrayed the relationship between the UK and EU in less hierarchical, and less separate terms. As a result, we see the more frequent use of terms which construct the UK as part of Europe, geographically and politically, and as part of the EU. For instance, the *Mirror* frequently referred to other European countries as ‘the rest of Europe’ (6 June 2001), and wrote of citizens of other European states as ‘our fellow Europeans’ (2 June 2001), as did the *Guardian* (for example, 31 May 2001). The *Times* referred to the ‘other European countries’ (31 May 2001), as did the *Guardian* (for example, 31 May 2001), while the *FT* referred to the UK government as a ‘European government’ (6 June 2001).

These more inclusive uses of the metonyms adopted by the *tan*-leaning press demonstrate that the mode of reference to Europe was not universal across all publications. A number of the newspapers studied fell into this category, and all were broadly supportive of the EU, and sympathetic to European integration generally. The *Guardian*, *Independent*, *Mirror* and *FT* all present the EU in a less dichotomous manner than the *tan*-leaning discourses discussed above. The *FT* does not seem to speak to an explicitly national group, unlike the other newspapers studied here. Rather, the audience to which its articles are addressed appears to be a much more international audience, and one for which the binding, in-group relationship is a group of business or professional people, rather than common members of a national group. The *FT* also generally refers to the UK as a European country, frequently using ‘continental Europe’ to distinguish the UK geographically from the rest of the continent, but avoiding the use of ‘Europe’ as excluding the UK. The *Times* can be located somewhere between these two groups, and presents an example of a newspaper that cannot easily be characterised in terms of its presentation of Europe. The *Times* offers a broadly Eurosceptic outlook, but adopts the language of ‘us’ and ‘them’ outlined above less frequently than the newspapers located further towards the *tan*-pole, again indicating a relationship between these dimensions.

Nevertheless, these newspapers demonstrate internal inconsistency in their construction of the EU in relation to the UK. The way that the EU, and ‘Europe’ more generally, is framed in *tan* discourses — as being distinctive and separate from the UK — permeates across the press and is present in some of the reporting analysed in newspapers that generally took a more pro-European stance. Thus, we can find examples of, for instance, the *Independent* and *Guardian* using the language of ‘us’ and ‘them’ in everyday reporting of the EU. To give just two examples, the *Independent* reported on the ‘rising hostility among business people towards

Europe' (6 June 2001) and the *Guardian* of 'national engagement in Europe' (26 May 2001). Here the use of 'Europe' as a metonym, and the idea that 'Europe' is a place or political entity separate from the UK, is clearly evident. This suggests that the mode of referring to 'Europe' — both the continent and the institutions of the EU — found in *tan*-Eurosceptic discourses, as the 'other' to the UK, was also expressed in discourses in generally more pro-European publications. The 'othering' of Europe by nationalist discourses thus also feeds into the way that pro-Europeans discuss European integration.

The construction of the EU at the basic linguistic level suggests a clear trend between Eurosceptic discourses and constructions of the EU as separate from the UK, or as an 'other' to the British in-group. This is particularly the case in what can be termed '*tan*-Eurosceptic' discourses. These discourses seek to create separation between the UK and EU, presenting the relationship between the UK and EU as hierarchal. The use of metonyms, particularly 'Brussels', seeks to make the EU appear remote and foreign, rather than an organisation of which the UK is a member. The following section expands this analysis to understand how these constructions of the EU and the nation extend to discussions of 'identity'.

## **5.2 Constructing the nation: the EU and British identity**

The discursive construction of identity in relation to the EU in the anti-European discourses examined follow distinctive patterns of opposition to European integration which privilege the nation and the national community as the only legitimate means of governance. The nation is constructed as an essential and inevitable form of political organisation, and the framing of the EU in this context indicates that the EU is consequently considered to be an illegitimate form of governance. The nation, national sovereignty, and national identity are the primary concerns of the *tan* discourses found within the British press. Elsewhere, the importance of sovereignty and the centrality of the national community to discourses on European integration in the UK has been described in terms of concern about the EU as an 'emerging superstate' (Hawkins 2009; 2012). There are two key elements, or frames, to this *tan* discourse on the nation. The first is the construction of European Union membership in relation to Britishness. This discourse concentrates on the claimed incompatibility of European integration and 'European identity' with British identity and the symbols of the British state. The second frame is one of sovereignty, and this is closely associated and intertwined, with the first. This frame constructs national sovereignty as the ultimate expression of the primacy of the nation-state, and European integration as an existential threat to British

sovereignty in light of a claimed ‘surrender’ of this sovereignty to the EU. The sovereignty frame is discussed in the next section.

### *Tan-Eurosceptic discourses on the nation*

At the core of the Eurosceptic press discourse on the nation is the articulation of the importance of the nation, and its defence against external disruption. Common to these discourses is the assumption that national identity is the most important political identity that citizens can hold. This construction of the nation is articulated, for example, by Simon Heffer in the *Daily Mail*, who argues that ‘patriotism’ is ‘the love and loyalty a person feel for their country’ and that ‘the preservation of that country as an independent nation’ is ‘fundamental to the concept’ (Heffer, *Mail*, 26 May 2001). The EU is constructed as separate from, and antagonistic to, the British nation. The EU is also constructed as an artificial creation, one that contrasts with the organic and natural image of the nation state, which is shown to be rooted in tradition and shared values. This logic of nationalism seems to support the claim that the nation has been normalised as the only legitimate form of governance (Billig 1995).

National identity was a frame deployed in Eurosceptic discourses to oppose further integration: being used to frame membership of the euro during the 2001 election campaign, and the Constitutional Treaty at the 2005 election. For example, the *Times* argued that people were ‘resentful of the EU’s rising costs and fearful of losing their national identity’ (28 April 2005). This defence of national identity finds strong expression in a number of newspapers. For instance, the *Daily Mail* argues that ‘our national identity is something to which we have an absolute right’, as well as ‘an absolute right to express’ (*Mail*, 21 April 2005). National identity is shown to be fundamental to the cohesion of society, and this is, it is argued, seen in the importance of ‘nationhood and great institutions that enable us to draw strength from the past while facing the challenges of the future’ (6 June 2001).

During the height of the debate about membership of the euro during the 2001 general election, the *Telegraph* ran an editorial written by former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher which aptly summarises the defence of a British identity, made corporeal in the form of the nation state:

The Prime Minister has recently been attempting to "redefine" British patriotism. One would have thought that the concept was simple enough. Patriotism is love of one's country. Full stop. (Thatcher, *Telegraph*, 1 June 2001)

The consequences of the EU for the nation are considered to be disastrous: undermining national identity and eroding the basis of the national community. In an article outlining the claimed consequences of a Labour victory at the general election, the *Mail* argued that the result of increased integration would be that '[t]he allegiance of the British people would be transferred from our own monarch to the President in Brussels' (*Mail*, 24 May 2001). In associating one of the key symbols of the British state, the monarchy, with the contestation of integration, this discourse is able to frame Europe as an existential threat to the British national identity. Indeed, the claimed threat to Britain is seen as encompassing many aspects of national life: 'jobs, taxes, public services, laws, policing, defences, traditions and political culture...will be profoundly influenced if Britain continues drifting with the federalist tide' (*Mail*, 30 May 2001).

The ultimate aim of European integration, according to this discourse, is that the UK would cease to be independent and would instead be part of a European 'superstate'. This is shown to be part of a 'plan' or 'plot' by EU leaders to replace the nation-state as the primary means of political governance, and instead 'establish Europe as a country with its own flag, passport, anthem and currency and centre of power' (*Sun*, 31 May 2001). As with the monarchy, these symbols are positioned as the most important and authentic hallmarks of the nation, and the appropriation of them is shown to represent the destruction of a distinctive British identity. This view was found, prominently, in the *Sun*, in an article headlined 'Death of Our Nation', which claimed that an 'EU superstate would swallow up Britain' and that 'Britain's cherished way of life would DIE under a nightmare vision of the European Union's future' (*Sun*, 29 May 2001, *emphasis in original*). Indeed, this particular article is symptomatic of the *tan* discourse on the nation. Presenting a sensationalised account of a speech by Lionel Jospin, the *Sun* constructs the EU as a threatening, almost hostile force: 'our political control could be seized by a superstate'. The article goes on to make claims that suggest that the most fundamental functions of the state would be replaced by the EU: 'Britain's Treasury would be banned from setting low taxes', 'a new EU police force would pound the beat', 'Brussels prosecutors would decide who to charge and take to court', and 'British embassies around the globe would be closed and replaced by Europe Centres'. This is the *tan* discourse on the nation at its most hyperbolic. Rather than present Jospin's speech as one of several visions of the future of the EU (an approach taken in the *Guardian*, 29 May 2001), the *Sun* instead extrapolates Jospin's proposals to suggest that these were unavoidable, 'a hammer blow to Tony Blair', while at no point suggesting that such changes might require negotiation and political consent from member states. Rather, the EU is constructed to be a quasi-hostile external threat to British identity and the British nation-state.

Invariably, this narrative of an attack on national identity constructs the threat as originating externally. However, British pro-Europeans are also constructed as being complicit in the process that is claimed will lead to the end of ‘the British way of life’ (*Sun*, 1 June 2001). Labour politicians, and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown in particular, are frequently constructed as being complicit in the process of the undermining of British identity by European integration. Labour were accused of ‘bombard[ing]’ citizens with ‘pro-euro propaganda’ (*Sun*, 26 May 2001), and ignoring the ‘patriotic, conservative instincts of the British people’ (*Mail*, 26 May 2001). Membership of the EU was argued to ‘help massage Tony Blair’s ego’ (*Mail*, 27 May 2001), rather than offer any substantive benefits to the UK, while Labour’s policies are argued to have ‘encouraged the destruction of the United Kingdom’ (*Mail*, 26 May 2001).

### *The ‘national interest’: privileging the nation*

One expression of the idea of the nation that was used by both pro- and anti-European discourses was the concept of the ‘national interest’. Much of the *tan* discourses employ this concept to suggest that the role of the government is to defend the ‘national interest’ in negotiations with the EU and other Member States. This discourse seems to privilege a politics that seeks to achieve ‘victory’ in negotiations over that which promotes compromise for mutual gain. The *Telegraph* argues that euro membership would be damaging on the grounds that the UK Government and Bank of England ‘must act in the national interest of Britain’, whereas the ECB ‘which will control our currency if we scrap the pound, is legally obliged to act against the national interest of Britain if it is in conflict...with the wider interest of Europe’ (30 May 2001). Elsewhere in the same issue, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard wrote that the Euro would mean ‘an end to Britain’s control over fiscal policy’ because each country would not be allowed to ‘run a separate budget policy in its own national interest’ (Evans-Pritchard, *Telegraph*, 30 May 2001).

The *tan* discourse makes clear that decision making on British involvement in further integration should be founded upon a responsibility to defend the ‘national interest’ and the nation itself. For Simon Heffer, further integration would ‘turn us into a foreign country’ and he argues that ‘the truly patriotic interest — the British national interest — would cease to exist’ if the UK were to join the euro (Heffer, *Mail*, 26 May 2001). In this passage, the national interest is clearly intertwined with the other ideas expressed in the *tan* discourse on Britishness and national identity. Acting in the national interest is mutually exclusive, according to the implications of this discourse, with co-operating with further integration in the EU and offering constructive engagement on the EU level. This sentiment extends to domestic measures that might mean that Britain would ‘fall behind’ other EU countries, who



are cast as competitors. For example, the *Times* condemned the government for allowing ‘environmental protests’ to ‘obscure the legitimate national interest’ when it came to expanding airport capacity, meaning that the UK might lose air traffic to other EU countries (31 May 2001). The presupposition of these narratives is that the national interest is inherently one which does not include participation in further European integration, and also that the primary role of government is to defend this interest *against* the interests of the EU, which are shown to be antithetical to those of Britain.

This term is employed in some pro-European discourses, albeit in a contrasting manner. The language of the national interest was employed in several pro-European discourses to frame engagement with the EU and participation in European integration as imperative for government. For instance, the *FT* argues that in regards to the euro, the UK needed to ‘clarify its position’ and that ‘constructive engagement is the policy that advances the national interest’ (1 June 2001). Quoting Tony Blair’s Edinburgh speech, in which he argued that ‘isolation in Europe is not patriotic but the denial of our national interest’ (analysed in greater detail in Chapter 6), the *Guardian* argues that the UK had ‘more influence in the EU and wider world if its attitude was constructive’ (26 May 2001). The *Sun* ran an editorial by Tony Blair that used the language of national interest to make a case for Labour’s policy of a referendum on the euro. He argued that when it came to euro membership, ‘the Government, like the people, will make a hard-headed practical assessment of the issues. In the national interest’ (Blair, *Sun*, 30 May 2001). Similarly, the *Independent* agreed with Blair, arguing that ‘the stronger Britain is in the EU, the stronger it will be with the US, and vice versa’ (25 May 2001). In the *Mirror*, Paul Routledge argued that the Conservatives use of the ‘national interest’ to justify a policy of ruling out euro membership was ‘flat-earth politics’ and argued that the Conservatives ‘hate Europe, and are obsessed with keeping the pound even if it is in Britain’s worst interests’ (Routledge, *Mirror*, 24 May 2001). This passage inverts the logic of *tan* discourses which defend the pound as a symbol of British statehood (and thus, in the national interest).

These examples present an alternative view of the discourse on national interest, and show a willingness on the part of the more pro-European publications to challenge the discourses of *tan* actors on their own terms. As the following sections show, the concept of the national interest is implicit in many of the pro-European constructions of the UK-EU relationship. Arguments that focus on the benefits of the EU in terms of increasing British influence, and the economic and social benefits of EU membership draw on similar ideas to the concept of the national interest.

The clearest difference between the anti- and pro-European discourses in the articles analysed is that national identity not widely discussed in pro-European discourse. Rather than being associated with a clearly *gal* discourse, which might be expected to articulate a post-national or liberal construction of identity, pro-European messages concentrated on frames other than identity when making positive arguments for supporting the EU. Thus, discourses which engage directly with the concept of national identity in order to make a positive case for EU membership are uncommon. Certainly, no newspapers actively constructed a discourse which favoured the creation of a European identity, or which envisaged Britain as being a part of such a development, in the articles analysed. The nearest example to this type of discourse can be found in the *Independent*, which in an editorial on the day before the 2001 general election declared that ‘the Independent’s vision is of Britain as a modern European country’ (6 June 2001). Other pro-European discourses which adopted this *gal*-ish construction of identity were often in reaction to Tony Blair’s Edinburgh Speech, often quoting from his remarks on patriotism, or otherwise adopting this language. For instance, the *Mirror* argued that Blair had positioned the Labour Party as ‘the party of true patriots’ (*Mirror*, 26 May 2001). Labour’s policy was constructed as a sign of progress by the *Independent*: ‘to argue that it is a matter of national self confidence for Britain to play a leading part in shaping modern Europe is immeasurably more positive than the tone struck in 1997’ (*Independent*, 5 June 2001).<sup>3</sup>

The most frequent use of national identity in pro-European discourses was to challenge or contest the *tan*-ish discourses of the Conservatives, and in some cases, other newspapers. For example, the Conservatives were described as ‘too extreme, too inward-looking and too obsessed with the EU’, in the *Mirror*, which constructs the Conservative position as considering the EU as ‘a threat to Britain’. This article goes on to express an optimistic construction of the EU, describing it as ‘a union of allies who, together, can achieve great things’ (*Mirror*, 7 June 2001). This construction of the EU as a ‘union of allies’ is perhaps closer to De Gaulle’s concept of a ‘Europe des patries’. Rather than describe Europe as a political and economic union, or in terms of a common European identity or culture, the *Mirror* instead constructs Europe in the terms of the nation-state and of inter-state ‘alliances’. The EU is thus akin to organisations such as NATO: a means to achieve collective ends but not as a new form of post-national or cosmopolitan political organisation. Instead, the UK is shown to have a positive role to play within this alliance, one which is threatened by

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<sup>3</sup> The next Chapter discusses in more detail the press reaction to and framing of the reporting of speeches, including Blair’s speech in Edinburgh.

regressive forms of nationalist politics: '[v]oting Tory would mean following his blinkered, little-England route which would devastate Britain's role in Europe' (*Mirror*, 27 May 2001).

The use of the idea of the nation and national identity was also found in cases where newspapers actively challenged the discourse of other newspapers. The *Guardian* condemned the *Sun's* rhetoric on the EU as 'playing, as ever, the xenophobic card', constructing the *Sun* and its *tan-ish* discourse as not simply nationalistic, but discriminatory and narrow-minded, asking rhetorically 'so what are the *Sun's* principles?' (31 May 2001). By positioning the *Sun's* discourse as xenophobic, the *Guardian* implicitly positions itself on the side of a more inclusive and pro-European outlook. Indeed, when discussing the possibility of euro membership, the *Guardian* positions the decision in similar terms to *tan* discourses - as a matter of national identity. In a leading article, it argues that the decision to join the euro was 'a defining emotional, cultural and constitutional choice for modern Britain', and that this decision was 'about who we are and what this country is' (26 May 2001). Rather than a simple choice between a defence of the nation and a positive engagement with European integration, the *Guardian* argues that 'patriotism and internationalism are not enemies' (26 May 2001). This is a distinctly *gal-ish* argument, which frames the decision to participate in integration not as one between the defence and the nation and the destruction of national identity, but as an imperative of an internationalist philosophy that was not incompatible with the nation-state: 'international engagement is Britain's only serious option and Europe is inescapably the most immediate forum for this engagement'. This did not mean that 'national interests suddenly cease to exist in an internationalist framework', but entails the rejection of a 'post-imperial fantasy Britain' in which the nation-state was paramount and the only legitimate form of governance (26 May 2001). Engagement with the EU is thus positioned as part of a world-view that embraces the rejection of the rigidities of exclusive attachment to the nation-state, but without rejecting the nation-state altogether: this is shown to require a serious debate which Labour is seen as having 'flunked on the preparation, at least in the public sphere' (26 May 2001).

In the *Financial Times*, there was a noticeable absence of discourses about the nation in everyday news reporting.<sup>4</sup> However, the *FT* did engage in discourses on the nation in the comment section. A number of comment articles by academics, and one article by Lionel Barber (later, editor of the *FT*), published during the 2001 election campaign, discussed the debate on European integration in relation to debates about the nation and national identity. For example, a comment article by Timothy Garton Ash (7 June 2001) analysed the identity

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<sup>4</sup> One characteristic of the *FT* is that its comment, opinion, and editorial articles are more clearly delineated from news reporting, the overall structure of the division between news and opinion being more akin to a US newspaper (such as the *Washington Post*) than its British counterparts.

politics of the Conservative Party during the general election, arguing that the key issue of the election was, indeed, national identity: '[t]oday the big issue is: who on earth do we think we are?'. Garton Ash links the discourse of the Conservatives to 'English nationalism', while articulating a discourse that constructs British identity as open, inclusive, and flexible: 'Britishness is a wonderful thing, precisely because it is so capaciously accommodating of multiple identities'. Similarly, Barber argues that the 'battlelines' for British membership of the euro lay along competing claims to 'patriotism', and the idea that British (and perhaps specifically English) identity may vanish 'in a continental mist' (Barber, *Financial Times*, 26 May 2001).

However, despite these examples, the most significant feature of the use of the nation frame by pro-European discourses was that, most often, it simply was not used at all. Rather than challenge the nationalist rhetoric of *tan* discourses, pro-European discourses in almost all newspapers instead framed Europe in different terms, for example concentrating on the economic benefits of membership, the claimed positive effects for British influence in global politics, or framed their *tan* opponents as 'obsessed' with Europe and the EU. The limited *gal* discourse on the place of the nation at these two general elections, save for Tony Blair's 2001 speech in Edinburgh, which was reported in all the newspapers covered, also suggests that it is in *tan* discourses where the main focus on the nation and identity lies: perhaps naturally given the 'nationalism' component of the *tan* pole.

Constructions of the nation are particularly central to the Eurosceptic discourse, therefore. The *tan*-Eurosceptic discourse identified in the previous section takes a construction of the nation-state that privileges it over other forms of political organisation. Britishness and patriotism are associated with this exclusive construction of the nation-state, which seeks to defend the national community and lay a claim to a 'true' definition of these concepts. The EU is constructed as eroding the basis of the national community, and as an emerging 'superstate'. The presence of this discourse confirms the hypothesis that newspapers construct connections between national identity and European integration. That newspapers are constructing these discursive connections in their reporting of the EU demonstrates their agency in the politicisation of European integration. This is particularly significant in the context of these discourses on identity, given the privileged role that the literature gives the press in national identity formation (Billig 1995; Wodak et al 2009).

### 5.3 Framing the nation and the EU: sovereignty and the discourse of ‘threat’

Directly connected to the national identity frame is one of national sovereignty. The defence of national sovereignty is at the heart of many Eurosceptic narratives among political parties in the UK: an association that has been well documented in the literature (see for instance: Baker and Seawright 1998; Turner 2000; Risse 2009). Indeed, the centrality of sovereignty and the principle of parliamentary sovereignty in the UK to the political debate on Europe has led to ‘thinking in terms of undivided sovereignty’, which ‘inhibits a constructive approach to European questions’ (Bogdanor 2005, 698). This is reflected in the contestation of the EU in the UK press: reports about European integration are frequently framed in terms of national sovereignty. Indeed, the sovereignty frame was the most numerous frame deployed in all of the reports examined.

The most common use of this frame was in the construction of the EU as a political institution that undermines British sovereignty and independence. The EU is shown to be the antithesis of the nation state, a form of political organisation that is designed to undermine and supersede the nation as the primary political community, and is thus a ‘threat’ to the British nation and the prevailing political order. The framing of the EU using the national sovereignty frame thus draws clear and negative associations between the issue of nationhood and national identity, and the claimed consequences of European integration. Fundamental to the framing of European integration in terms of sovereignty is this *tan*-ish defence of the nation-state: relatively few reports adopting a *gal*-ish stance employed sovereignty as a frame (those that did are discussed below). This suggests that discourses on sovereignty have become dominated by narratives that associate any ‘loss’ of national sovereignty as wholly negative: *gal* discourses rarely contest this issue on the terms set by *tan* discourses on sovereignty. Consequently, the ‘sovereignty frame’ is defined here as a frame that encompasses a *defence* of sovereignty on nationalist terms.

References to national sovereignty were plentiful in *tan* discourses in the coverage analysed. Under the broad category of a frame centred on sovereignty, we can identify a number of key narratives or motifs that occur frequently across several publications, and a number which appear predominantly in only one or two publications. The first of these narratives is that British national sovereignty is threatened inherently by the UK’s membership of the EU. This narrative follows the same pattern of logic exhibited by the national identity frame. This narrative constructs the EU as an external force, menacing one of the core symbols of the nation-state, sovereignty. As with the related discourse on Britishness, this frame is frequently

manifested in the language of a ‘threat’: the EU is constructed as a threat to UK sovereignty, and this is often linked to notions of democracy, identity, and self-determination.

The nation-state is constructed as diametrically opposed to any supranational authority, and thus any transfer of sovereignty from the UK to supranational institutions. Politics at the EU-level is thus conceptualised as a zero-sum game: in order for the EU to operate, the UK (and other Member States) must ‘give up’ sovereignty to an emerging central quasi-state (Hawkins 2009, 92). The consequence of this logic is that the *tan*-ish discourses that begin from this premise cannot account for the EU as anything other than damaging to British sovereignty. Alternative constructions of the consequences of European integration for national sovereignty, for instance the idea that sovereignty is ‘shared’ or ‘pooled’ among member states, are impossible within this nationalist logic.<sup>5</sup> An extract from an article by Peter Hitchens in the *Daily Mail* is worth quoting at length because it demonstrates these features, along with the discourse of threat:

FINALLY, it prepared to take the country into the euro, placing it irreversibly under the control of a supranational socialist system which will be able to impose on Britain all the taxes, regulations and restrictions that the Westminster Parliament might resist, delay or modify, and which will sweep away everything which makes Britain special and unique, and which has until now prevented Labour from exercising the almost limitless power that it has always longed to have. (Hitchens, *Daily Mail*, 3 June 2001)

Examples of this discourse could be found most frequently in the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph*, and also in the *Times*, and the *Sun*. While discourses in the *Express* largely eschewed the sovereignty frame in 2001, they did feature some of the motifs of this frame, including the use of the term ‘superstate’, and moved closer towards the heavily *tan*-influenced framing of the *Mail* and *Telegraph* by 2005. In the *Telegraph* the term ‘sovereignty’ itself was widely used. For instance, there were references to measures needed to prevent the ‘erosion of the sovereignty of member states’ (29 May 2001), claims that ‘Britain would surrender further political sovereignty if Labour won the election’ (Jones, *Telegraph*, 29 May 2001), and accusations that the Liberal Democrats used ‘the weasel word “pooling”’ for ‘sovereignty they wish to cede’ (28 May 2001). In constructing this account of the damaging potential of the EU to the UK, the *Telegraph* seeks to oppose what it calls a ‘long-standing Government strategy to surrender our fiscal and monetary sovereignty to a pack of bureaucrats in Brussels’ (30 April 2005).

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<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the idea that sovereignty is ‘pooled’ is the preferred conceptualisation of the European Commission.

The theme that UK sovereignty was ‘threatened’ by membership of the EU can be observed frequently. This is typified by the claims that the UK would disappear as a result of increasing integration, what the *Mail* described in an editorial as ‘this country’s absorption into the EU as we join the single currency and spell the end of our national independence’ (2 June 2001). The implication of this threat is that the EU would seek to equip itself with the ‘trappings of statehood’, and ‘cease to be an association of states, and instead become a state in its own right’ (*Telegraph*, 29 May 2001). This is constructed as threatening to the British state, and even Orwellian in nature, with the *Telegraph* describing the Charter of Fundamental Rights as ‘a written constitution’ that had been rebranded ‘in true Ministry of Love style’ (29 May 2001). George Pascoe-Watson in the *Sun* argued that the ‘truth’ was that the euro would mean member states ‘transferring their sovereignty’, and this would mean that ‘everything would have to be run past EU bureaucrats and the political elite in Brussels’ (Pascoe-Watson, *Sun*, 29 May 2001). In this same report, Pascoe-Watson refers to Gordon Brown as ‘Her Majesty’s Chancellor of the Exchequer’. The implicit suggestion offered here by the reference to the monarchy is that the EU undermines key symbols of British statehood.

*‘Interference’ and ‘imposition’: the construction of a ‘meddling’ EU*

A related motif is one that constructs the EU as interfering in the affairs of the UK, and as ‘imposing’ measures on the British people and institutions. This motif of a ‘meddling’ EU that involves itself deeply in the lives of citizens creates a portrayal of the EU as being an unwanted and damaging influence. The idea that the EU ‘interfered’ in internal UK affairs or ‘imposed’ unwanted measures is seen clearly in the *Daily Mail*. This is typified by the claim that Britain was run ‘not by Westminster legislation but by decrees issued in Brussels’ (27 May 2001). In another example, in an article framed by sovereignty, the *Mail* describes ‘Brussels’ as ‘interfering in the election’ and quoted Conservative MP Francis Maude accusing the European Commission of ‘meddling’ with the election (24 May 2001). This example demonstrates the close link between this motif and the democracy frame, which is discussed in more detail below. Similarly, we see claims that emphasise the apparently powerless nature of the UK government to prevent this meddling: ‘Government lawyers pleaded with EU judges’ (28 April 2005). Elsewhere, the *tan-ish* discourse on an interfering EU finds expression in the *Express*: ‘the Euro Commission has already dabbled in transfer fees’ (1 June 2001). In the *Telegraph*, this was a recurring theme, for instance with articles claiming that a directive on employer-employee consultation ‘could be forced through in the face of British opposition’ (4 June 2001), and of ‘a systematic programme of meddling in British internal politics’ (2 June 2001). These claims occasionally bordered on on the

conspiratorial. The *Times* published an article by Lord Pearson which claimed that UKIP has been ‘indirectly funded by the European Commission’ in order to divert votes from ‘Eurosceptic Conservatives’, and that whatever the truth of this allegation ‘the cap fits horribly well’ (1 June 2001).<sup>6</sup>

This discourse of interference tended to be applied to issues close to the symbolism of national sovereignty and self-determination — such as currency, law and order, and the armed forces — much more consistently than issues which involved, for example, consumer protection, or regulating unfair business practices. For instance, the *Daily Mail* (25 April 2005) framed an EU directive to improve road safety as a positive development, but in the context of ‘the growing risk posed by overseas lorry drivers’ from the EU. This mixed message was symptomatic of reporting across the spectrum of the UK press, and can be seen particularly in cases where reports focus on decisions that preserved the powers of national governments, or rejected proposed further integration. For instance, in the *Telegraph*, spending targets for member states recommended by the European Commission were described as ‘interference by Brussels’, while at the same time it was noted that these had been ‘deleted from projections’ by Gordon Brown in a ‘significant victory’ (6 June 2001). The same article described proposed (and at the same meeting, rejected) energy taxation harmonisation as being ‘imposed on all EU energy markets’. Thus, even a rejection of proposed EU reforms by national governments is framed in terms of meddling by the EU in national affairs, rather than as exercises of national sovereignty. This particular article ends with quotations from Eurosceptic commentators, selected to emphasise this framing. This strategy was common in *tan* discourses: where articles reported that proposals to further share sovereignty or transfer national competencies to EU institutions had been modified or abandoned, articles adopting *tan* frames tended to reinforce their message by concluding with quotations that reinforce the framing of the article, usually in terms of sovereignty or claimed ‘interference’ in UK matters. In the *Guardian*, the same meeting was reported as being a potential source of ‘more euro scare stories’, and it warned that ‘the Tories will look to create embarrassment’, while reporting that Gordon Brown was ‘furious with criticism from the European Commission’, and presents a much more reasonable view of the Commission: that they ‘agreed to reconsider the issue’ (1 June 2001). These contrasting constructions emphasise the importance of these frames in building contesting accounts of the same events.

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<sup>6</sup> Lord Pearson was, at the time of writing, a Conservative Peer. He was later expelled from the Conservatives and became leader of UKIP from 2009-10.



### *The EU 'Superstate'*

The second of the key motifs found in the sovereignty frame is the claim that further integration in the EU would lead to the creation of a 'superstate', or a federal Europe. This is portrayed in *tan*-ish discourses as wholly negative for the UK. In the logic of the *tan* discourse on sovereignty, the creation of a federal Europe or of a European superstate is the desired conclusion of the European 'project', and outcome that would mean the the UK would 'dissolve...into the socialist superstate of Europe' (Littlejohn, *Sun*, 4 June 2001). The use of the term superstate and its variants was widespread. For example, the *Telegraph* warned of 'the path to a European superstate' (1 June 2001) and 'the superpower ambitions of the European Union' (7 June 2001). The majority of the uses of the superstate motif were found in 2001: the clearest express of this motif being an article in the *Mail* by Paul Eastham entitled 'Superstate Plot', which reports on a speech by Lionel Jospin. Eastham constructs Jospin's speech as a 'vision of an "economic government imposing harmonised taxes"', as a leading part of 'the EU plans to build a super-state', which would 'deprive Britain of the right to control its own society and economy' (Eastham, *Mail*, 29 May 2001).

In the articles studied in 2005, the term is rarely used, a notable exception being by William Rees-Mogg, writing in the *Times*, discussing the Constitutional Treaty, who asks 'is the United Kingdom to remain an independent, democratic, self-governing country, or are we to become part of a European superstate?' (25 April 2005). In this article, Rees-Mogg argues that 'the United Kingdom cannot lose its liberty in a fit of mere-absent mindedness', and that joining the Constitutional Treaty would mean 'the loss of our national independence' (*Times*, 25 April 2005). The use of the superstate motif here follows the same pattern as its use in 2001: to oppose European integration on the grounds of the defence of national sovereignty. The relative absence of the superstate motif in 2005 can perhaps be explained by Rees-Mogg himself, who asks 'why this baffling silence?' about Europe in 2005. As discussed above, the low levels of contestation of European integration during the 2005 general election seem to have led to a much lower instance of the use of the superstate motif. Rather than being deployed in everyday coverage of European affairs, this motif is deployed in the articles studied here only in the context of discourses that contest European integration.

In many cases, the claimed move towards a federal Europe was constructed as being a result of inaction in the UK, as by William Rees-Mogg, above. For instance, the *Mail* argued that 'all over Europe, a serious debate is raging on the shape of a federalist future' and that Britain was 'drifting with a federalist tide' (30 May 2001). This sense that the UK was unconsciously moving towards an EU superstate, against the wishes of the British people, was found across

several newspapers. The *Mail* described an ‘onward march of the euro by stealth’ (3 June 2001), the *Telegraph* (discussing the proposals for an elected president of the European Commission) as ‘milestones on the path to a European superstate’ (1 June 2001), the *Sun* of a ‘headlong rush into a federal Europe’ (7 June 2001), and the *Express* cited the ‘failure to stand up to Europe’ as the cause of a loss of sovereignty that saw ‘Brussels riding roughshod over Westminster’ (4 May 2005).

Other narratives constructed the systematic undermining of British sovereignty as part of the agenda of British politicians. Labour and the Liberal Democrats were accused in several newspapers of pursuing policies that would damage UK sovereignty. For instance, the *Times* warned that the Liberal Democrats would favour policies involving ‘surrendering sovereignty to the EU’ (29 April 2005). Meanwhile, the *Mail* constructed Labour as devoting insufficient attention to Europe, arguing that, in 2001, Labour’s general election manifesto ‘devotes less space to the...consequences for national sovereignty’ of euro membership, ‘than it does to New Labour’s policy on sport’ (28 May 2001). This narrative is connected by *Mail* columnist Melanie Phillips to a left-wing political agenda more generally: ‘the Left decided to attack democracy and the nation state in favour of supranational institutions such as the EU and ‘universal’ values like judge-made human rights’ (Phillips, *Daily Mail*, 2 May 2005). Often, this agenda is shown to be hidden from the public. For example, the *Mail* described ‘the great deception’, and ‘the shabby, insulting behaviour of our own ruling establishment’ (30 May 2001), and characterised Tony Blair’s statements on Europe during the 2001 campaign as ‘notable only for its vapidness and its failure to address the hard questions’ over Europe (30 May 2001). This was closely connected with the democracy frame, discussed in more detail below.

The superstate motif is a simplification of the EU and its complex relationship with member states and governance structures. In this sense, the superstate motif is representative of the sovereignty frame as a whole. It draws on the construction of the EU as a potentially hostile ‘Other’, discussed above, to connect directly hostility to out-groups with a defence of the nation. By deploying these images of the usurpation of the British state, *tan* discourses are able to mobilise anti-EU sentiment. This frequently occurs through presupposition: the primacy of the nation-state is largely presupposed in these discourses, as opposed to being made explicit. The fact that a ‘reduction’ in UK sovereignty is assumed to be wholly negative suggests the assumption that the audience for these discourses places the same value on sovereignty as the writer: allowing them to construct a discourse which, at times, is strongly polemical in its denunciation of the EU. This discourse does not acknowledge that the involvement of the UK within the power-sharing structures EU might be positive for the UK,

or that the mechanisms for policy making and governance within the EU might operate on a more complex model than a simple ‘ceding of power’ to an external political organisation.

The key reform that prompted contestation during the periods examined was the proposed British membership of the euro, and associated referendum, promised in Labour’s election manifesto. It was in contesting British membership of the euro that the sovereignty frame was most frequently deployed. This reflects the tightened levels of contestation within the public sphere around the euro at this election, which was chosen as one of the key themes of the Conservative election campaign. Indeed, William Hague and the Conservatives engaged in a strongly Eurosceptic discourse around the election, which Hague declared was a ‘referendum’ on British membership of the euro.

The most frequent use of the sovereignty frame in discourses around the euro was to construct the euro as a source of threat to British nationhood. For instance, claims such as that ‘joining the euro would mean that core economic decisions on Britain's future were taken in Frankfurt and Brussels’ (*Mail*, 26 May 2001) can be found in a number of newspapers. The *Telegraph* claimed that entry into the euro would come with ‘attendant costs and loss of autonomy’ (4 June 2001). For the *Sun*, the euro was constructed as an economic and political disaster, and part of a wider ‘plan’ to draw the UK into a political union that would undermine the British state: ‘the economics are not right, the politics are not right, and on top of this the European vision outlined by the French Premier yesterday represents an utter nightmare’ (29 May 2001). This theme was also found in the *Express*, which constructed euro membership as a restriction on the freedom of national governments to set policies: ‘as euro-members, the last thing the Germans need is for the European Central Bank to raise the areas key interest rate’ (29 April 2005).

Particularly in the *tan* discourse on the euro, sovereignty was closely associated with the ideas of Britishness and national identity, as well as democracy and freedom of speech (as is shown below). Thus, the example of the euro demonstrates that issues may be framed using multiple concepts as part of an overlapping and complementary set of discourses. In this case, the ideas of Britishness (the defence of a symbol of British identity, the Pound Sterling), sovereignty (the defence of the ability of Parliament to control fiscal and monetary policy, as well as maintain national ‘distinctiveness’), and, as the next section will show, democracy (the construction of euro membership as subverting the ‘true’ democratic wishes of the British people) combine to construct a distinctly *tan* narrative that seeks to mobilise opposition to the euro on several levels.

### *Pro- European narratives and sovereignty*

Among pro-European discourses on Europe, sovereignty was a theme that appeared frequently, but in a different sense to the use of the idea of sovereignty in *tan* discourses: these counter-discourses focussed largely on opposing the nationalist logic of *tan*-Euro sceptic narratives about the EU. Thus, rather than being a common frame for articles, constructions of sovereignty were used to counter the arguments of the *tan*-leaning press in pro-European discourses. In addition, we also see that a large number of references to sovereignty in the more pro-European discourses come in the context of quotations of Euro sceptic politicians in articles that are not framed in terms of sovereignty.

Where pro-European discourses did challenge nationalist narratives on national sovereignty, a number of themes emerge. The first is a tendency to present a more nuanced construction of the relationship between Europe and UK sovereignty. For instance, the *Guardian* noted that ‘democracy is a far more important issue than sovereignty’ because it was the case that sovereignty was already shared ‘in Nato, in the UN, or in taking on other international tasks’ (30 May 2001). Far from taking power from the nation-state, Ian Black argued that ‘in every member state the big questions - and their answers - are rooted in national politics’: the future of the EU is constructed as a process of negotiation among its members, where competing visions of how ‘to construct Europe’ would be the subject of debate and agreement (Black, *Guardian*, 30 May 2001). The *Guardian* also offered a different view on the course that integration would follow, for instance writing that ‘Blair favours Europe of nation states in which power is vested in council of ministers representing each of 15 member states’ (*Guardian*, 30 May 2001). In the *FT*, the retention of sovereignty over fiscal matters by member states in the euro is given as an example of ‘bad rules and principles’, arguing that ‘the eurozone needs further integration simply to survive’, thus reversing the nationalist logic found in *tan* discourses: integration in order to ensure stability is constructed as a necessary consequence of monetary union (25 April 2005).

The idea that sovereignty was not necessarily ‘lost’ as part of EU membership also forms part of the pro-European discourse. For example, the *Independent* wrote that reaching ‘necessary’ agreement on the Nice Treaty meant ‘some further sharing of sovereignty’, which would ‘ensure effective EU decision-making’ (7 June 2001). In an editorial in the *Guardian*, Liberal Democrat MP Chris Huhne exemplifies this discourse, arguing that while there had been ‘a large rise in directives and regulations at the end of the 80s after the signing of the Single European Act’, these should not be interpreted as part of a discourse on sovereignty, but rather as ‘necessary to create a genuine single market’ and to ensue that ‘member states could not

use the excuse of separate safety or consumer-protection standards to protect their home markets' (5 June 2001). Furthermore, achieving this aim of free markets is precisely why 'a mere free trade area is not enough' and the pooling of sovereignty necessary (Huhne, *Guardian*, 5 June 2001).

This construction of sovereignty rests on rather different assumptions to those underlying the *tan* discourse on sovereignty: rather than being indivisible, sovereignty is instead a resource that can be shared or pooled among member states. In order to achieve practical objectives or ensure the smooth running of the EU. Indeed, in a leader article evaluating Tony Blair's leadership of the EU, David Clark argued that by using the 'language of his enemies: "veto", "sovereignty", "red lines"', Blair had failed to reach his potential to fulfil his commitment to Europe that formed part of 'the very core of the Blairite project' (Clark, *Guardian*, 2 May 2005). This rejection of the language of sovereignty is common among pro-European discourses. Rather than frame European integration in terms of sovereignty, pro-European discourses in the press concentrated on frames that avoided discussing sovereignty altogether, or engaged in narratives which dismissed sovereignty as an important concern. For example, in an editorial discussing the euro and the proposed referendum, the *Express* directly challenged the nationalist construction of sovereignty as central to the debate on UK membership, arguing that '[w]e are increasingly aware that whether we join is not about a threat to our sovereignty but a matter of economic common sense'. Instead, this was reframed to be an economic decision, echoing the position taken by Labour:

The only sensible approach is to consider whether the five economic tests laid down by Chancellor Gordon Brown are met and, if so, to act. But only then. (*Express*, 26 May 2001)

More often, pro-European narratives did not attempt to contest Europe on the grounds of sovereignty, with this frame occurring far less often in pro-European articles, and in the Europe-supporting newspapers, than in *tan* discourses. There was also not a distinctive *gal* discourse here: whereas the *tan*-Euro-sceptic discourses make clear associations between the nation and the threat posed by a loss of sovereignty, we see few defences of increased integration on the grounds of a *gal*-ish argument centred, for instance, on the idea of the EU as a community of interests. This supports that the postfunctionalist claim that the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension is more strongly associated with Euro-scepticism than the *gal* pole is to support for the EU. Sovereignty and the defence of national sovereignty is an issue more closely associated with nationalist ideologies, and thus perhaps provides a more fertile ground for *tan* discourses to mobilise opposition to the EU in the UK. The small proportion of citizens who report a 'European' identity (see Chapter 3), compared to the larger proportion

that report an exclusively national identity reinforces this relationship. Pro-Europeans are less likely to mobilise support for the EU by constructing a discourse framed by notions of a common European identity and shared sovereignty than Eurosceptics are likely to mobilise opposition by emphasising national sovereignty.

One striking feature of the sovereignty frame is that explicit references to national sovereignty were far more common in the press coverage of the 2001 general election than that of the 2005 general election. The sovereignty frame was deployed frequently in *tan*-ish discourses in 2001, whereas in 2005 discussions of sovereignty were far less frequent. This was not merely a consequence of fewer articles mentioning the EU at the 2005 general election. Rather, the coverage of the EU in 2005 was not presented using a sovereignty frame as frequently as in 2001: this was the case across *tan*-Eurosceptic discourses. Instead, articles favoured the democracy frame, or else an emphasis on economics. This suggests that the lower levels of contestation seen in 2005, both among parties and newspapers, filtered into the framing of articles. Where European integration was heavily contested in the context of a proposed reform (in the case of 2001, membership of the euro), the sovereignty frame was deployed more often. In 2005, reporting instead often focussed on EU news not directly related to proposed reforms, or on the progress of referenda in other EU member states on the Constitutional Treaty. This followed the lessened emphasis on the EU on the part of political parties. This suggests that the increased levels of contestation in 2001 may have led newspapers to construct the EU in terms of a threat to national sovereignty in order to increase the sense of ‘threat’ to the national community.

Sovereignty appears to be an important frame for both anti- and pro-European discourses, therefore. For *tan*-Eurosceptic discourses, the sovereignty frame forms part of the defence of the nation undertaken in the reporting of the EU. This was particularly the case in the *Mail*, *Telegraph*, *Sun*, and *Express*. This frame constructs the EU as a ‘threat’ to UK sovereignty, which is itself constructed as a fundamental component of the nation; without sovereignty, the nation is shown to be compromised. By constructing the membership of the EU as fundamentally incompatible with national sovereignty, this discourse renders the nation-state and the EU as antithetical. Pro-European narratives that discussed sovereignty did not contest these *tan*-discourses on the same terms, however. Instead, pro-European narratives around sovereignty constructed it as being ‘shared’ or pooled among member states, or focussed on the practical benefits of sharing powers. This appears to be an attempt to counter the narrative of ‘threat’ constructed by the *tan*-Eurosceptic discourse, and represents an attempt to conduct debates about sovereignty away from the issue of the nation.

#### 5.4 Framing the EU: Democracy and the ‘undermining’ of public debate

A third important dimension of the debate on the EU in the selected articles focussed on the implications for democracy of further EU integration. On both sides of the debate, democratic values and governance served as an evaluative frame for the legitimacy, scope, and pace of integration within the EU. This frame was one of the most numerous, supporting the conclusions presented by de Wilde et al (2013, 189-90), who argue that democracy was ‘the primary concern driving online evaluations of the EU’: in the print media, democracy was similarly a leading concern. The treatment of democracy, much in the same way as the nation and sovereignty, differs substantially across the newspapers studied. While the *tan*-leaning press were uniform in their evaluation of the EU as a negative force for democracy, and accused it of undermining public debate and subverting the will of the British public and politicians, the pro-European press was much more ambivalent in its evaluations. The *tan*-Euro-sceptic discourse on democracy, which seeks to construct the EU as anti-democratic, contains a number of features. The first is the idea that powers pooled or ‘transferred’ to the European Union were irrevocably lost through a process over which the UK had little control, which is manifested in frequent discussion of the national veto. Secondly, the EU is depicted as not democratically accountable to either the British people or to the Westminster Parliament, and this is shown to be damaging to the UK Parliament and British national independence.

As shown above, European integration is constructed as an inevitable process, one which is being undertaken by an elite without democratic consent. This construction crosses from the sovereignty frame to the democracy frame, being a distinctive motif in the portrayal of the EU as a body intent on removing national powers from the UK in an anti-democratic process. This is seen as being undertaken without consulting the publics of member states. Furthermore, the attitudes of the British public, and their counterparts in other EU countries are constructed to be different. For instance, the *Times* argued that European publics were more likely to go ahead with further integration even if it did not prove popular:

‘...too often Europeans seem to consider as inevitable projects which they do not really favour. And that is inimical to the spirit of representative government’ (*Times*, 3 June 2001)

The most prominent motif within the democracy frame was the construction of the EU as an organisation that was fundamentally antithetical to democracy. The EU is shown to be an anti-democratic organisation through its lack of accountability to citizens. This undermines the

sovereignty of the UK as a nation, and the British people as citizens. This theme seems to reflect the concerns expressed by both scholars and popular commentators about the so-called ‘democratic deficit’ from which the EU suffers as a political community.<sup>7</sup> Much is made of the claimed un-democratic nature of the institutions of the EU. This is particularly visible in the emphasis placed on the term ‘unelected’, which is used to categorise the various EU institutions as well as civil servants. For example, the *Mail* argues that the Commission was to become ‘an unelected executive’ (24 May 2001), and describes ‘demands’ for ‘much greater authority’ for the ‘unelected Commission’ (30 May 2001), while economic policy would be decided by ‘remote, unelected, unaccountable and not very competent bankers in Frankfurt’ (26 May 2001). This discourse can also be seen in the *Sun*, which complains of ‘unelected Brussels bureaucrats’, and ‘unelected failures such as EU commissioners Neil Kinnock and Chris Patten’ (*Sun*, 1 June 2001). In the *Telegraph* too, the notion that the EU was un-democratic due to the unelected nature of its bureaucracy can be seen on many occasions. For instance, in discussing claims of interference in the UK election, we see ‘the unelected Brussels commission, which was meant to be politically neutral’ (24 May 2001), while ‘the unelected European Commission’ is accused of ‘churning out some 70 per cent of our laws’ (2 May 2005). The recurring leitmotif of this narrative is the idea that ‘unelected bureaucrats on the Continent’ (*Telegraph*, 30 May 2001) wield power over the UK, subverting British democracy and freedoms. There is also a recurring theme that EU officials were overpaid, for instance we hear of ‘bungling, unelected European officials like Dim Wim on fat salaries and huge expense accounts’ (*Sun*, 2 June 2001). The EU is seen, in *tan*-leaning discourses, as being the primary cause of a democratic decline in the UK, characterised by the undermining of Parliament, the ‘transfer’ of powers to supranational institutions, and the steady decline in the ability of voters to hold governments to account. Thus, claims that the EU is insufficiently democratically accountable co-exist with claims that this has undermined the functioning of democracy within the UK itself.

This discourse found expression in the more pro-European newspapers too, suggesting a wider dissatisfaction with the levels of democracy and accountability within the EU. For instance, Ian Black writes of ‘[q]uestions about the European parliament, notoriously remote from national electorates, mingle with worries about an unelected commission’, and describes concerns about levels of democracy ‘not abstract’, but claims that ‘democracy is a far more important issue than sovereignty’ (Black, *Guardian*, 30 May 2001). Meanwhile, the *FT* also reported on the Commission ‘intervening’ in the UK election, but justified this as it ‘disparaged Conservative claims of a secret Brussels agenda to seize control of British

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<sup>7</sup> This theme is also highlighted by Hawkins (2009, 87-89), in his survey of coverage of the Lisbon Treaty in the UK.



taxes' (24 May 2001). The rather different framing of this article is one of only a few examples where the democracy frame can be found in the context of a pro-European article: in this case, the FT concluded by stressing that 'the final decision' on tax harmonisation would 'remain with national leaders' (*FT*, 24 May 2001).

Another motif associated with the democracy frame was one of trustworthiness and, in the *Sun* and *Daily Mail* the idea that the claimed anti-democratic consequences of membership of the EU were part of a New Labour 'plot' to undermine Britain. This demonstrates clear links between the democracy frame and national identity: many evaluations of the EU which cited democracy also made links to the nation and national self-determination. The *Daily Mail* in particular expressed this view, representing Tony Blair in particular as evading discussing European policy: 'Questions about the euro and spending were dismissed with a flick of his hand' (*Mail*, 7 June 2001). This was to be found elsewhere; for instance the *Sun* declared that 'New Labour isn't much interested in democracy, which is why it's so keen on Europe' (5 June 2001). Associated with this frame is a link constructed between the 'threat' to sovereignty posed by the EU to a sense that the Labour government sought to subvert democracy and undermine British sovereignty:

'[t]he issue, masquerading under the vague label of 'Europe', is democracy. Over the next five years what we regard as the normal democratic process will be threatened as never before' (*Mail*, 25 May 2001).

The *tan*-leaning discourse thus repeats the Conservative Party message that Labour could not be trusted on European policy. This is particularly evident in discussion of the potential referendum on the euro. Two positions emerge from the coverage when the promised referendum on British membership of the euro is discussed. In the *tan*-leaning discourse, there was strong support for the idea of a referendum, however there is significant variation in how newspapers construct the referendum and its political and economic implications. The *Times*, for instance, despite its endorsement to Tony Blair and the Labour Party, reiterated its opposition to Britain joining the euro at the 2001 general election; 'we are confident that the euro can be defeated in any plebiscite... our voice against it will be vigorous and loud' (5 June 2001). The *Express* argued that the issue of euro membership must not 'be skirted around any longer' (7 June 2001), whilst endorsing the Labour Party. These newspapers expressed a position which was to trust the outcome of any referendum, and to place the euro, and European integration more generally as an issue for another time:

Voters still don't want the euro -but this election has not been about the euro. (*The Sun*, 6 June 2001)

Labour cannot, despite the Tories' best efforts, renege on its promise to hold a referendum. (*Times*, 3 June 2001)

Indeed, the *Times* explicitly rejected the idea that a referendum could be rigged, arguing that any referendum would be conducted 'fairly' (7 June 2001). However, we see a division in the press between those newspapers which oppose the euro and support a referendum, and those which construct a discourse of untrustworthiness and deception around the proposed referendum. This discourse closely reflects that of William Hague's claim that Tony Blair would 'force Britain into the euro': a refrain picked up by the *tan*-leaning press and reproduced extensively during the election campaign.

In particular, the *Sun* and the *Daily Mail* framed the discourse Labour in regards to the referendum in terms of claimed untrustworthiness, expressing the notion that the result would somehow be manipulated, and contributing to the overall discursive frame of democracy. The *Mail* repeats this claim in multiple articles, for instance; 'if Blair wins another big majority, the euro referendum will be rigged' (*Daily Mail*, 3 June 2001); 'what is to stop Mr Blair from railroading the country into the euro[?]' (*Daily Mail*, 2 June 2001). Labour were also accused of conspiring with large corporations who were accused of 'complicity' in 'making us accept' the euro (*Daily Mail*, 3 June 2001). These newspapers construct much of this opposition to the euro around the negative connotations of 'ditching the pound' and the potential economic consequences of membership. The *Sun*, for example, invited its readers to imagine if their savings were in euros: 'you would have to watch helplessly as they fell in value' (*Sun*, 2 June 2001).

The discourse of Labour being unresponsive to voter concerns, and obfuscating its own position on the euro was not confined to these two newspapers, however. Even moderate *tan*- and *gal*-leaning discourses expressed reservations about the amount of information provided by the Government about their future plans. The implicit, or indeed explicit, suggestion in many of these reports is that Labour sought to 'hide' its true position from the public, or else stifle public debate:

When Brown and Tony Blair decided in October 1997 to rule out euro entry for this parliament, they also agreed to keep their views on the issue as opaque as possible. They have succeeded beyond their wildest expectations. (*Times*, 3 June 2001)

Even the *Guardian* published a leader article by its political commentator, Hugo Young, which constructs Blair and Brown as evasive about to euro, and even arrogant towards journalists who asked about it, which is worth quoting at length:

...whenever the euro was mentioned, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown declined to talk about it. They shut every questioner up with the impatient assertion that it had nothing to do with the election. They began to recoil from the ignorant effrontery of interviewers who still dared to look forward a few months... (The Guardian, 6 June 2001)

Young goes on to insist that despite the fact that ‘we talk about the EU as a threat to British parliamentary sovereignty’, it was really the undemocratic way in which reforms were being undertaken by politicians - both Labour and Conservative - that threatened the sovereignty of the British people: ‘our leaders, insisting on this electoral silence, have shown that the British are well capable of draining that fragile commodity unassisted’ (Young, *Guardian*, 6 June 2001).

The ‘democracy discourse’ thus represents a frame adopted primarily to make Eurosceptic arguments, and is a prominent feature of the *tan*-Eurosceptic discourse. There is a general agreement across the UK press in the articles studied that the EU suffered from a democratic deficit. Where the *tan* discourse is particularly differentiated here is that it frequently portrays the EU as a ‘threat’ to British democracy and often constructs the actions of EU institutions and policy makers as being undemocratic in their nature. This forms part of a wider discourse that, in some newspapers, purports to identify a ‘plot’ by the EU and British politicians to subvert democracy in order to lead the UK into further European integration. Conversely, the pro-European discourse largely avoids this frame. While some newspapers sought to challenge the idea that any referendum on UK membership of the single currency might be ‘rigged’, there was little other pro-European discourse that adopted framing around the idea of democracy.

### **5.5 Contesting the economics of integration: where left-right meets gal-tan?**

Reporting of business news related to the EU and European integration followed a pattern across all of the newspapers studied of containing fewer instances of contestation along the *gal-tan* dimension. Issues including national identity, sovereignty, and were rarely discussed in relation to news about individual businesses. However economic and more general

business matters that mentioned the EU tended to demonstrate some of the features of the general discourse on European integration. While, on the whole, business news was less politicised, one particular anti-European discourse concerned the claimed anti-competitive effect of EU institutions and regulations on British business. The EU was constructed as a source of bureaucracy and interference in business that was seen to ‘hold back’ British firms. This discourse appears, on the surface, to be framed around left-right politics. However, as the following discussion shows, it frequently connected to the themes already discussed, particularly the narratives concerning sovereignty. Conversely, a pro-European discourse that emphasised the economic benefits of membership can be detected, and this was located primarily in newspapers that were found in the previous chapter to be located towards the *gal-* pole of the new politics dimension. This discourse did not connect as clearly with *gal-tan* issues, however, demonstrating a clear difference between the economic discourses of anti- and pro-European newspapers.

#### *Bureaucracy and the ‘threat’ to British business*

In a number of newspapers, in particular the *Mail*, *Telegraph*, *Sun*, and *Express*, business and economic reporting framed the EU as a source of damaging regulation and of ‘holding back’ the British economy. Where news related to regulation of business or other EU directives and legislation affecting businesses (such as regulations relating to labour and working conditions), then the pattern of contestation found in the wider news reporting appears to be repeated. This was typically constructed with a frame centred on bureaucracy, and the idea that the EU is a source of inefficiency and damage to companies and the wider economy. ‘Brussels’, or the European Commission, is frequently constructed as bureaucratic, a frame that was to be found in all the of the newspapers studied to some degree, but which is emphasised particularly in *tan*-leaning discourses. When describing policy formation, the term ‘bureaucrats’ is frequently employed, often alongside ‘unelected’, forming a connection between this and the democracy discourse discussed above. The *Express*, *Times* and *Telegraph* adopted the metonym ‘eurocrat’ as a shorthand for this, this term appearing in articles in both 2001 and 2005, and there were single uses of the same terminology in both the *Independent* and the *Guardian*, presenting another example of the language of Euroscepticism spilling over into the discourses of pro-European newspapers.

Emphasis is often placed on the allegedly interfering nature of this bureaucracy for business in Britain, much in the same vein as the motif associated with the democracy frame, with the *Sun* warning of the effect of ‘watchdogs... meddling’ on the position of London as a business centre, for instance (5 June 2001). The UK is constructed as the recipient of a ‘flow’ of

regulatory interference and burdensome lawmaking emanating from the European Union. This is argued to place restrictions on British businesses and act as a constraint upon economic growth. For instance:

The effects of signing up to the European Social Chapter, the introduction of the minimum wage and a raft of European regulations are having a crippling effect on companies, particularly small businesses. (*Daily Mail*, 27 May 2001)

Emphasis is placed particularly on regulation, which is constructed as unwanted: 'a raft of new shopfloor laws would be foisted on to UK businesses', and this would result in 'destroying their competitive edge and wrecking their place as the world's fourth largest economy' (*Sun*, 29 May 2001). This is shown to be especially problematic given the period of relative economic success being enjoyed by the UK economy: 'he'll have to explain how it is patriotic to surrender control of the best economy for 30 years to unelected Brussels bureaucrats' (*Sun*, 26 May 2001). The UK is constructed as being part of a wider global economy that is highly competitive, and where membership of the EU is presented as 'holding back' the UK from achieving its potential:

We are not just competing against the Continent, but against companies across the world. More Brussels legislation might result in a level playing field in Europe, but could harm our position in relation to international competitors. We must stop any more employment laws. (*Daily Mail*, 24 April 2005)

This passage demonstrates the clear link to sovereignty discourses, and exhibits the connected nature of the *tan*-leaning discourses on European integration. Often, membership of the EU is presented, in one instance of discourse, with reference to several different frames or motifs at once. The economic consequences of British membership of the EU are shown in the *Mail* to be negative: 'being in the EU lowers our standard of living' (25 May 2001). Euro membership is also presented with this frame, with the economic consequences of membership constructed in *tan* discourses to be potentially damaging. For instance, the *Mail* argues that 'if sterling does not fall against the ailing euro and there is little evidence it will on its own the UK could suffer serious economic damage' (30 May 2001). Ultimately, staying out of the EU is considered to be vital to continuing British prosperity. In comparing the UK economy to those of countries within the Eurozone, the UK's higher rate of growth is attributed to the effects of euro membership. For instance, Alex Brummer claims that 'the economy, free of the constraints of euroland, will continue to outperform its competitors on the Continent' (Brummer, *Mail*, 4 May 2005).

This discourse also places emphasis on the EU as a means for other European countries to achieve economic advantages over the UK. The European economy is frequently shown to be performing poorly compared to the UK, which is depicted as a model which the rest of the EU ought to reproduce. This can be seen in the *Sun*, which claimed that ‘British firms are beating most European rivals in the number of jobs they create’ (31 May 2001), or in the *Mail*, which repeatedly compared the UK economy favourably to its EU counterparts (see for instance 27 May 2001; 25 April 2005). The UK is framed as being in a zero-sum competition with the other Member States of the EU. This leads to claims that the institutions of the EU were being used by other EU states to impose damaging regulations on the UK economy, placing constraints on the ability of the UK to compete. For instance, the *Sun* claimed that ‘countries like France would be delighted as Brussels applied the break to our freewheeling economy’ and claimed that France aimed to ensure the the UK was ‘hailed down to their level to watch as foreign investors packed their bags and fled - along with millions of jobs’ (29 May 2001).

However, there were some exceptions to the bureaucracy discourse, which co-existed with the bureaucracy frame in the most *tan*-leaning newspapers. In particular, both the *Mail* and the *Telegraph* constructed the EU as a champion of consumer rights. For instance, the *Telegraph* praised the European Commission for fining car manufacturer Volkswagen for price fixing, preventing ‘abuses’ from the ‘car giants’ from harming consumers (31 May 2001). Similarly, we see the *Mail* reporting positively on an initiative by Peter Mandelson, then the European Trade Commissioner, to investigate textile imports from China, which were ‘flooding Europe’ (25 April 2005).

The claimed bureaucratic nature of European institutions, and particularly the European Commission, is a theme more readily associated with the news sections of newspapers rather than the business sections, however. While the bureaucracy frame is primarily deployed in the main sections of the newspapers, it also appears in the business sections, albeit with a lower frequency. This frame combines a number of motifs found elsewhere, touching on sovereignty, democracy, and ideas of the nation, and is thus an extension of these ideas into the economic sphere. Rather than accept their opponents’ claims that the EU is a source of economic prosperity (see below), an important section of the *tan* discourse constructs the EU as a bureaucratic constraint to economic growth and success.

Conversely, there is strand of the pro-European discourses that emphasises the functional benefits of membership of the EU. These discourses occur most prominently in the *Guardian* and *Independent*, and also in the *Mirror*. Other examples of this pro-European economic discourse can be found in the *Times*. Most notably, this frame was the primary frame used in reporting of the EU in the *Financial Times*. The primary focus of this frame was to position the EU as vital to the UK's economic success and stability. The EU is shown to be a source of investment, an important focus for trade, and membership of the EU is argued to support a significant amount of employment in the British economy.

In the *Mirror*, this discourse on the economy is particularly strongly expressed. The *Mirror* constructs the EU as an important source of prosperity, and uses this to oppose the discourses that it identifies from the Conservative Party and in other newspapers. For instance, in opposing Conservative policy on the EU and euro membership, membership of the euro is argued to be vital: '[t]he future of this country depends on going into the single currency' (*Mirror*, 30 May 2001), this seems to echo Tony Blair's claim that the 'patriotic' course would be to embrace further integration. The same article continues: '[s]hutting ourselves off from our main trading partners and the world's second biggest currency bloc would be suicidal' (*Mirror*, 30 May 2001). These claims are repeated in the *Mirror* in discussions of the arguments in favour of participation in the EU. This discourse was deployed in order to attempt to persuade readers to vote for the Labour Party, for instance claiming that if the Conservatives were to win the 2001 general election, '[w]e would be forced out of the European Union, which accounts for 60 per cent of our trade and more than 3 million jobs' (*Mirror*, 28 May 2001).

This discourse was also present elsewhere. For instance, the *Independent* connects EU membership with economic growth, reporting that Bulgaria could expect that 'future membership would bring prosperity' (26 April 2005). Despite challenges including slowing economic growth and the effects of globalisation, the *Independent* credits 'the postwar European era of peace and prosperity' as being contingent on a 'social consensus' that included membership of the EU (28 April 2005). One particular event that was used in several newspapers to illustrate the benefits of European economic co-operation was the maiden flight of the Airbus A380 aircraft. For example, in a leader column, the *Guardian* argued that the 'giant A380... is a muscular symbol of what a united Europe can achieve', and contrasts this with what it claims is the 'shabby' state of European politics: the co-operation that led to the development of the aircraft, and its claimed success, is shown to be a model 'for a grand

European project' (28 April 2005). This pattern is repeated elsewhere, the *Mirror* praises the 'European built' aircraft while listing the components made in the UK (28 April 2005), and the *Independent* quoted Jacques Chirac to call the aircraft 'a magnificent result for European industrial co-operation' (28 April 2005), and described it as a 'European success story' (27 April 2005).

A related theme is that the UK is constructed as being champion of the Single Market, free markets in general, and as a leader in other economic reforms. The EU-UK 'relationship' seen as beneficial for both parties in this discourse, in that the UK is seen to offer leadership when it comes to the Single Market. For instance, in a *Guardian* editorial, Chris Huhne, Liberal Democrat MP, wrote that 'the single market is Lady Thatcher's greatest European achievement' (Huhne, *Guardian*, 5 June 2001), challenging the intervention of the former Prime Minister in the debate during the election campaign, in which she argued that Britain should 'never' join the euro (see *Telegraph*, 24 May 2001). This theme suggests that, for example, the 'lower level of bureaucracy in Britain' ought to be exported to the other states of the EU, and that 'a stronger UK voice in Europe' would 'help shape business policies there' (*Guardian* 6 June 2001). There was also a recurrent claim that this change was required in order to ensure a 'level playing field' across the EU. For instance, the *Times* claimed that 'some European countries reserve major contracts for local firms', and that the UK should ensure that 'the same open...processes' that were used in the UK 'were carried out across Europe' to guarantee fairness (4 May 2005). The EU is often argued to be the way in which to achieve this fairness, and thus bring greater opportunities to the UK economy (for example, *FT*, 7 June 2001; 3 May 2005; *Mail*, 4 May 2005).

The contestation of the economic benefits of European integration seems to show another division between the framing of Eurosceptic discourses and pro-European discourses. Among the Eurosceptic discourses, there is a clear link drawn to the *gal-tan* axis. The economics of European integration are not, in these discourses, framed in solely left-right terms, but connections are made to the other frames discussed above, particularly sovereignty. This links discussions of the economic implications of EU membership to the *tan*-Eurosceptic narratives centred on the defence of the nation. In strategic terms, this makes sense in the politicisation model, since it shifts the axes of contestation to include the new politics dimension. In the pro-European discourses, there is little evidence of this: the economics of the EU and reforms like euro membership are largely discussed in utilitarian terms, emphasising practical advantages.



## 5.6 A ‘depoliticisation narrative’?

Unlike the clear association between Eurosceptic discourses and *tan* narratives about the nation, there was no clear sense of a distinctive *gal*/pro-European discourse that was coherent in the same way as the *tan*-Eurosceptic discourse. While the *tan*-Eurosceptic discourse was clearly grouped around frames and narratives such as sovereignty and nationalism, pro-European discourses were inconsistent in their framing, making it difficult to analyse them with any conceptual clarity. While pro-European newspapers opposed the narratives of the *tan*-Eurosceptic press, they were less clear in making a clear ‘case’ for EU membership in their narratives, and of connecting this discourse to the new politics dimension. This seems to reflect the findings of Hawkins (2009; 2012), who argues that there is not a ‘unified pro-EU discourse’ in the UK press, which instead demonstrates a variety of competing voices.

As the above sections have shown, pro-European narratives are particularly concentrated in the *Guardian*, *Independent*, and *Daily Mirror*, and also in the *Financial Times*. However, as Hawkins (2009, 195) argues, there is not a single pro-European narrative in the British media.<sup>8</sup> Whereas the anti-European narratives discussed above tend to consolidate around a number of key frames, pro-European voices in the press do not necessarily contest these narratives directly. While the nationalist narratives of *tan*-leaning newspapers are challenged by a number of articles on their own terms, the overwhelming trend was for articles to instead make pro-European arguments in quite different terms to the anti-European rhetoric found in *tan*-ish discourses. Rather than argue for European integration along the same axes of contestation as the *tan* discourses discussed above, the pro-European voices in the British press focussed on benefits of membership of the EU that fell outside of the *gal-tan* dimension.

### *The Conservatives’ EU ‘obsession’ and de-politicisation*

However, one key feature of the pro-European discourse that was common in the pro-European newspapers studied is an apparent attempt in many articles to depoliticise the anti-European rhetoric of *tan* discourses, and the Conservative Party in particular, by charging these actors with an ‘obsession’ with Europe. In contrast to the economic frame, this is a discourse focussed on portraying concerns about European integration as ‘out of touch’ with the public and as the preoccupation of only a small group on the fringe of politics. Particularly in 2001, the charge that the Conservatives were ‘obsessed’ about Europe was to be found in almost all the newspapers studied — including those newspapers that were generally

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<sup>8</sup> Hawkins (2009) studies only the *Guardian* and *Mirror*, and does not study the *FT* or *Independent*, however.

supportive of anti-European sentiments — with the noticeable exception of the *Daily Mail*. This was despite this emphasis placed upon the need for public debate on Europe in these same newspapers.

Key to this discourse is the claim that the Conservatives were ‘obsessed’ with Europe and that they had failed in their objective to turn the 2001 general election into a ‘referendum’ on the euro. This discourse is contradictory to claims that there was insufficient debate about the EU and the consequences of membership (particularly of the euro). This could be found even in the Conservative-supporting newspapers. For instance, the *Telegraph* argued that ‘Mr Hague's attempt to turn the election into a referendum on the single European currency was not playing well with the voters’ (30 May 2001). Even the *Daily Mail*, which generally refrained from engaging in this discourse, acknowledged that Hague had ‘faced severe criticism from critics in his own party... who claim his determination to stop the euro has proved a turnoff’ (3 June 2001).

For the *Express*, the focus on the euro was constructed as negative, arguing that Hague either ‘lacks the intelligence to grasp’ that a referendum was planned on the euro, ‘or in his cynicism and desperation, he is trying to con the electorate into voting for him on this single issue’ (29 May 2001). Indeed, the Conservatives were seen as undermining the chance that the UK might retain the pound: ‘in one fell swoop, William Hague has helped Tony Blair to scrap the pound’, since the debate had ‘given Mr Blair a chance to portray them as extremists endangering our national interest’ (28 May 2001). Indeed, this was seen as reflecting badly on the Conservative party who had ‘once again let Margaret Thatcher set the agenda with her outdated and irrational anti-European views’ (25 May 2001). Similarly, the *Mirror* constructed the Conservative focus on Europe as leading to more important issues being left un-debated: ‘William Hague ignores the issues that really matter to the British people - health, education, pensions, transport, the economy - and goes on and on about the euro’ (*Mirror*, 29 May 2001). The *Sun* agreed with this, arguing that this had led to the Conservatives ‘pretend[ing] to themselves that the Election is a referendum on the euro’ (30 May 2001).

This discourse was also found in the pro-European broadsheets. This was particularly clear in the *Guardian*, which described the Conservatives as ‘still gripped and controlled by a euro-phobic clique which seeks to drive out apostates and unbelievers’ (*Guardian*, 6 June 2001). Under a headline of ‘Voters Fail to Share Hague’s Euro Obsession’, Alan Travis argues that the Conservatives were ‘going nowhere on Europe’ (30 May 2001). This is accompanied by claims that ‘the party’s obsession with Europe threatens to tear it apart’ (1 June 2001, see also 4 June 2001; 6 June 2001). In the *Independent*, the emphasis on the EU was seen to damage

the quality of debate around the election: ‘the election debate has been ditched in favour of a euro referendum squabble. And on early showing, the quality of argument is none too high’ (3 June 2001).

These claims position the debate on the EU and euro membership as the concern of only a small number of people. This seems to be an attempt to depoliticise the issue of Europe by pushing it off the agenda and refocusing the election on other issues. While it is expected that the Labour Party might want to pursue this agenda — and indeed Tony Blair’s claim’s regarding Hague’s ‘obsession’ with Europe were widely repeated — what is most surprising is that newspapers that generally supported both pro- and anti-European positions repeated this discourse. The claim that the Conservatives were obsessed with Europe gained wide traction, and this implies that the issue of integration ought to be debated less frequently.

This could be interpreted as an attempt to shift emphasis away from debates about European integration. Strategically, this appears to make sense for pro-European actors under the postfunctionalist model, since if reforms are contested on the left-right axis, this contestation is less likely to favour entrepreneurial actors who are able to use discourses on identity to cue public opinion on European integration. Significantly, postfunctionalism does not directly deal with ‘de-politicisation’ or the means by which incumbent pro-European parties or other actors might seek to challenge entrepreneurial (Euro sceptic actors), who appear to hold a strategic advantage given the preponderance of citizens who hold an exclusive sense of national identity (in the UK case in particular).

## **5.7 Comparing the 2001 and 2005 general elections**

Finally, the extent to which the general level of contestation of European integration in the broader political environment affects media discourses is of interest, since it indicates the extent to which newspapers may follow parties in the level of attention paid to European integration as an issue. The above discussion has shown patterns of discourse across both 2001 and 2005. However, discourses on European integration were more prominent in 2001. This is reflected in the number of articles mentioning Europe analysed (see figure 5.1). Phillipa Sherrington’s (2006: 69) assertion that ‘the 2005 UK general election was defined by ‘almost deafening political silence on the European issue’ is supported by the discourse analysis presented here. The relative quiescence of the major UK parties on the EU at the general election was, Sherrington argues, ‘underwritten by a silent pact’ between them

(Sherrington 2006, 69). This contrasts with the 2001 general election, whereby a considerable proportion of the election coverage discussed Europe.

In general terms, a number of clear patterns are visible when comparing the pattern of newspaper discourses on European integration between the 2001 and 2005 general elections. The first is that numerically, there were more articles mentioning Europe and European integration during the 2001 general election: 867 in 2001 compared to 557 in 2005. This reflects the lower level electoral competition over European policy evident at the 2005 general election: newspapers seemed to follow the lead of parties in talking about Europe less, especially in the context of contestation. This was in contrast to 2001, where coverage of European issues was much greater, especially in the context of contestation in the general election, and the proposals around a referendum on the euro promised by the Labour manifesto.

As noted above, the change in emphasis was also reflected in the way that newspapers framed the EU. While examples of the frames discussed above were found in the coverage from both years, as section 5.3 notes, the sovereignty frame was particularly emphasised in the 2001 general election coverage. This may reflect emphasis from the Conservative Party in particular on sovereignty and the issue of euro membership. In contrast, coverage of the 2005 general election tended to focus more on the 'democracy' frame - although the two frames are closely related, and often overlapping. The rather lower priority given to the issue of Europe at the 2005 general election was also evident in the newspapers' editorial endorsements of parties in the days before voting. In 2005, the endorsements of all newspapers gave far less prominence to parties' stance on Europe as justification for lending their support. However, the editorials of the key eurosceptic *tan* newspapers still mentioned the European issue in their support for Michael Howard's Conservatives. For instance:

We also need someone who will stand up to Europe, who will stop Brussels riding roughshod over Westminster. Most crucially, we need a Government that is prepared to end the utter madness that is European human rights legislation. (*Express*, 4 May 2005)

...they offer the hope of restoring integrity to public life, of renegotiating more sensible terms with Europe, of restoring genuine prudence to the economy and re-energising the public sector. (*Daily Mail*, 4 May 2005)

Although the *Sun* endorsed Labour once again, its main election endorsement editorial did not explicitly mention Europe. However, columnist Richard Littlejohn did express the consistent anti-integration line adopted by the newspaper (see Bartle 2005, 46), when he condemned the Liberal Democrats as ‘even more of a high-tax, big government, pro-Europe, meddling party than Labour’ (Littlejohn, *Sun*, 5 May 2005).

Nonetheless, the focus of coverage at the 2005 general election was largely directed at issues other than Europe. This reduction in coverage from 2001 seems to reflect the relatively lower importance given to Europe by the major political parties. Despite winning third largest number of votes in the UK at the 2004 European Parliament election, 16.1% and with 12 seats, mentions of UKIP in the coverage registered a decline between the 2001 to 2005 general elections, down from 23 articles in 2001 to only 15 in 2005. This relative absence of European integration as a topic of debate at the election was a point of contention for the most vociferous anti-European voices in the *tan*-leaning discourse. For instance, the Daily Mail ran an editorial on 3 May under the headline ‘The Head in the Sand Election’, in which Stephen Glover constructed Europe as ‘the issue that touches most deeply on the future of this country’;

Take Europe. Is it not important? I'd say so. But apart from Tony Blair's throwaway comment that as things stand entry to the euro 'doesn't look very likely', Europe has been largely avoided. Next year we are likely to have a vote on the new European constitution, unless the French should reject it in a referendum on May 29 and bring the whole process to a halt. (Glover, *Daily Mail*, 3 May 2005)

This sense that Europe was the missing topic at the election is emphasised in this passage. The negotiations and ratification process for the Constitutional Treaty is seen to be sufficiently important to warrant more attention. Despite this, most newspaper reports discussing the election did not mention the EU or European integration at all, and even fewer took these issues as their main focus. That the relatively low levels of contestation over Europe seen in between political parties is reflected in the numbers of articles discussing Europe, the EU, or European integration during election suggests a close link between the prominence of issues in the political arena and the amount of attention they receive in the press.

*2005: Immigration and Europe as the 'missing issue'*

While it has been shown that the relative lack of attention directed towards European integration by political parties at the 2005 election appears to have been reflected in the press, one key issue during that election, immigration, is of interest to the present study because of the way in which anti-immigration sentiments have frequently been mobilised by anti-European parties to stiffen their support at elections. The accession of ten new Member States to the EU in 2004 resulted in an increase in immigration to the UK, and immigration emerged as an important issue at the 2005 election, forming a key part of the Conservative Party's campaign (Whiteley et al. 2005).

Research suggests a connection between citizen attitudes towards immigration and opposition to European integration. Immigration is an issue that is particularly conducive to discursive constructions that link problems associated with immigration to the EU because these problems are 'relatively complex' and largely beyond the control of national governments: the free movement of people guaranteed by the Single Market constrains the ability of governments to substantially alter immigration policies (van Spanje 2010, 568). At the individual level, anti-immigration sentiments are associated with opposition to European integration, and have been shown to negatively affect public support for the EU in referenda (de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005, 73). In addition, anti-immigration sentiments are among the core predictors for support for populist parties, and attitudes opposed to immigration have increased, becoming more politically relevant in a number of European countries (de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005; Rydgren 2008).

In party contestation, using the postfunctionalist analytical framework, it is relatively easy for *tan* parties to adopt hard line policies on immigration, since they are easily able to connect immigration to cultural unity, and national pride, reconciling anti-immigration policies with the defence of the nation state and its culture against 'external threats' (Bale 2008, 463). The *tan* pole encompasses a wider support for the integrity of the nation state, including against the 'other' represented by migrants and mass migration. The emergence and increasing electoral success of parties across the EU, opposed to the free movement of people within the European Union and mass immigration into their own nation-states, illustrates this connection. Parties including the National Front in France, the Sweden Democrats, and the Northern League in Italy, have been effective in influencing policy outputs across Western European countries (van Spanje 2010).

This pattern of contestation among political parties in Europe does not fit with the evidence available from newspaper reports studied here from the 2005 general election. Much of the public debate on immigration at the 2005 general election did not focus on the free movement of people across the EU, or indeed the transitional arrangements for the accession countries that joined the EU a year earlier. Instead, the focus was largely on non-EU migration, specifically what the *Mirror* describes as ‘the asylum problem’ (23 April 2005). The Conservative party campaign focussed, for the most part, on those immigrants in the UK illegally. Their ‘Are You Thinking What We’re Thinking’ campaign has been described as a ‘dog whistle’, particularly on the issue of immigration and asylum, designed to ‘resonate with specific groups of anxious voters’ (Wring 2005, 63). This emphasis on illegal immigration was reflected in media coverage of the election: in one of the defining moments of the election, Jeremy Paxman, host of television current affairs programme *Newsnight*, asked Tony Blair a total of eighteen times if he knew how many illegal immigrants there were in the country (Bartle 2005, 52).

This emphasis on asylum and illegal immigration carries over into the press reports. Overall, there were relatively few connections constructed between membership of the EU and increased immigration. For example, a *Daily Express* leader column focussing on claims that Tony Blair lied to Parliament over the case for British involvement in the 2003 Iraq War also accused Blair of lying about crime figures and immigration ‘the Home Office admits 500,000 “illegals”’ (27 April 2005). Even in those newspapers that were supportive of reducing immigration into the UK, most reports did not draw connections with the enlargement of the EU and the free movement of people. Instead, the pattern of press reporting followed the party discourses, on this issue. Discourses on immigration focussed on illegal immigration and asylum, rather than legal immigration from within the European Union. For instance, the *Times* reported that one way to ‘scale back the number of foreigners working’ in the UK would be to follow the example of Ireland and reduce work permits for non-EU residents, rather than take measures to change the free movement of people, or to oppose further enlargement (23 April 2005).

While the bulk of newspaper reporting on immigration and European integration concentrated on the major parties, some attention was also paid to the smaller, anti-EU parties. Strikingly the UK Independence Party was not widely covered, the party being mentioned in only 15 articles in 2005, compared with 23 in 2001. In the context of the development of UKIP, this is surprising: UKIP has been successful in leveraging anti-immigration rhetoric to campaign for a British exit from the EU (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 103) However, the circumstances of the 2005 may provide an explanation for this failure. As Ford and Goodwin have shown, UKIP a

particular difficulty in constructing an anti-immigration the 2005 general election due to the relatively positioning of the Conservative Party and the far-right British National Party. As the Conservative rhetoric on immigration ‘ventured onto radical right territory’ and the BNP offered policies that appealed to ‘unapologetic racism’, UKIP were unable to develop a distinctive message (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 65). Nevertheless, given their success at the 2004 European Parliament elections, it is remarkable that their share of press coverage - on all issues - fell from the 2001 general election.

The juxtaposition of the 2001 and 2005 elections suggests that the level of contestation between political parties is directly connected to the level of contestation among newspapers. Where the parties strongly contested the EU, newspapers followed, whereas during an election in which the EU was not prominently contested, the level of debate in the newspapers on this issue was much lower. This also seems to affect the ways in which other issues are connected to European integration. Whereas membership of the EU became closely associated with the debate on immigration by the time of the 2015 general election (Geddes and Tonge 2015), the reluctance of parties to discuss European integration in 2005, and connect this issue with the EU and free movement, appears to be reflected in newspaper framing of this issue.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter presented an analysis of the ways in which the major UK daily newspapers constructed pro- and anti-European discourses. It set out to explore two areas: the connection between *gal-tan* position and discourses on European integration in the newspapers, and the way in which identity discourses featured in reporting on Europe. The expectation was that there would be a clear connection between the *gal-tan* dimension and the position of the newspapers on European integration. This has been supported by the evidence: newspapers which were found to oppose European integration were those which were located towards the *tan*-pole of the *gal-tan* dimension. It was also expected that newspapers would construct connections between identity and European integration in their discourses. This was shown to be the case for newspapers which were generally Eurosceptic, however there was a less coherent pro-European discourse and this was not consistently connected with a discourse on identity. These conclusions will now be discussed in more detail.

The most significant finding of this chapter is that there is evidence to show that the *gal-tan* dimension appears to structure debates in the press in a similar fashion to the way that this



dimension structures contestation of European integration among political parties. These results appear to support the estimated positions of newspapers discussed in Chapter 4. A group of *tan*-Eurosceptic newspapers, including the *Mail*, *Telegraph*, *Express*, and *Sun* presented consistent and powerful anti-European discourses that connected opposition to European integration with a defence of the nation. These newspapers were the same newspapers that were found to have average reader positions towards both the *anti-EU* and *tan* poles in Chapter 4. The *Times* often mirrored these discourses, but was more moderate in its opposition to the EU. This also reflects its more moderate relative average reader position on the support for European integration and *gal-tan* axes as shown in the previous chapter. Three newspapers, the *Guardian*, *Independent*, and *FT*, were consistently relatively pro-European, although they did not demonstrate a distinctive *gal* discourse. They were supported by the *Mirror*, although this newspaper reported European issues in less depth. The focus on the 2001 and 2005 general election campaigns has offered a contrast between a period of high contestation. Newspapers appear to largely follow parties in the prominence that they give to reporting of European integration: where the level of contestation among political parties is low, the level of reporting on Europe is lower, and those articles focus less on contesting integration.

The apparent association between the *gal-tan* dimension and the discourses adopted by the newspapers studied is, in a similar pattern to parties, stronger at the *tan* pole of the dimension. The association between newspapers that adopt positions towards the *tan* pole on the *gal-tan* spectrum and opposition to European integration extends beyond simply the co-existence of these two positions, however. Overall, there is evidence that the *tan*-leaning press seeks to engage Europe as an identity issue, acting as a political entrepreneur in the same sense as *tan* political parties, with the aim of politicising European integration. Also clear from the results of the discourse analysis is that the *tan* press reproduce and, in many cases, strengthen, the eurosceptic elite political rhetoric engaged in by the Conservative Party in particular, and this is examined further in Chapter 6. There is a less clear connection between *gal* discourses and support for the EU. Newspapers that were found to be towards the *gal*-pole (and whose readers had higher levels of support for European integration) in the previous chapter did tend to be more pro-European in their discourses, and made fewer connections between nationalist discourses and Europe (and featured a lower prevalence of nationalist discourses in general). However, there was an absence of a distinctive pro-European discourse, and particularly a *gal* construction of the nation — in most cases — that constructed the nation and membership of the EU as compatible. This is significant for the model, and as a general finding: while there is a distinctive, consistent, and coherent *tan* / Eurosceptic discourse in the UK press, there is little evidence of a coherent pro-European discourse. Even in those newspapers that support

European integration, there was little evidence of a systematic narrative that reconciled membership of the EU with the themes, particularly identity, that provided the focus for the *tan*-leaning newspapers. This finding perhaps offers a wider insight into the difficulty faced by pro-European actors in mobilising support for the EU in the UK, although it must be recalled that Hooghe and Marks find a stronger association between parties at the *tan*-pole and Euroscepticism.

This finding begs questions about the importance of the overall structure of the press, and influence this might have on the outcomes of debates. This is especially relevant when one considers not just the number of Eurosceptic newspapers found here, but the influence that they have in the mass arena. The high readership of the *tan*-leaning newspapers, and the pervasiveness of their Eurosceptic discourses during the time period studied, seems to have contributed to a discursive environment in which Eurosceptic ideas are strongly embedded. The effects of this structure are considered in the next chapter, where the representations of party discourses in the media are analysed in detail.

Analysis of the content of the newspaper discourses revealed a number of additional conclusions. Perhaps most importantly, the analysis confirmed that newspapers constructed discourses that connected the *gal-tan* dimension with European integration and which consequently contested European integration through the lens of identity politics. This is evidence to suggest that the discourses of newspapers matter to outcomes in the postfunctionalist model. As Chapter 2 argued, if newspaper discourses construct connections between the nation and European integration, then they may cue citizen attitudes in the same way that Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue party discourses cue citizen attitudes. This finding confirms the assertion of the MAP model that newspapers are also able to cue citizen opposition (or support) for European integration - with clear implications for the strategies of parties in the mass arena.

A number of key themes that framed the debate on European integration in the UK media were identified. Most importantly, it was shown that the frames of identity, sovereignty, and democracy were the most prevalent in the reporting, especially in anti-European *tan*-leaning discourses. Much of the opposition to the EU in the UK press centres around a narrative that European integration is a threat to the British nation, and this existential danger is constructed as being fundamentally incompatible with the nation-state as the primary means of political governance. The EU is thus constructed as objectionable on the grounds of the logic of nationalism. This defence centres around a number of motifs, including the defence of key symbols of British national identity and the British state, as well as through the concept of the

‘national interest’. *Tan* discourses also frame the EU in terms of democracy, touching on debates about the claimed ‘democratic deficit’ of the EU while concentrating on the supposed anti-democratic practices of the EU and the negative impact that European integration has had on ‘British’ freedoms. The clearest articulation of these sentiments can be seen in the *Mail*, *Telegraph*, and *Sun*, which develop a discourse on British membership of the EU that, while giving acknowledgement to the economic case for membership, is implacably opposed to further British involvement in integration. The most striking aspect of the discourses studied was the extent to which many newspapers adopted a construction of European integration that contested the very legitimacy of the EU as a political system. This suggests a deep opposition to the EU within sections of the press in the UK, acting as a source of resistance and opposition to the UK’s continued participation in the EU, that exists alongside the milder forms of Euroscepticism that dominate the press discourse analysed in this chapter. However this discourse is not uniform, or unchallenged. Several newspapers included in the sample present a rather different discourse on Europe, one which is closer to that engaged in by the pro-European parties. European integration is constructed in these newspapers, and particularly in *The Guardian*, *Financial Times*, and *The Independent*, as a generally positive development; they emphasise the functional purpose of integration alongside the practical benefits of membership of the UK.

## Chapter 6

### The Representation of Party Discourses in the UK Press

This chapter is concerned with the mediation of elite discourses and the linkage between the press and political parties in the mass arena. The previous chapter examined the characteristics and qualities of press discourses on European integration in the context of electoral conflict. Building on the general findings of Chapter 5, this chapter examines the postfunctionalist claim that political parties — and in particular entrepreneurial parties — seek to ‘push’ debates about European integration into the mass arena through discursive strategies that seek to prime public opinion. As the previous chapter found, there is evidence to suggest that there is a clear link between the *gal-tan* axis and newspaper discourses on European integration: contestation of European integration in the media exhibits evidence of being structured by this axis. A particularly strong link was found to exist between Eurosceptic discourses and the *tan*-pole of the *gal-tan* axis: as with parties in the postfunctionalist model, newspapers seemed to construct links between nationalist, anti-European discourses and an exclusive construction of British national identity.

Recalling the literature discussed in Chapter 2, the present chapter examines the mediation of debates in the mass arena. In particular, this chapter tests the postfunctionalist assumption that the process of politicisation and contestation is one in which the agency of parties is paramount. The assumption that parties can politicise (or de-politicise) European integration in the mass arena through acts of discourse-making implicitly relies upon the media to reproduce those discourses in order that they are transmitted to the public. However the extent to which media outlets reframe the discourses of elites, modifying the messages of mainstream and entrepreneurial parties alike, is significant for the operation of the politicisation and contestation process (see, for example, Scheufele 2000; Edy and Meirick 2007; Entman 2007).

Postfunctionalism establishes a number of assumptions regarding the politicisation of European integration in the mass arena. Most importantly, it is asserted that political entrepreneurs must mobilise opposition to the EU by constructing connections between ‘national identity, cultural and economic insecurity and issues such as EU enlargement’ (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13). Through engaging in discourses that engage with nationalist sentiments and which connect the EU with social insecurities, political entrepreneurs influence arena choice, ensuring that European policy is contested in the mass arena. The MAP politicisation model presented in Chapter 2 contended that the mediating role

of the media in the mass arena is significant. Parties must be able to effectively communicate their messages in a mass-mediated public debate, in order to be successful in engaging the tension between static identities and evolving supranational governance structures, and they rely on the media to do so. Parties must be able to set the agenda on European integration issues, and successfully communicate their framing of European integration to public, for the postfunctionalist politicisation model to hold.

The extent to which this agenda setting power is effective is the subject of this chapter: are parties able to put Europe on the agenda, and in the terms of their own choosing, as the model predicts? We expect that parties will seek to influence the basis and character of debate in order to achieve their objectives. In doing so, as Chapter 2 argued, they must change pre-existing media narratives through their entrepreneurial activity. Parties 'seek to politicise an issue when they see electoral advantage in doing so', and as a result we expect that parties will attempt to cast the 'spotlight of politicisation' on the EU only in situations where this is potentially advantageous (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 18-19). Therefore, major speeches are opportunities for parties to attempt to exercise their agenda-setting power in order to position themselves strategically on Europe. While parties are constrained in their strategic positioning by a number of concerns including reputation, ideological considerations, and the potential for issues to divide parties (Hooghe and Marks 2009; Meyer 2013), it can be assumed that major speeches on Europe represent occasions where parties seek to maximise their strategic advantages on European policy. This chapter will argue that parties are only partially successful in setting the agenda in this way. As the evidence below will show, the reporting of speeches did not always facilitate this: in some cases, newspapers did not report speeches at all (even those that were comparatively major speeches, from the perspective of the party), or reported relatively little of the content of the speech, limiting the ability of the party to set the agenda.

Chapter 2 argued that the way that the media reports speeches on the EU may not necessarily reflect the framing used in the speeches. Drawing from the political communications literature, it was argued that the mediation of speeches by newspapers and other media outlets is expected to alter the message of those speeches, particularly in terms of how they are framed. This chapter will show that there is substantial evidence of reframing. The following sections show that newspapers do significantly alter the frames used by parties, fitting the discourses of parties into pre-existing narratives and to suit their own editorial priorities. In addition, we expect from the theory that newspapers inclined towards a *tan*-ish perspective will reframe pro-European discourses in nationalist terms, emphasising the claimed consequences of integration for the national in-group. Given the higher salience of the *gal-tan*

dimension for actors at the *tan*-pole, we expect that this reframing will be particularly visible in the case of speeches that do not frame Europe in *gal-tan* terms: in other words, we expect the Eurosceptic, *tan*-leaning newspapers to frame speeches on European integration in their own nationalist terms, even if this does not reflect the positioning of the speech. If newspapers are in themselves entrepreneurial actors, then *tan*-leaning publications would seek to frame speeches in terms of *gal-tan* contestation, since is expected to produce the politicisation and subsequent cueing of opposition to the EU that they desire. This chapter argues that there is limited evidence to show that this is the case. As the following sections show, there is evidence to show that in some circumstances, newspapers do reframe party narratives, but not in a way that is always consistent with their own position on European integration.

### *Sources*

This chapter examines five major speeches on European integration, made by the leaders of the Labour and Conservative parties. Each speech is analysed alongside the subsequent resultant press coverage in the same nine major daily UK newspapers analysed in the previous chapters. Speeches were chosen to reflect a range of scenarios. In all cases, the speeches were given by the leader of the Labour Party or Conservative Party. A number of variables differ between the speeches, including whether or not the speech took place during an election campaign, the immediate audience, the orientation of the politician towards the EU, and the message of the speech. Three of the speeches frame European integration in terms of national identity, while two do not. In all cases, speeches were chosen as examples of the ‘best attempts’ of leaders to shape the contestation of the EU in their own image. It is assumed that, in each case, these speeches represent attempts by the party leader in question to exercise agenda-setting power, and, in postfunctionalist terms, influence either the arena choice for the contestation of European reforms, or contest European integration in the mass arena. Therefore, these case studies test the assumption that parties are able to politicise European integration (in the case of Eurosceptic parties), or are able to shape the terms of debate in the mass arena according to their own construction of European integration. This also tests the contention of this thesis that pro-European political parties, the role of which is not as well theorised in post-functionalism, face difficulties in containing the politicisation of European integration through their own framing of the issues.

Five speeches are analysed in detail, and these have been carefully selected as ‘defining statements’ made by party leaders on European integration. Two speeches by leaders of the Conservative Party, William Hague and Michael Howard, are examined. William Hague’s

speech to the Conservative Party conference in Harrogate, on 5 March 2001 was made before the calling of the 2001 general election, but served to set out his position for the forthcoming election. Michael Howard's speech in Bristol on 7th June 2004 was made three days before the European Parliament election of that year. Two speeches by Tony Blair are examined: one made in Edinburgh on 25 May 2001, during the 2001 general election campaign, and one made in Oxford, on 2 February 2006. Finally, Gordon Brown's most significant speech on Europe as prime minister, to the European Parliament on 24th March 2009 is examined. The articles analysed for each speech are summarised in figure 6.1.

**Figure 6.1 Newspaper articles analysed by speech**

	<b>William Hague Speech, 2001</b>	<b>Tony Blair Speech, 2001</b>	<b>Michael Howard Speech, 2004</b>	<b>Tony Blair Speech, 2006</b>	<b>Gordon Brown Speech, 2009</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Daily Express</b>	3	4	2	0	6	<b>15</b>
<b>Daily Mail</b>	10	9	2	2	6	<b>29</b>
<b>Daily Mirror</b>	5	5	1	0	1	<b>12</b>
<b>Daily Telegraph</b>	12	11	4	2	6	<b>35</b>
<b>Financial Times</b>	8	10	2	5	4	<b>29</b>
<b>Guardian</b>	16	12	2	3	10	<b>43</b>
<b>Independent</b>	8	10	5	4	3	<b>30</b>
<b>Sun</b>	6	7	1	1	3	<b>18</b>
<b>Times</b>	9	6	4	3	4	<b>26</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>237</b>

The speeches, and subsequent reporting of them, were analysed in detail using the same methodology employed in Chapter 5. Specifically, the analysis describes the framing of European integration and the EU in each of the speeches. The primary messages of each speech are analysed, and the extent to which the speech frames the EU in terms of national identity and the *gal-tan* dimension is discussed. The subsequent reporting of the speeches in the press is then analysed using the same criteria. Particularly, the analysis aims to compare the framing and messaging of the reporting with that of the speeches. Where speeches have been reframed, key messages altered or omitted, or the reporting focuses on pre-existing or alternative narratives, this is discussed in detail.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, the speech given by Gordon Brown in 2009 is examined. The analysis of this speech shows that speeches may not be reported in detail, even

when they are relatively important statements, and also shows that speeches can be fit into pre-existing narratives. Second, Tony Blair's 2006 speech in Oxford is discussed. The analysis of the reporting of this speech shows that party leaders - even prime ministers - can fail to influence the agenda at all, with several of the largest-circulation newspapers ignoring the speech. It also demonstrates some evidence to suggest that *tan*-leaning newspapers do reframe speeches to be about identity issues, as the theory expects. Next, Michael Howard's 2004 speech is examined, and it is shown that, even in periods of high general contestation of European integration, that speeches can be re-framed to by the media to fit a narrative around internal party politics, rather than substantive policy. Following this, speeches by William Hague and Tony Blair, both given in 2001, are examined. The analysis of Hague's speech shows evidence that when Eurosceptic entrepreneurial parties attempt to cue opinion through discourses that explicitly connect identity and the EU, this message can be substantially altered even in *tan*-leaning newspapers: in this case due to a negative reaction to Hague's rhetoric. Finally, the analysis of Tony Blair's speech shows that there is some evidence to suggest that there are occasions where the media do mirror politicians' framing, and that newspapers do sometimes divide along the *gal-tan* dimension in the reporting of speeches: reporting the speech in terms of identity politics and debates about the nation, but taking positions according to their general *gal-tan* position.

### **6.1 Gordon Brown's speech to the European Parliament, 2009**

The first speech to be examined was given by Gordon Brown to a plenary session of the European Parliament on 24 March 2009 (Brown 2009). This speech represents the most complete statement of Gordon Brown's approach to the EU during his time as prime minister, and garnered considerable attention in the press in the UK. The context of the speech was a diplomatic effort by Brown to gather support for a co-ordinated fiscal and monetary bailout package, to be presented at the G20 summit held in London on 2 April 2009. This speech is a case of a pro-European politician making a speech that constructs a case for co-operation through the institutions of the EU, and for British leadership within the EU. Rather than dealing with a specific European reform, Brown's speech instead is a call for policy action co-ordinated through the EU. This case provides some evidence to illustrate the nature of the operation of the later stages of the postfunctionalist model. The extent to which Brown is able to achieve his objective of setting the agenda, in order to gather support for EU-wide policies to confront the global recession, is illustrative of the processes by which politicians are able to influence mass-mediated public debates on Europe.



In the speech, European integration is framed as part of a wider narrative about the global financial crisis and recession. Brown proposes that ‘Europe takes the lead in a bold plan to ensure that every continent now makes the changes in their banking system’ to respond to the global recession then underway. The speech is therefore structured around a narrative describing the events of the global financial crisis, and the action that Brown argues needs to be taken to address this crisis. Brown frames his speech in this context, and constructs the EU as a means to exert global leadership on financial reforms. As with much of Brown’s rhetoric on European integration, the speech focusses on the themes of globalisation and interconnectedness, in this case in the context of the financial crisis: this theme of globalisation as one of the ‘challenges’ or ‘forces for change’ in the modern international system is common to both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown’s speechmaking on Europe (Daddow 2011, 247). Brown constructs the image of ‘an international hurricane... sweeping the world’, and positions globalisation as crossing national and ‘moral boundaries’. The alternative to this is to create a ‘new and principled economic consensus for our times’. This, Brown sees as emerging from co-operation between the US and UK, thus positioning the UK as a ‘bridge’ between the United States and Europe, a common theme in Blair and Brown’s speeches (Daddow 2011, 251). Thus, Brown constructs the nation-state as being vulnerable to the forces of globalisation, and of global economic crisis. Co-operation through the EU is positioned as a means to solve these problems; the emphasis is on the importance of co-operation as a means to achieve shared objectives. The focus of the speech is on this argument, and Brown frames the EU as a means to solve shared economic problems. This positions Brown firmly away from the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* axis.

In framing Europe, Brown emphasises the benefits of co-operation and supranationalism, discussing what he sees as the achievements of the EU. Brown argues that today ‘we enjoy a Europe of peace and unity’ and that this ‘will truly rank among the finest achievements of human history’. Brown sees the EU as ‘a beacon of hope for the whole world’, and sees the key achievements of the EU as being in bringing peace and security to Europe: ‘we are stronger together, safer together than ever we are apart’. This framing appears to combine some of the idealism of the founders of the EU with a pragmatic argument for the EU. Brown centres his account of the purpose of the EU around goals that are primarily economic. Indeed, he identifies the EU as ‘the greatest and biggest single market in the world’, and also cites its environmental achievements, commitment to giving aid, and consumer and workplace rights. This primarily economic construction of Europe echoes the central message of the speech, which is to place the EU at the centre of worldwide economic reforms: ‘we in Europe are uniquely placed to lead the world in meeting the wholly new and momentous challenges of globalisation ahead’.

However, in parts, the speech contains a secondary frame that deals with identity. This is comprised of two parts. First, Brown associates the EU with a set of common values. In his construction of Europe as embodying a common purpose, he expresses the idea that Europe is bound together by common values, in particular the idea that ‘freedom must never become a free for all’, ‘markets should be free, but never values-free’, and ‘being fair is more important than being laissez faire’. This, Brown argues, has led to a coming-together of Europe that implies a sense of common identity and purpose: ‘today there is no old Europe, no new Europe, no new east or west Europe, there is only one Europe and it is our home, Europe’. Thus, Brown constructs a commitment to common values and a sense of common purpose as the most distinctive feature of ‘Europe’: ‘the unity that will last is the democratic unity rooted in the common values of people... it is these defining values that bind us closely together’. Second, he develops this point and relates it to the idea of Britishness. Brown describes himself as ‘proud to be British and proud to be European’, constructing the two identities as compatible and inclusive. Furthermore, he constructs Britain in 2009 as ‘a country that does not see itself as an island adrift from Europe, but as a country at the centre of Europe, not in Europe’s slip-stream but in Europe’s mainstream’. This seems to be a rejection of Eurosceptic discourses on Britain’s place in the EU, and echoes the discourse of Tony Blair (see below) on Britain taking a leadership role in Europe. Indeed, Brown explicitly rejects the notion that he is eurosceptic; ‘some critics suggested that I was supporting global action more because I supported European action less’, instead he claims to ‘want Europe to be leading on the world stage’. This suggests that the speech, at least in part, was intended by Brown as an attempt to cast himself as pro-European, and to reject the notion that he was ‘secretly’ sceptical of the EU.

Thus, Brown’s speech offers a positive account of the role of the EU in the context of the financial crisis and in the context of increasingly powerful forces of globalisation. This construction of Europe is based around shared values, and the idea that there is a common European interest. Brown does acknowledge the nation in this, but only in a single instance in the speech where he warns against ‘heading for the rocks of isolation’, instead arguing for ‘the course of cooperation’, which he says ‘is in all our national interests’. Primarily, Brown constructs the financial crisis and globalisation as being bigger than any one nation, and instead sees these forces as compelling internationalism and co-operation. The speech does not engage in debate on the EU in overtly *gal-tan* terms, therefore. Instead, the EU is constructed as a means of enabling co-operation in, primarily, the economic and security spheres.

### *The construction of Brown's speech in the press*

Reporting of the speech demonstrated a plurality of framing, tone, and depth of coverage. 43 articles covered the speech over a two week period. This suggests a significant impact in terms of the amount of attention paid to Brown's remarks. In common with the other speeches analysed, the amount of coverage varied considerably between the newspapers (see figure 6.1). The most notable aspect of the reporting of this speech is the framing employed. Whereas Brown attempted to frame discussion of British engagement in the EU as a matter of solving shared (particularly economic) problems, and to construct the UK as taking a leadership role in the EU, the framing of his speech in the press changes this message entirely: Brown's speech is reported in the majority of the daily national newspapers as part of a claimed conflict between the prime minister and Bank of England. Other reports constructed Brown as having suddenly 'changed his mind' on the EU. There is also some evidence of reframing of the speech into *gal-tan* terms, emphasising the importance of identity and the nation state.

The most notable feature of the reporting, that was shared among a number of newspapers, was the reframing of Brown's speech in order to present it as part of a disagreement between the government (and Gordon Brown in particular), and the Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King.<sup>1</sup> Several of the newspapers constructed the two as being in conflict, claiming that King's statement to Parliament opposed the fiscal stimulus proposed by Brown in his speech. This was particularly visible in the *Express*, *Mail*, *Telegraph*, and *Times*, and was a secondary framing device in the *Independent* and *FT*. Meanwhile, the *Mirror* reported Brown's speech in a single article discussing King's comments, reflecting that newspaper's relatively limited coverage of the European Union.

Notably, only three newspapers — the *Guardian*, *FT*, and *Independent* — gave an accurate account of the content and framing of the original text. All three reported the speech in a positive light. For instance, on the day of Brown's speech, the *Guardian* reflected Brown's message that 'Europe's history showed that erecting national barriers to trade only leads to "retreat and fear"', and presents Brown as offering 'strong support for Britain's membership of the EU' (24 March 2009). Similarly, the *Independent* led one of its reports with the claim that the 'European Union can lead the world out of recession by forging a new partnership with the US', and described Brown's speech as part of 'an emerging consensus' on financial reforms and the role of the EU in creating a new financial regulator (25 March 2009). Similarly, the *FT* reported Brown's speech as acknowledging 'the value of shaping an

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<sup>1</sup> King gave evidence to the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee on 24 March.

international debate by first agreeing a common EU position', and quoted Brown on being 'proud to be British and proud to be European' (25 March 2009).

More common was reporting that reframed Brown's narrative. Through reframing Brown's speech to focus on domestic politics, several newspapers shifted attention away from the content and message of the speech, and towards the apparent difficulties faced in implementing an economic stimulus within the UK. For instance, the *Telegraph's* front page story on the topic framed Brown's speech primarily with a construction of conflict between the prime minister and Bank of England. The article constructs tension between King, who is quoted as arguing that 'Britain cannot afford tax cuts or public spending rises', and Brown, who had 'called on countries attending the G20 summit to borrow and spend unprecedented amounts' (*Telegraph*, 25 March 2009). Similarly, the *Mail* constructed an account of 'the Bank and No. 10 at war', framing Brown's speech in a narrative that characterised King's appearance before Parliament as an 'extraordinary warning' that 'blew a hole in Mr Brown's plans', and is described as 'especially embarrassing for the Prime Minister' (*Mail*, 25 March 2009). In the *Times*, Brown's speech is similarly framed, being characterised as being at odds with King's comments, which are described as 'unconstrained' (25 March 2009), and as 'a broadside that reduced relations between them to their lowest point' that 'overshadowed Mr Brown's first Strasbourg speech' (Webster, *Times*, 25 March 2009). Indeed, the *Times* covered this division on its front page, presenting King's comments as an 'unusual intervention' that 'laid bare tensions' on the day of Brown's speech (25 March 2009). This presents Brown and King's apparent disagreement as the main story, and neglects to report many of the key elements of Brown's speech. In one of the more pro-European newspapers, the *Independent*, this frame of conflict between Brown and King is also the main organising motif of the reporting. In the *Independent*, Brown's speech is framed as being delivered in the context of a disagreement between Brown, on the one hand, and Mervyn King and Alistair Darling (then Chancellor of the Exchequer) on the other (26 March 2009). The substantive reframing of Brown's speech to fit with a narrative of conflict between the government and Bank of England suggests that even an extensively reported speech such as this can fail to influence the nature of the mass-mediated debate if pre-existing media narratives prevail over the original framing of the speech.

This finding is reinforced by the other frames identified in the reporting. A second significant feature of the reporting was the construction of Brown having delivered a much more pro-European speech than his 'usual' tone, which was represented as a significant change from the past. In the *Mail*, this frame is adopted to present Brown as duplicitous and insincere. In an editorial, Brown is constructed as a 'cynical' politician, using flattery to go about 'battering

up MEPs': this is juxtaposed with the image of Brown as 'for years, one of the Government's great eurosceptics' (25 March 2009). The article suggests Brown is lying in order to 'win Europe round to his stimulus plans', contrasting his previous desire to 'distance himself from the EU's Lisbon Treaty'. In a second article, headlined 'Day Brown Fell In Love With The EU', this is reinforced with a construction of Brown having 'delivered the most pro-EU speech of his life', and of having 'abandoned his traditionally cool, and sometimes antagonistic attitude' towards the EU (Chapman, *Mail*, 25 March 2009). The *Sun*'s main article on Brown's speech constructed Brown in a similar fashion, claiming that he had 'lavished praise on the EU' in his 'most pro-European speech to date'; this is contrasted with 'his frequent clashes with Brussels during his ten years as Chancellor' (25 March 2009). In this, the *Sun* describes Brown as 'shameless' and shows Brown to be at odds with the public, constructing his speech as having 'declared yesterday he was PROUD Britain signed the hated Lisbon Treaty' (25 March 2009, emphasis in original). Columnist Kelvin Mackenzie offered a more stark expression of this framing, characterising Brown as 'brown-nosing Europe', asking readers 'is he smoking something?', and reinforces the message that Brown had performed a U-turn, describing it as 'wholly at odds with what he has professed for most of his life' (Mackenzie, *Sun*, 26 March 2009).

This frame could also be found in some of the more sympathetic accounts of Brown's speech, indicating that the image of Brown 'changing his mind' on the EU was not confined to Eurosceptic accounts. For example, Brown is described as 'gushing like a broken fire hydrant' that had 'drenched the European Parliament in praise', and as a man who 'yesterday went all misty-eyed about co-operation' (*Guardian*, 25 March 2009). This is contrasted with the 'grumpy chancellor who hated attended European summits' and who was 'embarrassingly obstructionist' (*Guardian*, 25 March 2009). This creates an image of Brown as calculating: in its leader column, the *Guardian* constructs Brown as using praise for the EU as a pragmatic means to achieve his ends: he 'cannot have become an emotional convert to the European cause', but rather 'sees Europe as a useful battalion' in his 'great army of financial reformers' (25 March 2009). The *FT* also reflected this frame, describing Brown's speech as representing 'new willingness to engage fully with Europe' in contrast with 'his reluctance to attend Brussels meetings' (24 March 2009).

Reframing was generally deployed to oppose Brown's speech. Notably, the reports that reframed Brown in this way gave relatively little detail on the content of Brown's speech. Instead of opposing the Brown's narrative on the grounds of sovereignty or other common *tan* frames, they seek to personally discredit Brown and his policies, and to avoid giving an accurate account of Brown's message altogether. This pattern was broken in two instances, in

which newspapers re-framed Brown's speech in terms of sovereignty and the nation. The *Express* constructs Brown as hypocritical, of making apparently contradictory statements that on the one hand speak in 'nationalist tones about "British jobs for British workers"', and on the other 'goes off to the European Parliament and ridiculously calls the EU "a beacon of hope for the whole world"' (*Express*, 26 March 2009). The speech is constructed as an endorsement of further European integration, which is contested with an explicitly nationalist rhetoric. The EU is constructed as part of a set of institutions 'the UN, the International Monetary Fund, the EU and World Bank', that 'have failed us dismally' (*Express*, 26 March 2009). Rather, than acting to 'reward their failure by strengthening their powers', the article argues that 'the real answer lies in each government looking after the interest of their own people in the own countries'; thus, the EU is shown to stand in the way of the national interest. This re-framing and contestation of Brown's narrative demonstrates that the concepts of sovereignty and the nation can be used in *tan-ish* discourses that set out to contest European integration, even when the speeches being reported do not construct Europe in terms of sovereignty or nationalism.

A number of interesting features emerge from the reporting of Brown's speech, therefore. There are clear differences in the extent to which the newspapers report the content of the speech in any detail. While the *FT*, *Independent*, *Guardian*, and *Times* all gave multiple quotations that summarised at least a subset of the main points of the speech, the other newspapers focused on on limited aspect of Brown's message. As might be expected, where coverage of the speech was positive in tone, this was in the generally pro-European newspapers. However all of these pro-European newspapers published at least one article that reframed Brown's speech substantially. Most importantly, there is evidence to suggest that speeches may be substantially reframed to fit with pre-determined narratives. All newspapers demonstrated a framing that presented Brown's speech as either overshadowed by the appearance of Mervyn King before the Treasury Select Committee, or which constructed the speech as a major change of tone on the part of Brown, often suggesting a duplicitous or Machiavellian motive. This suggests that, especially where the political salience of European integration is relatively low, speeches are likely to be reported in ways which obscure their original message and framing to the reader, even in those newspapers which might be editorially sympathetic to their original framing. Most significantly, analysis of this speech suggests that leaders are unable to straightforwardly 'prime, cue and frame' public opinion through engaging in public discourses in the mass-mediated public debate. In this case, Brown was simply unable to set the agenda through his speech. This suggests that we must reconsider the mechanisms in the postfunctionalist model for the contestation of Europe in the mass arena.

## 6.2 Tony Blair's speech in Oxford, 2006

The second speech to be analysed is Tony Blair's final major speech on Europe as prime minister, given in Oxford on 2 February 2006 (Blair 2006). The speech offers a reflective account of British involvement in European integration since joining the European Community.<sup>2</sup> This speech looks back on Blair's time in office to develop a pro-European, but nevertheless qualified case for engagement in Europe. This speech is significant in that it represents the final lengthy statement on European policy of Blair's premiership, and was delivered after the conclusion of the UK presidency of the European Council. In several respects this speech shares some similarities with Gordon Brown's speech to the European Parliament. It was also delivered at a time of relatively low overall contestation of the EU in the UK: being delivered neither during an election campaign, nor during a period of contestation of EU reforms (following the referenda in France and the Netherlands on the EU Constitutional Treaty). In common with Gordon Brown's speech, this speech does not engage in the debate on European integration with a discourse that is located primarily the *gal-tan* axis, although Blair does include some elements of a discourse on nationalism in his speech. As the following discussion will show, Blair frames the EU as requiring reform, but also as an opportunity to recast the relationship between the UK and 'Europe' in a more positive light. In doing so, he frames European integration not as a matter of identity, but of pragmatic necessity in the face of the forces of globalisation and terrorism, echoing his framing in many of his speeches on the EU as prime minister (Daddow 2011, 104).

In this speech, Blair frames the EU in two distinctive, yet related, ways. The first is to frame the EU as an essential and inevitable creation of the forces of history - one which solves collective action problems that nation states alone cannot. This frame revolves around the claim that 'history is on the side of Europe'; the development of the EU is constructed as part of an arch of history stretching from the Second World War to the present, and despite 'the setbacks of recent years', Blair argues that 'in times to come, Europe will be stronger and more integrated'. European integration is held to be central to addressing the contemporary challenges faced by nation states. He constructs an argument centred on 'globalisation, enlargement and the new security threats Europe faces', which he presents as making the case for 'engagement not isolation'. This positions Blair firmly in favour of further integration.

In framing British involvement in the EU, Blair draws on a construction of the EU as a model for international cooperation and success. For instance, he describes the EU as 'the biggest

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<sup>2</sup> While Blair made a number of additional speeches on foreign policy that discussed Europe, this was his last speech as prime minister to focus primarily on Europe.

political union and largest economic market in the world', and lists the successes of the EU as 'democracy, peace, freedom and prosperity'. However, Blair sees the 'the awesome nature of what the founders' of the EU did, and the 'idealism and faith' of the founding principles of the EU as 'an unsatisfactory basis' to 'justify the EU to a different generation living in different times'. The EU, in Blair's construction of it, is needed so that nation states can overcome challenges collectively:

The world is more interdependent than ever. Policy on trade or climate change or war cannot be conducted alone. Statesmanship is shared or, all too often, futile. Nations are obliged to cooperate. If the EU didn't exist, we would have to invent it (Blair 2006).

Blair thus frames membership of the EU in pragmatic terms, and also deploys the idea of the 'national interest' to justify the UK's place within the EU.

The core message of this speech is a case for constructive involvement in the EU and the development of the UK as a leader within the EU. Blair frames UK involvement in the EU necessary economically and politically, but sees it and the future of the EU itself as conditional on the need to reform the institutions and rules of the EU. This is contained within his second frame, which constructs the EU as having become distant from citizens and in need of change: 'it needs to reconnect its priorities and pre-occupations with the challenges its people face'. In order to achieve the '21st century relevance of Europe', Blair argues that 'policy answers' to these challenges must be combined with 'institutional change'. Thus, Blair engages with arguments surrounding the relevance of the EU, and the extent to which it reflects the wants and needs of European publics. Blair offers a pragmatic assessment of the EU that particularly emphasises the need for reform. his institutional integration is problematic in Blair's construction: 'Too often in recent times, more Europe has been used not to answer a question but to avoid answering it'. In this, Blair adopts a tone that reflects some of the eurosceptic language examined in the previous chapter. Blair constructs an image of the EU as too remote from the concerns of citizens: European leaders had 'locked ourselves in a room at the top of the tower and debated things no ordinary citizen could understand'.

Finally, Blair draws on the same arguments found in his wider corpus of speeches on the EU to make a case, based on this framing, for British engagement and leadership in Europe (Daddow 2012). He argues that the need to reform the EU offers 'an historic opportunity to cure the sickness that has afflicted Britain's relationship with the project of European integration'. Thus, the speech directly addresses British Eurosceptic discourses and seeks to build a positive case for the UK's participation in future integration. This is articulated in the



context of his assessment of the British relationship with the EU, in which Blair claims to detect a ‘political, almost cultural difference in approach between Britain and Europe’, suggesting that this is a result of deep-seated opposition to European integration in the UK. He argues that the rejection of ‘sharing sovereignty, accepting common rules, majority votes and so forth’ represents an objection to the EU that is ‘intellectually pure, albeit practically outdated’, positioning Eurosceptics as old-fashioned, and his own views as up-to-date. Blair constructs the need for institutional reform as an ‘opportunity’ to ‘become part of a new consensus about the EU in the 21st century’ and for Britain to take a leadership role in achieving this. Blair argues for the need for a ‘critical analysis’ of Europe, which would allow ‘for Europe to re-shape a different vision of its future; and for Britain to feel comfortable within it’. He is careful to frame this in terms of the maintenance of national sovereignty, and acting in the national interest, describing his vision as ‘an ever closer union of nation states, cooperating, as of sovereign right, where it is in their interest to do so’. This vision is also carefully constructed by Blair to be qualified in its commitment to further integration. He states that ‘I don’t support ever closer union for the sake of it’; but rather he argues that ‘in the world in which we live, it will be the only way of advancing our national interest effectively’. In arguing for greater integration, Blair adopts the language of the nation and national interest in order to justify his support for the EU, but without, as he says, ‘devotion to undiluted national sovereignty’.

Blair therefore makes a pro-European argument that, largely, does not construct its positions on the *gal-tan* dimension. Rather, Blair argues for European integration from a pragmatic perspective: the EU is shown to be a means of solving collective action problems. While Blair does occasionally cross into the *gal-tan* dimension with his discourse on the national interest, his discussion of British Euroscepticism is more firmly rooted in the language of the New Labour project itself, focusing as it does on the idea that Blair’s views were those of the future, and those of his opponents were of the past (see Fairclough 2000). The speech can be understood in the context of the model as one that seeks to promote European integration without engaging on the *gal-tan* dimension, seeking to contest the issue of EU institutional development away from the issue of identity. This is consistent with the expectations of the model, which suggests that incumbents prefer to contest European integration away from the *gal-tan* dimension.

#### *The construction of Blair’s speech in the press*

One of the most striking features of the coverage of this speech is the distribution of coverage among the newspapers studied. The speech received wide coverage in most of the pro-

European leaning quality newspapers, with the *Guardian*, *FT*, and *Independent* each publishing five or more articles discussing Blair's speech. Amongst the other quality newspapers, the *Telegraph* published two articles, and *Times* published three articles. However, among the mass-market newspapers, only the *Mail* offered any substantive coverage, with two articles, while the *Sun* published one, brief leading article. Significantly, the speech was unreported in the *Express* and in the generally pro-European *Mirror*. There is, therefore, a contrast between the relative importance placed on the speech by the *Guardian*, *FT*, and *Independent*, and in the mass-market newspapers. The speech was categorised as an important one by the government at the time: the 10 Downing Street website listed the speech as one of the 'major' speeches of 2006, and so it is surprising that the speech received only selective coverage in the press.<sup>3</sup> Although it is impossible within the scope of this study to give a full explanation as to why this is the case, this does example proves illustrative in a number of ways. In the context of postfunctionalist theory, the fact that this speech was not reported in several major newspapers highlights the difficulties outlined in Chapter 2 in conceptualising the politicisation and contestation of European integration through the study of political parties alone (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Although parties are seen as setting the public agenda, and thus driving the politicisation and contestation process, examples such as this illustrate the weakness of that model: where media simply do not report acts of political discourse making by politicians, contestation in the mass arena cannot occur, or at least do not occur in a broad and cross-cutting way. Instead, this example shows the speech making an impact on certain sections of the media — in this case the broadsheets and the vociferously anti-EU *Daily Mail* — while other sections ignored it.

Across the newspapers that covered the speech, a number of trends can be observed. In all cases, newspapers engaged in a substantial reframing of Blair's narrative. In three of the pro-European quality newspapers — the *Times*, *Independent*, and *FT* — the speech was framed as a valedictory admission of failure on the part of Blair. The elements of the speech that discussed the history of the UK's involvement in European integration, and the discussion offered by Blair of Euroscepticism in the UK, are emphasised over the elements of the speech that discuss the future of Europe. In the *Guardian*, the reporting reframes the speech in light of Blair's relationship with other European leaders, constructing him as being more 'at home' with right-wing than fellow centre-left politicians. Thus, the content of the speech is largely ignored and the narrative about Blair's left-right positioning is privileged above the content of the speech. In two of the more Eurosceptic publications, the *Mail* and the *Telegraph*, the

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<sup>3</sup> Archived versions of the 10 Downing Street website from the New Labour period were made available in the National Archives after the election of the coalition government in 2010 (see <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20070701080624/http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page8893.asp>).

speech is reframed around the issue of sovereignty, and the possibility of a revived Constitutional Treaty.

The *Times*, *Independent*, and *FT* all framed their coverage in such a way to focus on the reflective aspects of Blair's speech and placed less emphasis on the main message of the speech. For example, the *Independent* led on this a domestic angle, framing Blair's speech as one 'conceding that he will not achieve the sea change in British public attitudes to the EU' that he had set out to achieve (2 February 2006). In addition, the *Independent* discussed Blair's reference to Eurosceptic newspapers, and reframes this to suggest that Blair identified the press as the cause for his 'lack of success changing public opinion' (2 February 2006). Also in the *Independent*, Steve Richards asks 'why has Tony Blair failed to convince the public of the benefits of Europe?' (Richards, *Independent*, 2 February 2006), framing Europe as an issue of domestic party politics, and focussing on Blair's personal frustration - quoting him that the 'dilemma of a British prime minister over Europe is acute to the point of being ridiculous'. This article has a secondary frame that reflects Blair's message that the EU presents an opportunity for the UK and for Blair personally, noting that Blair has 'remained engaged' with the EU and listed achievements including 'defence, asylum, [and] international crime'.

In his speech, Blair instead offers a developed and intellectually nuanced exploration of varieties of Euroscepticism, which is lost in the reporting. The focus of the reporting is on Blair's legacy and domestic British debates about Europe. Similarly, the *Times* adopted a frame that analysed Blair's speech in the context of his legacy and prime minister, claiming that 'all he can do now is reflect on his record, and what might have been' (2 February 2006). The reporting of the speech is constructed in the context of an 'opportunity lost'. Much like the *Independent*, the *Times* offers a qualified endorsement for Blair's achievements in the EU, listing them as 'backing enlargement to the east; getting economic reform firmly established on the EU agenda; helping to shift the balance of the EU budget slowly (too slowly) away from farming; developing joint security and defence' (2 February 2006). However, the framing focusses on the claim that 'Blair has failed to resolve Britain's relations with the EU' and the associated impact on Blair's record as prime minister.

In the *Times* reporting on the day after the speech, the framing similarly focuses on the 'valedictory' nature of the speech, and the idea that Blair had performed a 'U-turn' by being critical of the EU's focus on institutional reform, and by adopting a 'Brownite' view of Europe that placed economics before politics (*Times*, 3 February 2006). This reporting does acknowledge the content of the speech in more detail, however. For instance, it characterises

the speech as ‘painting an optimistic future for Europe and Britain's part in it’ and quotes extensively from the text of the speech (*Times*, 3 February 2006). This preserves more of the original message and framing of the speech than the reporting in either the *Guardian* or *Independent*, for example. The *FT* followed a similar framing pattern, characterising Blair’s speech as ‘valedictory optimism’ and as having a ‘fin de regime feel’: Blair is described as ‘a prime minister whose days are numbered’ (3 February 2006). In common with the *Independent* and *Times*, the *FT* coverage is also framed in terms of the claimed failures of Blair’s European policy, which ‘has ducked its two biggest challenges’ (3 February 2006). The *FT* characterises the speech itself as ‘one of those failures’, noting that ‘Mr Blair has made a big speech on Europe every six months or so’, ‘then nothing much happens’ (3 February 2006). However, the *FT* is the most sympathetic towards Blair, in this instance, of the newspapers analysed. The *FT*’s analysis of the speech acknowledges Blair’s arguments in regard to the UK’s potential leadership role in the EU: ‘the prime minister was right to say the terms of intellectual debate in Europe have moved decisively in Britain's favour’ (3 February 2006).

In contrast, the framing of reporting in the *Telegraph* and the *Mail* concentrates on the Constitutional Treaty and the likelihood of its revival. The *Telegraph*’s main leader column on the speech is framed in terms of the Constitutional Treaty, arguing that Blair had signalled its possible revival (3 February 2006). As a secondary frame, this reporting also shares the emphasis on the valedictory nature of the speech. Blair is characterised as showing ‘candour’ and ‘looking back on his eight years’ as prime minister. The *Telegraph* devotes far more space to emphasising the ‘remarkably different’ tone of Blair’s speech, and the ways in which Blair is, according to this construction, said to have ‘changed his mind’ on the EU. This ignores the elements of Blair’s speech that focus on a positive agenda for the EU, and places far more emphasis on the criticisms made by Blair of the emphasis of European reforms. In the *Mail*, this emphasis on the Constitutional Treaty is readily apparent, with the headline of Benedict Brogan’s article on the topic: ‘EU Constitution is not dead, says Blair’ (Brogan, *Mail*, 3 February 2006). This article demonstrates much of the framing found in *tan*-leaning discourses discussed in the previous chapter. Brogan accuses Tony Blair of ‘trying to rewrite the discredited blueprint for a federal Europe’, framing the article in terms of sovereignty and Blair’s own credibility (Brogan, *Mail*, 3 February 2006). Blair is constructed as having ‘admitted’ that the Constitutional Treaty ‘will have to be revived’ and as having ‘conceded the debate about the constitution is not over’ (Brogan, *Mail*, 3 February 2006). This suggests a mendaciousness on the part of Tony Blair that fits with the *Mail*’s overall discourse on the trustworthiness of Blair in regard to Europe (see Chapter 5). Notably, the *Mail* dedicates far more of its report to quoting Eurosceptic responses to the speech, quoting William Hague.

The article concludes by raising the EU budget, negotiated in 2005, claiming that it was ‘victory’ for France ‘at the expense of the British rebate’, thus reframing Blair’s speech in terms of political conflict between EU member states (Brogan, *Mail*, 3 February 2006). In the case of both the *Mail* and the *Telegraph*, a re-framing of the speech has undertaken to concentrate on the claimed implications for national sovereignty. By emphasising Blair’s comments on the Constitutional Treaty, they are able to construct links to a *tan-ish* discourse that opposes the treaty.

Three phenomena seem to be significant from the reporting of this speech. First, that the speech was only selectively reported in the press, suggesting that politicians who attempt to engage in the mass arena — even prime ministers — may find it difficult to have their discourses heard. Second, much of the reporting fit the speech within a narrative designed by the press to emphasise the more reflective elements of the speech over all else. While Blair did spend time reflecting on the past, this is not representative of the content of the speech overall. Finally, the expectation that Eurosceptic newspapers would seek to set reframe the speech in *tan-ish* terms was partially met. In both the *Mail* and *Telegraph*, the speech is framed by a discourse on sovereignty and the nation that does not reflect Blair’s framing and message. This result suggests that pro-European politicians may have difficulty in setting the agenda on their own terms, since the Eurosceptic media are likely to reframe their discourses in order to emphasise issues such as identity and sovereignty.

### **6.3 Michael Howard’s speech in Bristol, 2004**

The third case study is that of a speech given by Michael Howard as leader of the Conservative Party on 7th June 2004, three days before that year’s European Parliament election (Howard 2004). This speech represents Howard’s most complete statement on Europe during his time as Conservative leader, a topic which he largely avoided at the 2005 general election, as the previous chapter discussed. In this speech, Howard opposes further integration within the European Union, and draws upon nationalist discourses. In particular, Howard emphasises the nation state and seeks to use the idea of national identity and the national interest to mobilise opposition to the EU. However, Howard also calls for an alternative, ‘British’ vision for the future of the EU, centred around the sovereignty of Member States.

Following William Hague’s strongly Eurosceptic policies as leader of the Conservative Party from 1997-2001, subsequent leaders, and Howard in particular, had adopted a less overtly

Eurosceptic line (Crowson 2006). This strategy was, in part, designed to counter claims that the Conservatives were ‘obsessed’ with Europe, or that the party was divided over European policy. The speech, coming as it did during the European Parliament election, was made at a time of relatively high contestation of the EU, and so we would expect correspondingly high media interest in Howard’s message. Despite the relatively low priority assigned to the EU in Howard’s leadership, the speech offers a relatively straightforward Eurosceptical and *tan* construction of the EU. This speech therefore offers a case of a speech by a party leader attempting to politicise anti-EU sentiment at an election through deploying a *tan* discourse. The Conservatives at this time were an opposition party seeking to mobilise votes, and competing against the incumbent, pro-European, centre-left Labour Party. In the postfunctionalist model, the Conservatives can be interpreted as occupying a position closer to UKIP (which can be seen as a classic political entrepreneur), than to Labour.

The framing of the speech demonstrates some of the same characteristics as the Eurosceptic *tan*-ish press discourses discussed in the previous chapter. The speech begins by offering a construction of the relationship between the UK and EU which asserts the primacy of the nation state as a form of governance, and which constructs the EU as an external entity engaged in a process of removing powers from the British state. Howard begins this by asserting that the ‘institution which can best provide that sense of ownership and solidarity is the nation state’, and that without ‘a strong and independent state’, ‘no modern democracy is possible’. Howard asserts that the key to this legitimacy of the nation state is its position as a focus for national identity. The nation ‘is what binds people together’, and what ‘gives people a sense of identity’: Howard argues that these are the main reasons why he is ‘so hostile to proposals which would transfer more power from Britain to the European Union’. In particular, Howard uses this speech to oppose the European Constitution, which he constructs as a threat to the status of the nation state, as it ‘would mean transferring substantial new powers from the nation state of Europe to the European Union’. The language of the national interest also plays a part in this speech. For instance, Howard accuses Labour of having ‘totally failed to stand up for British interest’ and that Tony Blair had falsely claimed that ‘he’ll stand up for Britain’s interests’. Fundamentally, Howard sees this as part of a wider plan to remove the nation state from the institutional architecture of Europe and would mean ‘more power for Europe, less power for Britain’. He argues that ‘Labour’s Minister for Europe went to Brussels and signed up to a blueprint for a European state’ and that the Constitution would mean the creation of ‘a nation called Europe’, since ‘countries have constitutions’. This ‘country called Europe’ would have the attributes of a nation state: ‘the EU will have a President and a Foreign Minister to set policy’, and ‘new powers to make treaties with other

countries'. The nation is, therefore, one of the key frames adopted by Howard, and the speech seeks to construct the British nation as threatened by European integration.

The second key frame in the speech is sovereignty. Howard constructs a vision of the implications of the 'transfer' of sovereignty to the EU for Britain. For instance, he asserts that 'Europe would be able to tell Britain how to run our police and courts', and 'how to deal with terrorists', and that 'it would give the EU and European Court the power to make new laws about how British businesses are run'. The consequences of this are argued to be significant: for example, Howard argues that 'they will lead to yet more burdens on business' and that changes would be made that 'British politicians would be powerless to stop'. In this construction, the pooling of competencies is a zero-sum game, and the EU is an external actor which can govern Britain from above. Rather than participating in a collective decision making process, the EU is constructed as a source of regulation and legislation over which Britain has no control. Howard argues, for instance, that measures would be 'imposed upon us by the majority vote of other countries in Brussels' rather than decided 'here, in Britain'. In opposing this, he also invokes the concept of personal freedom - 'we want to control our lives, here in Britain' - and of democracy, constructing the negotiation process for the Constitution as being 'railroaded into handing over yet more power to Brussels'.

Despite this, Howard offers a message that constructs the possibility of a different approach to European integration. Howard asserts that 'Britain should put forward an alternative vision for Europe', in order for it to 'counter the federalist vision'. This approach, Howard claims would 'safeguard jobs and prosperity' and 'create a more flexible Europe'. Again, this vision privileges the nation state: Howard argues that 'taking back powers from Europe that would be better exercised at a national level here in Britain' should be the primary objective of his vision. This, he argues, will ensure that national governments cannot 'be more easily forced into doing things against their will', and this will 'succeed in building a successful and durable partnership among European nations', echoing De Gaulle's vision of a *Europe des patries*.

#### *The construction of Howard's speech in the press*

Howard's speech received coverage in all the newspapers studied, although the level of coverage varied significantly. The speech was the subject of only a short summary article in the *Mirror*, and in the *Sun* was reported in a single paragraph in the context of an article discussing the final days of campaigning in the European Parliament election, rather than separately as in the rest of the newspapers. Elsewhere, the other newspapers studied all ran

more than one article covering the speech, with five in the *Independent*, and four in the *Times*. This is a somewhat striking variation in coverage: while the *Mirror* devotes relatively little space to European issues, we would expect the *Sun*, with its strongly Eurosceptic editorial line, to devote more attention to the speech. As with Tony Blair's 2006 speech, this demonstrates that even *tan*-leaning politicians can fail to make an impact even in newspapers (such as the *Sun*) that are of a similar position on the *gal-tan* and Euroscepticism axes. This supports the conclusion that the ability of politicians to influence the mass-mediated public debate is constrained by the role of the media as gatekeepers.

The framing of the reporting of the speech is notable in two respects. Firstly, there is a remarkable consistency between the newspapers, with two frames being dominant in the reporting. These frames constructed Howard's message as part of a conflict within the Conservative Party, and secondly, in the light of electoral competition with UKIP. Only the *Mail* presented a positive account of the speech that reflected Howard's own message and framing. In an editorial, the *Mail* constructed a message that mirrored Howard's, arguing that the proposed Constitutional Treaty would 'hand over enormous powers to EU bureaucrats, including the right to set out policies on issues ranging from criminal justice to foreign policy' (8 June 2004). The editorial frames the EU in similar terms to Howard, arguing that 'the country is best served by a flexible, pragmatic approach' and that the basis of the EU ought to be 'that markets, not sovereignty, should be shared', and Howard's message is approvingly constructed as 'the only realistic vision for Europe'. In the case of the *Mail*, it can be argued that Howard has succeeded in setting the agenda, although, as the previous chapter showed, this is an agenda to which the *Mail* is highly favourable.

In the case of the other newspapers studied, there is evidence of a considerable reframing of Howard's message, however. The quality newspapers - the *Guardian*, *Independent*, *FT*, *Times*, and *Telegraph* - all reported the speech framed by the internal conflict within the Conservative Party on the EU, constructing an account of Howard's speech in the context of disagreements within the party, and the 'divisive' nature of the EU. This discourse emphasised the conflict within the Conservative Party, framing Howard as at the centre of a 'battle' over the EU within his party. For example, the *Guardian's* leading article on the speech opened with the image that 'the Conservative truce over Europe shattered' (8 June 2004). The *Independent* constructed the Conservative Party campaign as 'in disarray last night as its dormant divisions over Europe erupted in public again', and characterised Howard's speech as an 'attempt to steady Tory nerves' (8 June 2004). The *FT* also framed its main article on the speech with the construction of the Conservatives as a party divided, with the article leading on comments by Roger Helmer, then a Conservative MEP, that the Conservatives should



adopt withdrawal from the EU as party policy (*FT*, 8 June 2004). Similarly, the *Times* led with comments from pro-EU Conservative MPs, characterising Howard as under ‘pressure’, and his speech of having ‘provoked’ an ‘attack from within the party’ (8 June 2004). The *Telegraph* reported that ‘the Tory truce on Europe was under increasing strain’ and characterises Howard as struggling to ‘position himself at the centre between what he says are two extremes’ (8 June 2004). All the newspapers using this frame also constructed Howard as part of the history of Conservative Party divisions over the EU; indeed, all with the exception of the *FT* mentioned Margaret Thatcher as part of this. For example, the *Guardian* claimed that Howard ‘invoked the memory of Margaret Thatcher’ (8 June 2004), the *Independent* constructed Howard as ‘recalling how Margaret Thatcher fought Britain’s corner in Europe’ and of citing ‘Baroness Thatcher’s campaign to win a rebate’ (Grice, *Independent*, 8 June 2004). The *Times* constructs Howard as having ‘invoked the spirit of Margaret Thatcher’ (8 June 2004), and the *Telegraph* described Howard as having ‘invoked Margaret Thatcher’s battle to secure the rebate on Britain’s annual contribution to the EU’ (8 June 2004).

The second major frame found within the reporting was that of electoral competition. This is perhaps to be expected given the timing of the speech, although the prevalence of this frame in combination with the ‘division’ frame is notable as together these two frames dominated the coverage of the speech. All the newspapers reported the speech in this context, and the electoral frame frequently appeared alongside the division frame to constitute the primary structuring narratives of the articles. In most of the newspapers, particular emphasis was given to the electoral fortunes of UKIP compared to the Conservatives, and the consequent implications for Howard’s position on the EU. For example, the *Independent* constructed Howard’s speech as ‘an attempt by Mr Howard to stem an apparent haemorrhage of Tory support to UKIP’ (8 June 2004), and the Conservative campaign as having been ‘derailed’ by ‘the unexpectedly strong showing in the opinion polls by UKIP’ (Grice and Woolf, *Independent*, 8 June 2004). In the *Express*, the speech was characterised as an ‘eleventh hour appeal to Eurosceptic voters’, and the speech is positioned as an attempt to shore up support as ‘the UK Independence Party is set to snatch a quarter of Tory supporters in this week’s European elections’ (*Express*, 8 June 2004). The *Times* noted that Howard ‘made no mention’ of UKIP in his speech, but characterises him as being under ‘pressure’ and for ‘failing to tackle the threat of the UK Independence Party’ (*Times*, 8 June 2004). Similarly, the *Telegraph*’s leader article on the speech argued that Howard had already begun ‘making excuses for what is likely to be a humiliating European election performance’ (8 June 2004).

The *Express* constructs Howard as needing to ‘win back his grassroots supporters’, while also being ‘criticised’ by ‘senior Tory MPs’ (Walker, *Express*, 8 June 2004). In its leader article on

the speech, the *Express* constructs this division as being responsible for the Conservatives electoral performance. This discourse claims that Howard had ‘been pussyfooting instead of giving a clear lead’ due to the ‘differences in his party over the EU’, and that this meant that the Conservatives had ‘underestimated people’s hatred and suspicion of the EU’ (*Express*, 8 June 2004). This is a rather different use of this frame than that in the other newspapers; the *Express* connects the idea of division in the Conservative Party to what it sees weakness and a failure on the part of Michael Howard to be sufficiently Eurosceptic. In the *FT*, Philip Stephens frames the speech as being in reaction to ‘the assumed advance of UKIP’, which had ‘exposed the essential fraudulence of the Conservative prospectus’ (Stephens, *FT*, 8 June 2004). Notably, this is one of the few articles to engage meaningfully with Howard’s own narrative, contesting his position on Europe by constructing it as meaning that it ‘shows he learnt nothing from the pitiful isolation of John Major’s government’; his argument for selective engagement in further integration is constructed as being damaging for the national interest, coming ‘at the cost of a permanent existence on the margins of influence’ (Stephens, *FT*, 8 June 2004). This is significant, as many of the reports of Howard’s speech contain relatively little reporting of Howard’s own narrative, instead focusing on the apparent divisions within the Conservative Party, and the electoral context of the speech, made in the face of favourable polling for UKIP.

In the case of both major frames, they represent a major departure from the way that we can assume Howard intended his message to be received. The use of the frame of division within the Conservative Party by a broad cross-section of newspapers suggests that where other highly salient features of a speech, either in its content or context, are prioritised over the way in which the speech is framed, the message can be substantially re-interpreted by the media. Howard’s speech represents an attempt to mobilise support for his party during an election campaign where UKIP can be seen in the postfunctionalist model as an ‘entrepreneurial party’, mobilising support with nationalist discourses, and attracting some of the eurosceptic supporters previously won by the Conservatives (Ford and Goodwin 2014). While this speech might be interpreted as a ‘middle way’ between the positions of UKIP and Labour, the way that the speech was reported means that this message was largely lost in its transmission to the wider public. Howard clearly engages in *tan*-ish discourses centred on sovereignty and the primacy of the nation, however these are presented by the media in the context of divisions within the Conservative Party, and electoral competition from UKIP. Only in a few instances, particularly in the *Mail*, is the original framing of Howard’s speech reflected in the reporting.

Indeed, the reporting appears to construct Howard’s speech almost exclusively in the context of pre-existing narratives, framing it as a symptom of division within the Conservative Party

and as a reaction to the success of UKIP. Thus, Howard's message and framing is mediated in a way that fundamentally alters the original meaning of the speech and which, for the most part, primes the reader to think about the difficult electoral position of the Conservatives. This has important implications for understanding how contestation in the mass arena occurs. This case study provides evidence that where media actors hold the salience of other factors (in this case, internal party politics and electoral dynamics) to be greater than the salience of the content of party discourses on European integration, then the content of discourses will receive less exposure, and thus be transmitted less effectively into the mass arena. Despite engaging in a *tan*-ish discourse that was substantively similar to the discourses favoured by a number of Eurosceptic newspapers, only one of those newspapers - the *Daily Mail* - reported the speech in favourable terms that reflected Howard's own framing and message. This suggests that even in the case of a *tan*-leaning party actor speaking to a *tan*-leaning media, the impact of acts of discourse can be constrained by the agency of the media.

#### **6.4 William Hague's 'foreign land' speech, March 2001**

The fourth speech to be examined was made by William Hague, to the Conservative Party Conference in Harrogate, on 5 March 2001. Hague's speech is notable for this thesis because it engaged directly with issues located on the *tan* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension, and set out Hague's policy towards the EU and membership of the Euro. The speech was framed in terms of 'the determination to fight for freedom and democracy' (Hague 2001). While the speech discussed a number of topics that Hague associated with a second-term Labour government, the speech is particularly significant for its focus on Europe and British identity (Johnson 2002, 170). Made in the run-up to the 2001 general election, the speech perhaps the clearest exposition of Hague's position on the EU, and set the tone for the forthcoming Conservative Party general election campaign. Although the speech was not made during the election campaign itself, it was made at a time of relatively high contestation of European integration, as Labour promised to hold a referendum on British membership of the Euro should they win a second term in office.

This speech has become known as Hague's 'foreign land' speech, after the organising message of the speech, which promised 'let me take you on a journey to a foreign land' (Hague 2001). The 'foreign land' to which Hague referred was one 'in which Brussels controlled the economy' and in which 'people were welfare dependent, in which bureaucracy had increased and competition was a dirty word' (Johnson 2002, 169). In this speech, Hague constructs a discourse focussed on constructing his Labour opponents as a threat to the

fundamental character of the UK and to British identity. Hague frames the speech in his 'resolve to protect our national independence' and to 'speak the truth in an age of spin and political correctness'. This narrative combines a defence of the nation of the sort associated with *tan* discourses, along with a concern about individual sovereignty and the right of individuals to act with a maximum amount of freedom. For example, Hague promised that a future Conservative government would 'go further than any government has ever gone before to hand back to individuals and families the ability to shape their own lives'. This forms part of a right-wing and *tan*-ish discourse that incorporates commentary on numerous issues including education, health, schools, and policing, as well as the EU and European integration. The speech therefore offers an example of a strongly-*tan* discourse aimed at politicising a proposed reform - British membership of the euro - and at a time of relatively high intensive political conflict on European integration generally. This offers an important test of the assumptions of the model.

Hague's framing of Europe in this speech is characterised by a strong emphasis on British national identity and the construction of the importance of Britishness. Indeed, the terms 'British' or 'Britishness' are used in the speech 25 times. Hague establishes the historical continuity of his construction of Britishness by invoking the historical memory of prominent (Conservative) leaders, and the 'values that have shaped our past' and 'must also guide our future', including William Wilberforce, William Pitt, John Burke, Lord Shaftesbury, Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher, and John Major, situating what he calls 'Tory values' and 'Tory history' as the context for his claim to 'fight for freedom and democracy'. In doing so, he constructs these values — national independence, freedom, democracy, and speaking the 'truth' — as British, claiming that his would be 'a Conservative Government that speaks with the voice of the British people'. This is built into a narrative of history that constructs the UK as the foremost defender of these values ('no country has contributed as we have to the freedom of mankind'), and which attributes these claimed achievements of the UK - free trade, law, freedom - as 'our achievements as a sovereign and united country'.

Associated with this discourse on Britishness is a framing of national sovereignty that closely associates it with national identity. Sovereignty is constructed as a necessary condition for 'Britishness' and the upholding of 'British values'. The speech constructs the EU, and the euro in particular, as a threat to Britishness and to the British nation. Hague builds a rhetorical construction of the EU that emphasises the claimed implications for sovereignty and democracy. Much of this is built around a discourse that commits Hague to opposing British membership of the euro and participation in further integration. Hague argues that the forthcoming general election would be 'your last chance to vote for a Britain that still controls

its own destiny': developments in European integration are constructed as being antithetical to this; 'they will ratify the Nice Treaty', 'establish a European constitution and the start of an EU legal system', and 'they'll agree to the European Army'.<sup>4</sup> For Hague, these developments represent a mortal threat to parliamentary sovereignty, with the powers of the UK Parliament 'parcelled out in every direction outwards to Brussels'. Hague asserts that Tony Blair would 'give up the first and greatest of Parliament's prerogatives...the right to control revenue', and constructs a vision of the 'Chancellor returning from Brussels carrying instructions to raise taxes still further', which would mean 'control over our own economy given away'. The EU is thus constructed as an emerging state, one which would replace the nation as the primary unit of governance.

This dual framing is exemplified with the contrast that Hague draws between his own Conservative Party and the Labour Party. Labour is constructed as anti-British, 'a government that holds Britishness cheap', and as an enemy of British democracy: 'a Labour Government that scorns and despises the very Parliament to which they were elected'. In this, Hague accused Labour of ignoring the concerns of 'the people it governs':

Talk about Europe and they call you extreme. Talk about tax and they call you greedy.

Talk about crime and they call you reactionary. Talk about asylum and they call you racist. Talk about your nation and they call you Little Englanders (Hague 2001).

This passage demonstrates a clear link in Hague's speech between Europe and other issues associated with the *gal-tan* axis, such as crime and asylum. In reference to the *gal-tan* issues in the speech, Hague positions himself clearly on the *tan* pole. For instance, he complains about 'liberal sociologists' in reference to crime, and takes a stance which is strongly anti-immigration, referring to 'an international trade in asylum seekers', and he promises 'immediate deportation' for failed applicants for asylum.

A particular focus for the eurosceptic elements of this speech is its articulation of Hague's opposition to the Euro. Hague offers visions of the 'Royal Mint melting down pound coins as the euro notes start to circulate' and 'our currency gone forever' in the event of Euro membership (implying that the Euro would not be 'our' or British currency if it were adopted, but something external or foreign). As part of this discourse on the Euro, Hague makes a direct appeal to nationalist sentiment, appealing to 'everyone who believes in our country' to support the Conservative Party, because 'this election is your last chance to keep the Pound'. This rhetoric on the Euro is situated in a discourse which juxtaposes sovereignty and democracy as two sides of the same coin. Membership of the Euro is argued by Hague to be

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<sup>4</sup> 'They' referring to Labour in this context.

part of a wider programme of integration, meaning that ‘taxes and defence policy and even criminal justice’ would be ‘run from Brussels’, leading Hague to ask ‘what would be the point of holding elections here?’. At the same time, Hague constructs this agenda as being part of a wider anti-democratic tendency among the EU and its supporters in the UK. For instance, he asserts that after the next election, ‘Tony Blair would force this country into the euro’. Any referendum on membership, according to Hague, would be liable to be ‘rigged’ as Tony Blair would ‘set the terms of the referendum, ‘decide when to hold it’ and ‘draft the question’. As the previous chapter showed, this rhetoric later found expression in several newspapers during the 2001 general election campaign.

Hague’s speech offers a clearly *tan*-oriented eurosceptic discourse, focused around the key frames of sovereignty and national identity, therefore. In the postfunctionalist framework, the speech can be seen as an attempt to set the agenda and push European integration, and the Euro in particular, into the mass arena. Hague’s discourses on the nation and Britishness seek to politicise these issues and draw connections with the EU, engaging contestation on the *gal-tan* dimension. This fits the model particularly well since this speech was made at a time of electoral conflict, and in the context of mooted UK membership of the single currency. Attempting to gain an competitive and electoral advantage over the incumbent, pro-European Labour Party, Hague and the Conservatives therefore appear to be a clear example of a political entrepreneur in the postfunctionalist model.

#### *The construction of Hague’s speech in the press*

Of all the speeches analysed in the present chapter, Hague’s speech received the most coverage, being mentioned in 73 articles in the two weeks following its delivery (see figure 6.1). This suggests a significant impact. While all newspapers dedicated at least three articles to reporting the speech, the *Guardian*, *Telegraph*, *FT*, and *Times* each covered it in greater detail. Three features are particularly notable in the content of the coverage of Hague’s speech. Firstly, much of the reporting and editorial discussion of the speech occurs on the terms set by Hague, focussing on the *gal-tan* axis and the concepts of the nation and Britishness in particular. Secondly, several of the newspapers placed an emphasis on the sections of Hague’s speech that dealt with immigration, rather than those which discussed European integration. Thirdly, the critical tone of much of the coverage is highly salient. Hague is accused of tapping into a strand of nationalism with xenophobic connotations by a number of newspapers that were generally sympathetic to his *tan*-ish message on Europe.

The speech had a polarising effect in the press. Only two newspapers gave a generally positive editorial response to the speech; the *Mail* and the *Telegraph*. Notably, the other generally Eurosceptic and *tan*-leaning newspapers exhibited a much more negative editorial reaction. Most notably, the *Sun*, despite being characterised by the generally *tan*-ish rhetoric analysed in the previous Chapter, reacted unfavourably to the speech, and ran an editorial on the day following the speech which declared that it would support Labour at the next general election. Similarly, the *Express* ran a leader column that condemned the speech. The remaining newspapers also reacted negatively to the speech: while this might be expected for particularly pro-European newspapers such as the *Guardian* and *Independent*, it is notable that the *Mirror*, *FT*, and *Times* all ran editorial or leader articles that were highly critical of the speech.

The two newspapers that offered a favourable reaction to Hague's speech — the *Mail* and the *Telegraph* — are also the two newspapers that were found to be most consistently Eurosceptic in the discourses studied in Chapter 5. In both newspapers, Hague's own framing of the EU is reproduced, with the reporting constructing *tan* narratives about the EU and focusing on the twin pillars of Hague's narrative on the EU: Britishness and sovereignty. The *Telegraph's* main article reporting on the speech echoed Hague's central framing, appearing under the headline 'Hague's pledge to preserve Britishness' (Jones, *Telegraph*, 5 March 2001). The article characterises Hague's speech as 'putting measures to curb asylum seekers and preserve Britain's sovereignty as an independent nation' at the centre of the Conservative campaign. Although the article acknowledges claims that the speech would be labelled as 'racist', the framing of the *Telegraph's* reporting constructs Hague as making 'an appeal to national pride' and as 'being prepared to speak up for the "mainstream majority" of people' (Jones, *Telegraph*, 5 March 2001). Hague's framing of the EU is reproduced, with the article arguing that a Labour electoral victory 'would mean so much power being handed to Brussels that Britain would lose its sovereignty, its independence and its power to control its own destiny' (Jones, *Telegraph*, 5 March 2001). This was reflected in the *Mail*, which framed its main report on the speech with Hague's claims on sovereignty, arguing that 'that the next general election could be the last time British people freely choose their own government' (5 March 2001). This echoes Hague in constructing an image of the EU as a threat to Britishness, reproducing Hague's claims and describing 'Britain's sovereignty handed over to the eurocrats' (*Mail*, 5 March 2001).

Directly addressing the issue of Britishness in an editorial, the *Telegraph* constructed Hague's speech as demonstrating his 'patriotic credentials', and reflects Hague's characterising of Britishness as being rooted in institutions, arguing that 'it is difficult to define Britishness...

wholly in terms of abstract precepts' (5 March 2001). It also reflects Hague's claim that Labour held the British people in poor regard, arguing that 'ministers will find it hard to shake off Mr Hague's central charge, namely that they feel embarrassed about the gut instincts of those they represent' (*Telegraph*, 5 March 2001). Similarly, in an editorial on 12 March, the *Telegraph* argues that 'William Hague was right to say that Britain under Labour is becoming a foreign land', constructing a strongly nationalist and authoritarian vision of the UK. This connects a defence of national sovereignty, arguing that 'Parliament's powers have been parcelled out in every direction', with *tan-ish* concerns about 'politically correct nostrums about women on the front line' and 'homosexual soldiers' (*Telegraph*, 12 March 2001). The *Mail's* editorial comment on the speech was more qualified, noting that Hague's claims about the UK becoming a 'foreign land' were 'exaggerated and deliberately so' (5 March 2001). Nevertheless, it constructs Hague's speech as highlighting 'the threat to the pound and, with it, our very existence as an independent sovereign nation'. Hague is instead characterised as being on the side of 'millions of decent, tolerant, and intelligent Britons' (*Mail*, 5 March 2001). Hague is thus constructed as speaking to a commonly-held set of national 'values', and as defending the national community - closely reflecting his own framing in the speech.

However, these positive reactions were exceptional. While Hague's framing of European integration on the *gal-tan* axis is preserved in the majority of reports, the reaction in the other seven newspapers studied was overwhelmingly negative and frequently sought to challenge Hague on his own terms. These articles focused on two narratives; one, which characterised Hague as appealing to xenophobic or racist undertones, and a second which characterised Hague as being disingenuous in order to win mobilise support. In the case of the first, many of the newspapers which reacted negatively to Hague's speech directly challenged his ideas on the nation and Britishness. In the mass-market newspapers that reacted negatively to Hague's speech, the *Mirror* exemplifies this framing, describing Hague's speech as having 'abandoned the centre ground... for the Far-Right Eurosceptic foreigner-bashing lunatic fringe' (5 March 2001). The *Mirror* constructs Hague as having 'wrapped himself in the Union flag' and 'railed against Brussels, asylum seekers, the European Rapid Reaction force, anything he thinks isn't quite English' (5 March 2001). Using 'English' and 'British' interchangeably, Hague is mocked; he 'pretends to speak for the people of Britain', but this is instead shown to be concerning, 'playing to the natural fears of the man in the street' (*Mirror*, 5 March 2001). Indeed the *Mirror* went as far as describing Hague's speech as 'Third Reich stuff', and as 'pandering to the basest instincts of voters - including racial hatred' (5 March 2001). In a leader column, the newspaper characterises Hague's speech as having 'conjured up' a vision of Britain as 'a land of racists and bigots, of hatred of foreigners' (5 March 2001). Britishness is explicitly defended by the *Mirror* in this account of the speech, and the article



constructs Hague as being unrepresentative of Britishness: 'the British people will never support such disgusting ideas' (5 March 2001). Thus the image of Hague as xenophobic is combined with a challenge to his discourse on Britishness.

Similarly, the *Express* noted that Hague had 'placed national identity at the heart of the general election', and noted that he used the word 'British' 25 times (Walker, *Express*, 5 March 2001). In contrast to the *Mirror*, the *Express* reflects some of the framing of Hague's speech, characterising Hague's message as being that 'a second-term Labour administration would see the end of Britain as an independent sovereign nation' (Walker, *Express*, 5 March 2001). However, this is qualified as 'highly controversial', while the reporting suggests that Hague had to 'deny' having played 'a pre-election race card' (Walker, *Express*, 5 March 2001). John Kampfner notes that while Hague 'denies any racist intent', and sought to make 'an appeal to national pride', the speech could be interpreted as 'using coded language to play on people's fears that they might be swamped by an alien culture' (Kampfner, *Express*, 5 March 2001). This framing is repeated in the *Sun*, which in a leading article constructs Hague as 'imprudent', and having 'risked being called an extremist by banging on about immigration' (7 March 2001). In the *Sun* in particular, the elements of the speech discussing asylum are emphasised over the message on the EU and euro. For example Hague is shown to be engaging in a narrowly nationalist, anti-immigrant, discourse; his speech is shown to 'flirt with extremism', which is described as 'clever and 'coded' (7 March 2001). This is constructed as having 'left a nasty taste in the mouth', since the *Sun* positions itself as having 'doubts about those [politicians] who are prepared to be portrayed as anti-foreign' (7 March 2001). The following day, the *Sun* published an editorial declaring that it would support the Labour Party at the next election. This editorial constructs the Harrogate speech as 'a huge error' and 'a speech that has killed his election hopes'; the speech is characterised as 'Hague's asylum seekers speech' that contained 'a tone of desperation' (8 March 2001).

Notably, the *Sun* contains some dissenting voices to the overall editorial tone of the newspaper, which characterised Hague's speech as 'desperate'. For instance, political editor Trevor Kavanagh characterises Hague as being 'probably right' that 'a silent majority is fed up with the way Tony Blair is carving up the United Kingdom' (Kavanagh, *Sun*, 7 March 2001). This echoes the nationalist framing that Hague adopted, in that it positions Labour as a threat to the nation. Kavanagh also asserts that 'he is neither racist nor a Little Englander'; instead, Hague is characterised as hapless, and having failed to 'think things through' (7 March 2001). Richard Littlejohn offered greater focus on the Eurosceptic elements of Hague's speech, reflecting Hague's framing with his claim that 'Blair's ambitions in Europe are a deliberate affront to the vast majority of people in Britain', and arguing that Blair would try to

‘railroad us into the euro’ (Littlejohn, *Sun*, 13 March 2001). However, Littlejohn frames Hague as ‘fighting a losing battle’ against his colleagues, and the speech as coming amid ‘an orgy of pathetic personal bickering and exhibitionism’ (Littlejohn, *Sun*, 13 March 2001).

The framing of Hague as exploiting unsavoury nationalist sentiments was reflected in the quality newspapers that reported the speech unfavourably. These newspapers, in common with the mass-market newspapers discussed above, challenged Hague’s narrative directly. The quality newspapers also devoted more attention to the elements of the speech covering the EU. For instance, the *Independent* framed the speech as an attempt to ‘make asylum and Europe key issues at the forthcoming general election’, and as having ‘provoked allegation that he was a racist “Little Englander”’ (5 March 2001). Similarly, the *FT* characterised the speech as a ‘high-risk strategy of trying to spark controversy over asylum and Europe in order to win back voters who have deserted the Conservatives’ (*FT*, 5 March 2001). The *Independent* characterised Hague as having ‘wrapped himself in the flag’, and the speech is constructed as having ‘provoked allegations that he was a racist “Little Englander”’ (5 March 2001). The use of the words ‘foreign land’ is argued to be ‘a careful and deliberate attempt to touch a nerve for voters worried about asylum-seekers’, and an attempt by Hague to ‘play the asylum card’, and construct a populist nationalist rhetoric (5 March 2001).

The contestation of Hague’s narrative on Britishness was a key part of the reporting of the speech in the quality newspapers. The *Times* characterised Hague’s speech in an editorial as an attempt to ‘link the euro, asylum-seekers, constitutional reform and political correctness as a defensive war against alien threats to the nation’ (6 March 2001). Hague is described as ‘narrowly nationalist’; this is juxtaposed with the attitudes of the British people, who are constructed as not being willing to ‘stampede to politicians’ who ‘seem to be playing the race card from the bottom of the deck’ (5 March 2001). Similarly, columnist Mary Sieghart offers a robust criticism of Hague, constructing him as ‘whipping up xenophobia against his better instincts’, repeating the framing found elsewhere that Hague was acting disingenuously in order to win support: he is characterised as knowing that ‘there is a seam of racism to be tapped in Britain’ (Sieghart, *Times*, 9 March 2001). Sieghart also contests Hague’s discourse of Britishness, arguing that ‘to accuse Labour of making Britain a foreign land is to deny the very principles of democracy’, that ‘parties with different views and ideologies can coexist in one country’. Instead, Britishness is constructed as inclusive and welcoming: ‘acceptance of other cultures is one of Britain’s great national traits’ (Sieghart, *Times*, 9 March 2001). In a *Guardian* leader column, Jonathan Glancey directly challenges Hague’s construction of Britishness, asking ‘hasn’t Britain always been a bit foreign?’ (Glancey, *Guardian*, 6 March 2001). Glancey constructs an inclusive account of national identity, arguing that ‘the British...

came from continental Europe', and positions 'Britain's genius' as being a capacity to 'absorb and ultimately nurture in its rough and ready way, foreigners of every creed, culture and colour' (Glancey, *Guardian*, 6 March 2001). Thus, Hague's rhetoric on Britishness is contested with a construction of the UK as 'a mixed race island governed largely from a capital founded by Italians' (Glancey, *Guardian*, 6 March 2001). Similarly, in the *Mail*, which took a generally more supportive editorial line on the speech, columnist Keith Waterhouse asked 'what's so wrong with being foreign?', deconstructing Hague's claim of a continuous British identity by asserting that national identity is ever-changing 'we make ourselves over more regularly than Manchester United changes its strip' (Waterhouse, *Mail*, 8 March 2001).

Elsewhere, the reporting also challenged Hague's discourse on other dimensions. For example, the *Guardian* characterises Hague's policy as an 'exit from the European Union into a state of permanent commercial and diplomatic friction with our neighbours', a policy that is juxtaposed with 'a more liberal-minded or internationally responsible set of policies' that the newspaper claims are necessary (*Guardian*, 5 March 2001). Elsewhere, Hague is framed as making 'grim warnings about how Tony Blair's enthusiasm for Europe would destroy Britain', and of issuing a 'chilling warning' (Watt, *Guardian*, 5 March 2001). Francis When mocked Hague's 'journey' motif by describing the 'nightmarish future' as one where 'the prison population is falling and Britain remains in Europe... so far so good' (When, *Guardian*, 7 March 2001). The *FT* also contested Hague's discourse on nationalism and European integration. In an editorial, it characterised Hague as turning the upcoming election 'into a crusade against the European Union', and juxtaposes the 'emotive language' used by Hague in his speech with the 'days when they called themselves the party of Europe' (5 March 2001). Hague's discourse is dismissed as 'a crude attempt to make political capital from the recent influx of asylum-seekers' (5 March 2001). Rather than a defence of the nation, the *FT* constructs Hague's vision of the nation as being incompatible with the national interest, since 'the UK's prosperity and security rest on its active engagement in the Union'; although 'membership of the EU is sometimes uncomfortable', the *FT* argues that Hague's speech offers only a 'vision of a little England safe from foreign interference' (5 March 2001).

This speech is notable in the way that it has been reported because it represents a deviation from the expectations we derive from the postfunctionalist framework. Whereas we expect Hague's message, situated firmly at the *tan*-pole of the *gal-tan* dimension, to be reflected in the Eurosceptic newspapers and reported with enthusiasm, this was not the case. Several of the newspapers which were found in the previous chapter to engage in *tan* discursive constructions were strongly critical of the speech. This criticism was also found, as was expected, in the pro-European press. However, despite the somewhat surprising nature of the

coverage in several of the Eurosceptic newspapers, Hague was able to dictate the axis of contestation in this case. The reporting largely engages with Hague on the *gal-tan* dimension, discussing and contesting his construction of the nation. This is significant, because while Hague was challenged and much of the reporting was negative, these findings suggest that in some circumstances, politicians are able to set the agenda, at least in terms of dimension along which European reforms are contested, if not in terms of the character and content of the ensuing debate.

### **6.5 Tony Blair's speech in Edinburgh, 2001**

Two months after William Hague's 'foreign land' speech, Tony Blair's address in Edinburgh, entitled 'Britain's role in Europe and the world of today', was one of Blair's most important speeches on European integration (Blair 2001). This speech, given on 25th May 2001, can be understood as Blair's reaction to the Conservative electoral focus on the euro and the EU, and was given during the 2001 general election campaign. This speech represents an important pro-European statement made during a period of high general contestation of the EU in the UK, as shown in the previous chapter. While the reaction to this speech was partially discussed previously, the discussion here, as in the rest of the present chapter, focusses on the ways in which press cover characterised Blair's statements in relation to the content of those statements: i.e. how the press coverage of Blair's speech framed and reframed his discourse on Europe.

This speech is significant because it engages with the issue of European integration and the nation directly. As such, it situates itself on the *gal-tan* axis in a way that the other pro-European speeches examined in the present chapter do not. The primary focus of this speech is to speak against 'isolationism or marginalisation in Europe', and to make the case that the UK should be 'an active, engaged partner' in the EU and in other international organisations. Blair is explicit in situating this case in a discourse that is about national identity, invoking ideas of patriotism, and arguing that failing to engage in the EU was 'the denial of our true national interest'. This locates Blair's speech very much in the same rhetorical field as that of Hague, discussed above, since the ideas of the nation, patriotism, and the national interest are deployed. However, this speech represents a case of the use of these ideas to support a pro-European discourse. Indeed, Blair deploys the idea of Britishness to argue that the conception of national identity centred around parliamentary sovereignty is old fashioned: 'to regard each pooling of sovereignty as a diminution of a national identity, is to retreat from modern reality', rather he argues that this sovereignty-based approach is 'for a nation, with such a

proud history as that of Britain' demonstrates 'a lack of self-confidence', while denying 'our true potential for leadership'.

Britishness is, in common with Hague, defined by a set of shared values, although Blair rejects the conservative account of Britishness: 'Britishness is not defined by clinging to the status quo'. Rather, it is defined 'by reference to our common purpose and sense of mutual belonging, born of shared values'. These are, according to Blair, centred around three core 'sets' of values. The first is 'freedom under the law', which Blair holds to include 'the protection of human rights and personal autonomy'. He constructs a vision of a 'pluralist democracy' at the heart of this set of values, offering a contrast to Hague's more traditional approach. The second set of values includes 'tolerance', along with 'openness', and 'an outward looking approach to the world', which includes a 'spirit of internationalism'. Blair uses the imagery often offered by accounts of British 'exceptionalism' to defend this internationalist position; for instance he refers to the UK as 'an island: a sea-faring country forever looking outward beyond our borders'. This reflects the narrative of the British as an 'island race', exceptional when compared to their continental neighbours, on account of the outlook conferred upon the British people by virtue of geography and a sea-faring heritage (see for example, Baker, Gamble and Seawright 2000, 410; Price 2006, 609). For Blair, this re-framed Britishness is located in a rich history of engagement in Europe. He argues that the UK 'has ancient European roots', from St Augustine, to Caesar, and that to deny this European history is to be narrow-minded: 'we are all products of that history, whether we like it or not'. Blair also talks about devolution and the strengthening of the union through a re-imagining of Britishness around 'our tradition of democratic self-government', rather than parliamentary sovereignty 'dominated by Westminster'. This offers a contrasting approach to that of Hague, and forms part of a wider rejection of traditional conceptions of Britishness centred around the concept of parliamentary sovereignty (Parekh 2000, 9).

For Blair, the framing of Britishness and identity are central to the delivery of his message. He argues that British values are a platform for a redefinition of what it is to be 'patriotic' and British: 'I believe a forward-looking modern patriotism can be built on them'. This provides the background to the primary message of the speech, which is to argue for a re-imagining of British engagement within the EU in the context of this re-framing of Britishness. At the core of this 'modern patriotism', Blair argues that there is a 'patriotic case for international engagement and against isolation'. This message seems clearly calibrated to oppose the discourses of opponents of the European Union. Blair frames this as moving from a 'domestic doctrine of community' to 'a doctrine of international community, based on enlightened self interest', a process that is argued to require the regaining of 'an inner-self confidence about

who are are' and also about 'what kind of country we want to be'. However, Blair is careful to qualify this by affirming that 'we will remain nation states', and that his vision is of 'Europe becoming a super-power, but not a super state'. The nation thus remains privileged in his discourse on integration, echoing the pattern of Eurosceptic discourses. Nor is this commitment to the EU held to exclude other alliances: Blair argues that 'we are stronger in Washington if we are seen to be leading in Europe'.

Blair also engages in a discourse about the national interest, framing engagement in the EU as 'a unique opportunity for influence and leadership... on questions vital to our national interests', and in doing so, re-frames what he calls 'true patriotism' as 'standing up for the British national interest first'. Thus, for Blair, patriotism means not defending parliamentary sovereignty as an arbitrary goal, but ensuring that 'we do not turn our back on Europe'. This creates an imperative to ensure Britain is not relegated 'to the sidelines of... Europe', since isolationism 'is not standing up for Britain'. This is also given an economic justification; Blair constructs the EU, as 'the key alliance... on which millions of British jobs depend and in which we do 60 percent of our trade'. At the core of Blair's argument is a recurring theme of 'British jobs and influence', and an imperative to 'increase our leverage on the global problems that face us'. This convergence of the idea of a new patriotism and emphasis on the nation interest can be seen in the conclusion of the speech, where Blair argues:

Far from standing up for Britain this Conservative Party would give up Britain's interests to its own divisions. That is not patriotism. It is folly. I will fight for Britain. Fight for the British economy. Fight for Britain's interests in Europe. Fight for Britain because it is right that Britain gets the best out of our membership of the EU (Blair 2001).

This speech therefore represents an instance of a politician attempting to directly contest the *tan*-ish discourses of an entrepreneurial political party — in this case, the Conservatives — through engaging in a discourse about national identity in relation to European integration. While this speech represents only one part of a wider 'logic of history' presented by New Labour (Daddow 2011), this speech is notable for its particular focus on the idea of the nation and the concept of patriotism, areas more readily associated with a *tan* discourse on Europe. Blair engages directly with the connection between European integration and national identity, contesting the ideas set out by Hague less than two months earlier.

*The construction of Blair's speech in the press*

The reporting of Blair's speech is notable for its focus on the contestation of Blair's key motif of patriotism, and by extension, the essence of national identity and the nation. In contrast with the reception to Hague's speech, the reaction to Blair's speech appears to divide along the lines of the general positions on European integration of the newspapers at the 2001 election (see Chapter 5). Significantly, those newspapers which sought to contest Blair's rhetoric on patriotism did so on the same terms, constructing a *tan*-ish discourse which sought to challenge Blair's inclusive narrative on patriotism, and reframe it in their own, nationalist and authoritarian terms. Notably, the speech generated a positive reaction in only one of the more Eurosceptic newspapers — the *Express* — while the reaction in the other generally Eurosceptic newspapers was uniformly negative, even in those newspapers which endorsed the Labour Party at the general election. Overall, Blair's framing around identity, Britishness, and the national interest is carried through, although his perspective on this is strongly contested in several of the newspapers. In the more pro-European press, Blair's message is reflected in the *Guardian*, *FT*, and *Mirror*, while the *Independent* largely focussed on the domestic electoral implications of the speech, and its place in the election campaign.

The framing in much of the Eurosceptic press reflected Blair's emphasis on patriotism and identity, while strongly contesting it. For example, the *Mail* reformulated Blair's discourse on sovereignty, co-operation, and patriotism. Blair's narrative on patriotism was reframed as 'bowing to Brussels is patriotic, insists Blair', and that Blair sought to 'raise the election temperature' by claiming that 'only Labour's policy of handing more of Britain's powers to Brussels is truly patriotic' (Eastham, *Mail*, 25 May 2001). The speech is characterised as 'provocative' and his construction of patriotism 'arrogant nonsense' (Eastham, *Mail*, 25 May 2001). In a subsequent article, the speech was re-framed as 'the clearest signal yet' that Blair would 'take Britain into the single currency'; this is constructed as being against the wishes of the British people — the article notes that '73 per cent of voters are opposed to ditching the pound' — and suggests an anti-democratic tendency, claiming that 'Gordon Brown would not be able to stop it' (*Mail*, 26 May 2001). Notably, when the article was framed in terms of euro membership, the elements of the speech on patriotism were largely left to speak for themselves. While the article extensively quotes Blair's narrative on patriotism, it does not contest it in the same way as above; rather, the article situates these quotations in the context of the election, arguing that 'Mr Blair was deliberately choosing to fight the Tories on their own battleground' (*Mail*, 26 May 2001). However, a subsequent editorial connected the euro and Blair's narrative on patriotism, framing it as a 'fact-free speech on Europe and 'patriotism''; it constructs the speech as a means for Blair to 'enable him... to claim he has a mandate for scrapping the pound and hustling Britain into the emerging European superstate' (28 May 2001). Thus, Blair's narrative on patriotism is reframed as part of an elite

‘plot’, led by Blair, to subvert democracy and national sovereignty through a strategy that is described as ‘as opportunistic as his speech was dishonest’ (28 May 2001).

These constructions and re-framings of Blair’s speech can be observed elsewhere. For example, the *Sun* reported on the day of the speech that it was expected to be ‘fiercely pro-Europe’, and suggests its scepticism by closing its report with an extensive quotation from Conservative Shadow Foreign Secretary Francis Maude: “[w]hat’s patriotic about axing the Pound, passing Parliament’s powers to Brussels and damaging our democracy?” (25 May 2001). Reporting after the speech, the *Sun* constructs the speech as a ‘desperate’ attempt to ‘defuse the euro as an explosive issue’, and reframes Blair’s narrative on patriotism to suggest the opposite meaning: ‘he’ll have to explain how it is patriotic to surrender control of the best economy for 30 years to unelected Brussels bureaucrats’ (26 May 2001). In the *Telegraph*, the speech was reported as part of a larger, front-page article under the headline ‘Parties draw battle lines over Europe’ (25 May 2001). This article frames Blair’s speech as being about membership of the euro, and echoes the Conservative Party’s discourse by claiming that Blair ‘gave his strongest indication yet that Labour wants to scrap the pound if it returns to power after June 7’ (25 May 2001). Notably, this article gives very little information about the speech, offering only a rather vague summary of Blair’s argument. Much like the *Sun*, the *Telegraph* provides extensive quotations from Francis Maude in this report; Blair’s speech is framed by a narrative that is centred on the Conservative agenda, and the claim (quoting Maude) that ‘a Tory victory would ensure that Britain was no longer taken down a “one-way street towards a European superstate”’ (*Telegraph*, 25 May 2001). In an editorial, the *Telegraph* also frames the speech as part of a ‘campaign to convert the British people to the merits of the euro’ (26 May 2001). This editorial challenges Blair’s narrative on patriotism, expressing a framing of patriotism centred on institutions and the symbols of nationhood:

The monarchy, our greatest universities, our legal and parliamentary system: these are the institutions that might spring to mind when looking for a definition. But institutions are anathema to Mr Blair. (*Telegraph*, 26 May 2001)

This construction of patriotism is striking, as it closely resembles the construction of British national identity espoused by the Conservative Party (see Lynch 2000). A second ‘electoral analysis’ article reinforces this editorial line, constructing Blair’s speech as ‘populist opportunism dressed as patriotism’ (26 May 2001). Here, Blair is constructed as a hypocrite and opportunist, and his 1983 election speeches and publicity material are used to substantiate



this claim.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere in the same issue, Benedict Brogan offers a much more neutral report, however. Brogan's account strongly contrasts with the editorial pieces on the speech, being framed as an attack on William Hague's European policy in which Blair's characterisation of the Conservatives as 'playing with fire' on the EU and their policy as a 'folly' is reproduced (Brogan, *Telegraph*, 26 May 2001). Notably, this article also did not introduce quotations or other discourse from other politicians. The contrast between these articles demonstrates that even in newspapers with strongly Eurosceptic editorial lines, reporting can vary significantly in tone, with relatively neutral reports of speechmaking appearing alongside reports that radically re-frame speeches or contest strongly their narratives.

A number of pro-European newspapers also reflected Blair's framing, but in a way that supported his message. For example, the *Mirror's* main report on the speech frames Blair as having 'declared Labour the party of true patriots', while the Conservatives are characterised as 'living in the past' (26 May 2001). Reflecting Blair's rhetoric, the EU is constructed as 'a strategic alliance on its doorstep where Britain does 60 per cent of its trade and on which millions of jobs depend'. The article also contrasts Blair's 'growing confidence' with Hague, who is characterised as having 'hardened his right-wing stance over Europe' (26 May 2001). Similarly, the *Guardian* echoes Blair, arguing that the speech represented an attempt to pick up the euro-gauntlet 'flung down by the Conservative election team' (25 May 2001). The *Guardian* contrasts Blair's "'patriotic case" for international partnership' against what is described as 'a wrecking Tory isolationism', describing Blair's policy as 'full engagement with the EU' (25 May 2001). Significantly, the main *Guardian* report on the speech quotes Blair extensively, reproducing the key elements of his speech (26 May 2001). Notably, this report did not give quotations from the Conservatives, focussing only on Blair's message, and constructing a highly positive portrayal of the speech which claims that 'Europe was not a problem' but rather 'it was an opportunity' (26 May 2001). In an editorial, the *Guardian* continues this tone, reflecting Blair's framing an arguments by portraying engagement in the EU as an opportunity, and constructing this as compatible with national identity:

Patriotism and internationalism are not enemies. International engagement is Britain's only serious option, and Europe is inescapably the most immediate forum for that engagement. If undertaken, engagement must be sustained. (*Guardian*, 26 May 2001)

Elsewhere, the framing of the speech varied, in contrast with the remarkable consistency of the Eurosceptic *tan*-leaning press. The most notable example is the *Express*, which, despite its

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<sup>5</sup> Blair campaigned in the Breconsfield by-election on a platform that included withdrawal from EEC membership, which was Labour policy at this time.

relatively Eurosceptic orientation, did not contest Blair's narrative on Britishness. The *Express* framed the speech as primarily about the euro, describing it 'a long time coming' and 'his most positive endorsement yet in favour of Britain joining the euro' (26 May 2001). Blair's framing of euro membership is echoed in this report, with the single currency being characterised as 'economic common sense' rather than a matter of sovereignty. The speech is also framed in terms of electoral competition; Blair is constructed as having decided to 'fight back' on the issue of the EU, in contrast to his previous 'reticence' (26 May 2001). Notably, this report does not discuss Blair's rhetoric on patriotism, although a shorter report on the day of the speech did strongly reflect Blair's framing, quoting from the text of the speech in such a way that suggests that it agrees with Blair; the article characterises Blair's narrative as being that "'true, modern patriotism" means protecting Britain's interests' (*Express*, 25 May 2001). Notably, this article did not present any of the opposing arguments from the Conservative Party, thus reinforcing the reproduction of Blair's framing of patriotism.

Similarly, the *Times* also framed its reporting of the the speech around the election. Here, the speech was constructed as an attempt by Blair to shift the debate away from the euro, 'to separate the election from any euro referendum' (Riddell, *Times*, 26 May 2001). Elsewhere in the same issue, the speech was described as a reaction to the Conservative campaign, with the aim 'to blunt that offensive early by making "Europe" the campaign issue to which the euro should be seen as subsidiary', and as 'a tactical speech, designed to stop Mr Hague making the weather on Europe' (26 May 2001). This article contests Blair's narrative on the euro, constructing the decision to join as inherently political and as a matter of sovereignty, rather than economic as Blair argues:

To present as pure economics a revolutionary transformation in Britain's position in the European Union, in its freedom to manage its economy and in the accountability of government to governed would be wrong. (*Times*, 26 May 2001)

Meanwhile, the *Independent* reflected Blair's framing of patriotism, reproducing extensive quotations from the speech covering Blair's statements on 'modern patriotism' (*Independent*, 25 May 2001; 26 May 2001), yet the primary frame was that of electoral competition between Labour and the Conservatives. In the *Independent*, the reporting constructs Blair's speech as a signal that 'he intends to convince the public of the merits of joining the single currency', and characterised Blair as going 'on the offensive on Europe' (25 May 2001). Elsewhere, the speech is characterised as a 'scathing attack' on the Conservatives (26 May 2001). The *Independent* also emphasised the implications for the UK's relationship with the United States, constructing Blair's speech as calling for a 'European super power', and arguing that

the UK ‘could hold a strong place in the world only by co-operating with its historic allies’ in both Europe and North America (26 May 2001).

The reporting of Blair’s speech offers insight into the operation of the politicisation mechanism. In this case, we see clear examples of where many of the expectations of postfunctionalism are met. In the Eurosceptic press, Blair’s speech was contested on the *gal-tan* axis, where he had located his message. However, this was undertaken in a hostile way, which constructed Blair’s narrative on Britishness and the nation negatively, and fundamentally contested his constructions of those concepts. Here, we see constructions of European integration that strongly emphasise the claimed threat to the nation. Rather than re-frame Blair’s narrative, the newspapers that opposed Blair’s message contested his narrative, representing it in their own nationalist terms. In the more pro-European press, in common with the findings of Chapter 5, we see a mixed picture. While some of the newspapers reflected Blair’s own framing and constructed a narrative of an inclusive, pluralistic national identity, comfortable with European integration, others chose to focus on the context of the speech in the election campaign. These findings suggest an inherent difficulty for pro-European politicians; even when engaging with, and contesting Eurosceptic discourses on the *gal-tan* dimension, these discourses are likely to be repurposed by *tan*-leaning newspapers to support their own Eurosceptic narratives.

## Conclusions

This chapter examined several aspects of the mediation of political speeches by newspapers, to test the postfunctionalist claim that political parties are able to politicise European integration in domestic political debates. It deployed a discourse analysis of five major speeches and the subsequent reporting of them in the nine national UK daily newspapers to develop a greater understanding of this mediation process. Chapter 2 argued that the claim that political parties can cue opposition to European integration through their framing of the EU in discourses rests on the assumption that the discourses of political parties are transmitted to the public by the media in a way that preserves their framing and narrative. This chapter has presented evidence to show that this is not the case: party framing and narratives are not simply transmitted in the press, but rather are subject to considerable modification.

The notion that party framing is not reflected in the media is provided by evidence from the cases examined here. In three of the cases in particular, there was evidence of substantial reframing of party discourses by newspapers, in such a way that altered or removed entirely

the original narrative of the original speech. Section 6.1 showed that, in the case of Gordon Brown's speech to the European Parliament, this reframing could take the form of altering the object of the discourse, moving it away from the substantive issue of European integration and instead focussing on claimed conflict between the government and Bank of England. The reporting in this case largely ignored the content of the speech to instead focus on the incidental context in which it was given. Similarly, section 6.3 gave an example of a speech — given by Michael Howard — that was reframed to be interpreted as a response to internal party conflict, not as an attempt to set a European policy. In the case of Tony Blair's 2006 speech, it was shown that newspapers sometimes chose to ignore party interventions into the debate entirely, while the coverage from the newspapers that did report them showed that pre-existing narratives — i.e. Blair's 'failure' on Europe and his final months in office — can displace the narrative of speeches in coverage, meaning that their original message fails to reach the public. Finally, section 6.4 presented an example of a speech that appears to be an attempt at cueing politicisation of European integration failed that to achieve a positive reception among even Eurosceptic newspapers, and was reframed as being in bad taste. This suggests that even in cases where we would expect the Eurosceptic media to reproduce identity frames and narratives relatively unaltered, other constraints outside of the model operate on the media. In this case, Hague's speech was deemed to be 'in bad taste', meaning that he was unable to communicate his message successfully. This leads to the conclusion that readers of these newspapers did not receive the messages that parties intended, and casts doubt on the postfunctionalist politicisation model as conceived by Hooghe and Marks (2009).

Only in section 6.5 did evidence of clear and consistent reproduction of the original framing emerge. In this case, the decision by Blair to engage in the debate on the *gal-tan* dimension seems to have ensured that the media framing remained largely focussed on identity. This case demonstrated the difficulty faced by pro-European politicians to influence debates. This example suggests that pro-European parties may have their message reported if they choose to contest European integration on the *gal-tan* axis. However, the postfunctionalist model concentrates on the potential for debates in the mass arena structured by the *gal-tan* dimension to politicise European integration. The extent to which parties can depoliticise European integration through engaging in debates structured by identity is unclear.

A second expectation derived from the discussion in Chapter 2 and the data presented in Chapter 5 was that the discursive constructions of speeches would follow the political positions of newspapers. However, when we consider how newspapers reframe party discourses, and what relationship this has to the *gal-tan* positions of newspapers, the evidence

was less clear. The expectation that Eurosceptic, *tan*-leaning newspapers would reframe pro-European party messages to emphasise connections to the nation and identity was not met in some of the cases examined. In several instances, these results show, the press do seek to reframe political speeches to reflect their own positions on the *gal-tan* axis. This phenomenon is particularly visible in the case of newspapers with predominately-*tan* discourses: here newspapers are observed reframing speeches that did not seek to contest European integration on the *gal-tan* axis in those terms. This is consistent with the behaviour of political entrepreneurs in the model. An example of this can be seen in the reporting of Tony Blair's 2006 speech. However, there more numerous examples of cases where this did not occur. In the case of Gordon Brown's speech, for example, the main re-framing was to emphasise his domestic political difficulties. The only speech which was reported with identity as the dominant frame was Tony Blair's 2001 speech in Edinburgh, which was already framed in these terms.

These findings provide further support for the argument of this thesis that media organisations should be treated as key actors in the postfunctionalist model. Whereas postfunctionalism assumes that party contestation in the mass arena is a process that can operate without the influence of a substantive actor in-between parties and the public, these findings suggest otherwise. The mass media are a meaningful class of actors, able to reframe party discourses, selectively transmit and reconstruct key messages, and demonstrate considerable independence from parties. This calls into doubt the assumption that parties can set the agenda in European debates, and suggests a much more complex, interdependent relationship between actors in the mass arena, in which the role of mediation is important. However, the inconsistencies in the behaviour of newspapers suggests that the media cannot simply be substituted for parties in the postfunctionalist model. Newspapers do not always act as their positions on the new politics dimension suggest they should, and there is no clear pattern in the way that political speeches are represented. Further work is therefore needed to systematically determine the nature of the relationship between elite and media discourses, and how attempts by parties to cue public opinion are shaped and constrained by the agency of media actors.

## Conclusions

This thesis set out to explore a number of key questions regarding the processes that drive and constrain the course of European integration. Specifically, it developed an understanding of how debates in EU member states are structured, which actors are important, and how these debates affect the outcomes of policy making on the EU. It did this by focussing on the process by which European integration is politicised in EU member states, adopting the emerging postfunctionalist research agenda. In particular, it investigated the role of the public discourses of political parties and the media in the politicisation and contestation of the EU in member states, using the UK between 1997 and 2010 as a case-study. In order to shed light on the role of public discourses, it adopted a framework that emphasised the discursive construction of national identities. This led to a discussion of the role of the mass media in constructing national identity, and in acting as the primary source of citizen information on European integration. It was argued that the mass media are key to understanding national debates on the EU, in light of these two roles. Subsequently, the thesis presented a new model of politicisation, Media Augmented Postfunctionalism, that took these insights about the role of the media into account. Following from this, it set out to test a series of hypotheses about how the positions of the media on European integration are structured, how they discursively connect the EU and national identity, and how they interact strategically with the discourses of parties. The arguments made will now be summarised and the key implications of the conclusions reached will be discussed in more detail. This is followed by a short discussion of some of the limitations of this research, and finally by a series of suggestions as to how this research agenda could be furthered.

Part I of the thesis reviewed the postfunctionalist model and set out the conceptual and methodological framework of the thesis. Chapter 1 began by discussing the postfunctionalist model, which provides the source of the theoretical understanding of European integration in this thesis. This discussion highlighted the roots of postfunctionalism in neo-functionalism and the multi-level governance approach. It argued that postfunctionalism centres its explanation of the politicisation of European integration on the agency of parties, which seek to entrepreneurially cue citizen attitudes towards European integration when it is electorally advantageous for them to do so. In light of this discussion, two weaknesses were identified in postfunctionalism. The first of these was in the account of identity that postfunctionalism provides. Identity is assumed to be given, without explanation as to how it is formed or contested. The second weakness was in the role of actors in cueing public opposition to the EU through constructing connections between static national identities and changing

supranational governance arrangements. It was argued that while Hooghe and Marks (2009) discuss in detail the role of parties in cueing opposition to the EU, they fail to properly explore the role of other actors, particularly intermediary actors, in this discursive process.

Subsequently, Chapter 1 also examined the literature on identity formation in light of the unexplored nature of identity in postfunctionalism. The work of scholars including Benedict Anderson and Ruth Wodak was reviewed, and the chapter subsequently argued that recent approaches which emphasise the role of discourse in the construction of identity are compatible with the postfunctionalist theory. These accounts of identity formation emphasised the role of a diverse range of actors in constructing national identities. The significance of discourse for the postfunctionalist framework led to a discussion of the empirical claim made by postfunctionalists that discursive connections formed between static identities and evolving governance structures cue opposition to European integration among citizens, leading to a state of ‘constraining dissensus’. In particular, the role of the mass media emerged as being important: mass communication has enabled common discourses on identity to be shared across national communities in hitherto impossible ways. These discourses are not singular, but plural, and contested; different actors construct different discourses about the nation to serve divergent purposes. Ultimately, it was argued that if postfunctionalism is to contain a better account of identity formation, contestation, and politicisation, then the role of the media in constructing national identity ought to be taken into account.

Accordingly, Chapter 2 proposed a new politicisation model — the Media Augmented Postfunctionalist model — that incorporated the mass media as an actor alongside political parties. It argued that the media play an important role in determining outcomes of national debates on the EU in two respects. The first of these was in the media’s construction of their own discourses on European integration, particularly in relation to national identity. In the MAP politicisation model, it was theorised that the media construct connections between identity and European integration in the same way that parties do in the Hooghe-Marks politicisation model. This serves to cue public opposition to European integration in a similar way to party discourses. Secondly, the role of the media as an intermediary actor in the mass arena is argued to be central to determining outcomes. A discussion of the political communications literature on media effects revealed considerable evidence to suggest that the media do have a substantive causal effect on citizen attitudes, and that this claim is broadly compatible with the claims made by identity theorists about the constructive nature of media discourses. The literature on media effects was discussed, with particular reference to the mechanisms that postfunctionalists identify: priming, cueing, and framing. It was shown that media framing effects are widely argued in the communications literature to have a

substantive effect on audiences; including on attitudes and voting behaviour. This was discussed in the context of party discourses, and it was argued that parties may face problems in successfully cueing public attitudes on Europe if the media do not effectively transmit their discourses to the public. If the media instil their own biases, narratives, and frames in their reporting — operating as independent actors in their own right — then we must have a clearer understanding of when and how the media construct discourses about European integration, how these discourses connect the issue with national identity, and how they represent the discourses of parties. This discussion led to a number of expectations or hypotheses to be addressed empirically in Part II of the thesis. These were, specifically: a) that newspaper positions on European integration would be structured in the same way as political parties, i.e. by the *gal-tan* dimension; b) that newspaper discourses would construct connections between national identity (i.e. the *gal-tan* dimension) and European integration; c) that newspapers would contest European integration through discourses on the nation and seek to cue citizen attitudes; and, d) that there would be evidence that newspapers were able to substantively alter debates through their reporting of party discourses.

Subsequently, Chapter 3 discussed discourse theory and the relationship between discourse and social action. It introduced the work of Norman Fairclough and Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA provides a useful framework for unpacking the discourses of both parties and the media, providing the critical tools to anchor this research in an understanding of how discourses are produced (Fairclough 1995, 16). It set out the specific methods to be used in the subsequent empirical chapters, including describing the data to be examined and the procedures adopted for discursively analysing the qualitative sources. This chapter also discussed the UK, and it was argued that the UK presented an ideal case study for examination in this thesis in light of the highly contested nature of European integration in the UK, as the recent referendum on UK membership of the EU has demonstrated.

Chapter 4 examined the structure of media positions on European integration in an attempt to determine if the relationship that postfunctionalists observe between opposition to European integration and the *gal-tan* dimension in parties can also be observed in newspapers. While it was argued that the political positions of newspapers are not as easily determined as those of parties, data on the attitudes of the readers of newspapers is widely available. The attitudes of the readers of nine UK daily newspapers was taken as a proxy for the positions of the newspapers, and data from the British Attitudes Survey allowed for an estimation of the position of these readers on their support for European integration, and on the economic left-right and new politics dimensions. It was shown that the new politics dimension is much more closely associated with attitudes to European integration than the left-right economic



dimension. In common with parties, the average reader positions for the newspapers showed a correlation between positions towards the *tan*-pole of the dimension and opposition to European integration. These findings suggest that the structure of contestation among newspapers may be similar to that between parties, with the *gal-tan* position of newspapers (and their readers) being a better predictor of their position on European integration than the left-right economic dimension. This finding provides context to the rest of the study, and appears to confirm the first hypothesis.

Chapter 5 subsequently examined the content of newspaper discourses in the UK. Indeed, one of the most significant findings of Chapter 5 was that the discursive constructions of European integration in newspapers appeared to follow the general pattern of the estimates of their positions derived in Chapter 4. It was shown that the *gal-tan* position of newspapers was related to the content of their discourses: *tan*-Euro sceptic newspapers consistently constructed the European Union in terms of a nationalist narrative. This appears to confirm that the pattern of contestation among newspapers is broadly similar to that of parties. Notable differences in the framing of European integration were found. Specifically, a group of newspapers, including the *Daily Mail*, *Sun*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Express*, were found to consistently frame European integration in terms of the nation and national identity. Drawing connections between the EU and the nation, these newspapers constructed a narrative around the EU that portrayed it as a fundamental threat to the British nation, to national sovereignty, and to democracy. This distinctive ‘*tan*-Euro sceptic’ discourse demonstrated a remarkably consistent attempt to separate the UK and the EU, constructing the EU as the ‘other’ to the British nation and people, including at the most basic linguistic level. Concerns expressed about EU membership in these discourses seemed designed to construct connections between a sense of exclusive national identity and the perception that EU membership was a ‘threat’ to this identity. The EU was portrayed as encroaching on British sovereignty, and is dismissed as an elite and undemocratic project to ‘impose’ regulation from ‘Brussels’ on the British people.

The zero-sum nature of this discourse meant that the nation was privileged above all other forms of governance, thus mobilising the tension between national identity and changing governance arrangements as postfunctionalism describes. In contrast, the pro-European discourse was not clearly associated with a distinctive *gal* discourse on the nation. While pro-European discourses were associated with newspapers that had estimated positions towards the *gal*-pole of the *gal-tan* axis, there was no single, coherent pro-European discourse in the newspapers studied. While the *tan* / Euro sceptic discourse was consistent, clearly articulated, and formed of strong connections between opposition to European integration and a defence of the nation-state, no such coherent discourse could be found to oppose it. Although some

newspapers made a variety of arguments in favour of membership of the EU, these discourses were isolated and did not constitute a coherent whole. Similarly, while several of the pro-European newspapers attempted to challenge the nationalist discourses of the Eurosceptic press, there was little evidence of a clearly articulated discourse that offered an alternative construction of the nation to that offered in *tan* discourses. This appears to confirm the findings, in this regard, of the only other significant recent study of UK newspaper discourses (Hawkins 2012). While pro-European newspapers were not as homogenous in their discourse on Europe as the *tan*-Eurosceptic newspapers, they did appear to actively contest the discourses of *tan*-Eurosceptic newspapers, seeking to rebut their claims about Europe. There is also some evidence of attempts to depoliticise European integration, particularly at the 2001 general election. These findings appear to be particularly relevant in relation to the strong association between anti-European discourses and *tan*-ish discourses that privileged the nation above other forms of political organisation. In common with Hooghe and Marks' (2005) study of party positions, this study finds that there is a clearer link between the *tan*-pole of the new politics dimension and opposition to European integration.

Chapter 5 also confirms the picture of the press environment in the mass arena in the UK developed in Chapter 4. The structure of press positions in the UK is distributed towards the *tan* / Eurosceptic poles, especially in the mass-market press. This is made even more significant by the fact that the newspapers found here to be largely Eurosceptic in their discourses, and which sought to construct connections between identity and the EU, represent a significant majority of the UK press by readership and circulation. This suggests that other political actors, and in particular parties, face a strategic challenge in communicating their messages on European integration to the public, especially where these messages do not agree with the discourses on European integration produced by the newspapers representing the majority of readership. The implications of these findings are discussed in more detail below.

Finally, Chapter 6 examined the ways in which party discourses are represented in the press. Chapter 6 presented a focussed analysis of five major speeches on European integration by UK party leaders and the subsequent press coverage of them. In contrast to the previous chapter, the empirical evidence on the relationship between the political positions of newspapers and their reporting of party leader's speeches did not show a consistent pattern. While it was expected that Eurosceptic newspapers would reframe party narratives about the EU to a *tan* discourse focusing on the nation, or would emphasise this framing where it was used by parties, this did not occur consistently. While some of the reporting followed these expectations, there was not a clear pattern to the reframing that took place. The chapter did observe considerable evidence of reframing by all newspapers, however. This often took the

form of reframing party narratives to fit with pre-existing narratives in the press, and was found in the case with both Eurosceptic and pro-European speeches.

Furthermore, the empirical evidence suggested that attempts by political parties to cue opposition to European integration (or to seek to rally support) are hampered by the selectivity of press reporting. In several cases, newspapers ignored speeches entirely, or reported them only in scant detail. In almost all cases, major details and frames from the speeches were lost. To some extent, this is to be expected, since the press cannot report the whole content of speeches in the space available. However, even in the case of the major speeches studied here, readers of many of the newspapers would not have received an accurate report of the content or main messages of the speeches. This suggests an important role for the press as an intermediary actor. Attempts to cue public opinion directly are fraught with difficulty if parties cannot rely on accurate reporting of their messages. This is particularly the case for pro-European parties, where careful positioning to avoid contestation on the *gal-tan* axis may easily be undone by media reframing.

However, these empirical findings suggest that the media cannot simply be substituted for parties in the postfunctionalist model. While the evidence in Chapter 5 suggests that there is a *prime facie* case that newspapers adopt positions and construct discourses on European integration in a similar way to parties, the empirical evidence from Chapter 6 reveals a more complicated picture. The press are actors in the mass arena in their own right, but they also play an important role as intermediaries for the discourses of other actors. The press do not follow a consistent pattern in their reporting and mediation of party discourses, however. While we expected that newspapers would reframe party messages on European integration to fit their own positions, this was not observed across all the reporting of the speeches examined. As Fairclough concludes, the relationship between professional political and media discourse is ‘an area of intersection and tension’ (1995, 197). What is clear from the evidence presented in Chapters 5 and 6 is that the claim of Part I of the thesis, that the transmission and reproduction of party discourses in the mass arena is best characterised as a complex mass-mediated debate, appears to be the case in the UK contestation of European integration. The assumption of existing postfunctionalist theory that parties are the most significant actor in cueing public opinion on European integration must, therefore, be subject to revision and clarification. In the case of the UK, at least, parties face a significant challenge in ‘having their discourses heard’ by the public in the face of a polarised media that take distinctive positions on European integration, and which substantively reframe party discourses to fit their own pre-existing narratives.

## *Implications*

The findings of this thesis suggest a series of implications for postfunctionalist theory, and for our understanding of the factors that shape the course of European integration more generally. The overall conclusion is that the hypotheses have been largely confirmed. In seeking to build on the postfunctionalist model to develop a more holistic understanding of the constraints on European integration, this thesis has presented evidence to suggest that the media are significant actors in the politicisation of European integration in the domestic politics of European countries, and that their role in mass-mediated public debates can have a substantive effect on the outcomes of those debates. The MAP model, and the empirical evidence presented here to support it, demonstrates that debates in the press are well structured, and that the positions of newspapers are structured in a similar way to political parties. The evidence shows that press discourses can alter the substantive character of debates, reconstructing and mediating party messages and thus affecting the way in which the public debate about European integration is conducted and the information received by the public. The media are therefore the critical actor in the mass arena, acting as a gatekeeper to the public debate, and exercising considerable influence on the content and tone of debates. There is also clear evidence that the press act as political entrepreneurs in this arena, constructing connections between national identity and European integration that may serve to politicise European integration and cue citizen attitudes towards it.

One implication of these findings regards the structure of the press. Where the structure of the mass media is different to that of parties, this may make a significant difference to the discourse on Europe. Parties face a strategic challenge where media positions are unfavourable to their own message on European integration, and where parties face a media hostile to their message, they are likely to struggle to cue citizen opinion on European integration. The MAP model conceptualises this as the key feature of the mass-mediated public debate - one in which the media and parties are engaged in a battle for ideas, frames, narratives. Parties can lose that battle if the media are structured in a way that is hostile to them. Similarly, in cases where entrepreneurial political parties find themselves faced with a relatively pro-European media, they may be unable to adequately influence the character of the mass-mediated public debate, thus failing to cue public opinion. This suggests a limit on the strategic 'room for manoeuvre' for parties in the mass arena. Thus, the overall structure of media positions on European integration may be central to determining the outcome of the politicisation process: what matters is where the media actors are relative to parties, since the media act as gatekeepers to the public and mediate party messages. Where the media in a member state are distributed differently to parties, this may result in outcomes that are not

predicted in Hooghe and Marks' model, but for which the MAP model presented here is able to account. Extended across the EU, this is a significant finding, and may go some way to explaining the variable success of political parties in cueing citizen opposition to European integration in EU member states, especially in the light of relatively high levels of attachment to national identities (European Commission 2014). By extending the postfunctionalist model, this thesis allows for an understanding of how structural considerations are important, and provides a tool for conceptualising the contestation of European integration that takes this significant factor into account.

In the case of the UK, this thesis has provided important evidence which builds on the existing literature to develop a picture of a newspaper sector that adopts distinctive discourses on European integration, and which appear to be active agents in the politicisation and contestation of European integration in the mass arena. This provides further evidence to support claims that the UK media is characterised by a 'vigorous partisan hostility' to European integration (Daddow 2012, 1219). In developing a better understanding of press constructions of Europe during the New Labour period, it provides evidence that may help explain why New Labour found it so difficult to successfully 'sell' the project of Europe to the British people. The wider scholarship on the UK's relationship with the EU is, of course, still to be redefined in the aftermath of the 2016 referendum. While this thesis does not address the referendum directly, it has provided useful contextual information to aid scholars in understanding how the EU is contested in British politics. In particular, the absence of a coherent pro-European narrative in the pro-European press echoes claims made that the 'Remain' campaign failed to articulate a positive message during the referendum. In this study, it was found that much of the *tan* / nationalist / Eurosceptic discourse on European integration went unchallenged in the more moderate and pro-European sections of the press, and this seems to have contributed to an environment in which pro-European parties struggled to influence citizen attitudes towards the EU.

The work done in this thesis to understand the mass-mediated debate in the New Labour era could usefully be extended to the referendum campaign and the contestation of the referendum in the media, therefore. While the MAP model deals largely with the process of contesting *European reforms* rather than the singular event of an in-out referendum, similar mechanisms appear to have been in operation during the referendum. Certainly, the decision to call the referendum could be seen as a result of the agency of entrepreneurial actors that led prime minister Cameron to feel compelled to hold a referendum. Subsequently, the mass-mediated debate on the referendum was conducted in large part through the media, with all

the consequences for the campaign to remain in the EU implied by the discussion on the structure of the UK press set out above.

In a wider sense, this thesis also holds implications for the growing body of literature that seeks to understand debates on European integration and the bases of citizen attitudes towards it. While a number of recent studies have highlighted the importance of the mass media in debates on European integration, this study differs in that it is able to situate the study of media effects in the context of a middle-range theory that is able to answer the question of how the media are able to affect policy making on the EU. With the MAP model, the postfunctionalist research agenda is able to offer an answer to that question, highlighting the consequences of the agency of the media in the mass arena, while providing a general framework for analysis that can be applied and adapted to all EU member states. This holds relevance both for studies that seek to understand the role of the press in contesting European integration, and for those that seek to understand the role of parties in contesting Europe. The growing salience of European integration and the *gal-tan* cleavage has reordered party systems in several European states (such as France), and threatens to do so in others (Börzel and Risse 2009). The MAP model allows for a framework to analyse the interactions between a parties and the media in the mass arena, and the constraining effects that the mass media can have on parties.

### *Limitations*

A number of limitations to these conclusions must be noted. The first is that, as discussed above, the behaviour of newspapers in the mass arena when reporting the discourses of parties did not consistently conform to the expectations set out in the MAP model. We expected that party discourses would be reframed by newspapers in line with their own position. However, the evidence from Chapter 6 showed that this was not the case, and that while significant reframing did occur, it did not follow a clear pattern. This suggests a limit to the explanatory power of the model in this regard: while the model predicts that a mis-match between party and media positions on European integration will constrain the strategic possibilities for parties, it cannot currently predict how different media will react to party discourses.

A number of limitations should also be noted in regards to the empirical evidence studied in this thesis. The most important of these is that this study only offers data from a single country, the UK. The applicability of the MAP model of domestic politicisation to other EU states requires further testing, and, as noted below, provides an important avenue for further research. The UK is certainly a case where opposition to European integration is widely held,

as the results of the 2016 referendum show, and offers an opportunity to study the mechanisms described by the model in a country with high contestation of the UK. However, the MAP model seeks to explain the politicisation process in all EU states, and so further data is required to understand how the politicisation process differs across member states, with different media and party systems, and where the relative influence of these actors may vary.

In the UK case studied, there are also limitations in the data presented. The thesis studied data from only one section of the mass media: the London press. This was in part due to practical considerations, as well as to reflect the relatively prominent role played by the London press in UK political debates. However, it must be noted that there is likely some important variation in discourses on Europe in newspapers in other parts of the UK, particularly in light of distinctive Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish identities. The sample size of newspapers also provides only limited data to test the association between the *gal-tan* dimension and support for European integration. This was particularly noticeable in the case of exploring what association there is between pro-Europeanism and the *gal* pole of the *gal-tan* dimension. It was therefore not possible to determine if newspapers follow the pattern of parties, with a falling-away of support at the extreme *gal*-end of the dimension. An EU-wide study of newspaper positions might allow for this to be addressed. The sample also covered a relatively condensed period of time, choosing to cover two general election periods and five speeches in depth. While this allows for a highly detailed analysis of discourses on these occasions, it nevertheless limits the data in its temporal coverage.

Perhaps most significantly, the study only examined the press, and did not analyse other forms of mass media. Although the press continues to play an important role in debates on European integration, the relative position of the press has declined as circulations have decreased and other forms of media have increased in popularity. Other more traditional forms of media, including magazines, radio, and television may provide important data not explored in this thesis. The rapid growth of internet news and social media is also potentially highly significant. While the world wide web was in its relative infancy at the start of the time period studied in this thesis, the growth of the internet as a source of citizen information means that it is now an important factor in the mass arena - one with quite different dynamics to the traditional print media (Gergen 2008; Coleman and Bulmer 2009; Welch 2013). As noted below, further work is required to understand the importance of these alternative forms of media for the model.

## *Future Research*

The results and implications discussed here present a number of possible avenues for future research that may seek to address the normative and empirical questions opened by this thesis. One important locus for further research is in extending this analysis to other European countries. While some work has been done to understand the extent to which public communication is ‘Europeanised’ in other EU member states (for example, Risse 2010), work is needed to understand if the patterns identified here are to be found elsewhere in the EU. While the UK appears — especially in light of the 2016 referendum on EU membership — to be an especially powerful example of a country where public attitudes towards European integration act as a constraint on policy makers, developments in the politics of the EU demonstrate a deeper crisis of European integration than when Hooghe and Marks first proposed their theory in 2009. The slowing speed of European integration, the rise of Eurosceptic parties in many EU States (including, notably, *Alternative für Deutschland* in Germany, *Movimento 5 Stelle* in Italy, and *Front National* in France), the difficulties faced by the EU in responding to the continuing crisis of the Eurozone, and the challenge of the UK’s vote to leave the Union all suggest that domestic politics are increasingly important to the development of European integration.

Part of this work entails developing a deeper understanding of the agency of media organisations in debates in other EU Member States. This includes developing the estimates of positions developed here to understand if the correlation between *gal-tan* position and support for European integration detected here is found in the media of other European countries. There is good reason to think that it may, in light of the association between these dimensions found in the positions of parties and the attitudes of individual citizens across the continent. Analysis of the specific content of news discourses would undoubtedly reveal significant variation between member states — the domestic nature of the contestation of European integration means that concerns about the EU are inevitably linked to domestic political issues — however a wider study might seek to discover the common features between the debates in member states to develop a more structured picture of discourses on European integration across the EU.

Another avenue for research is in studying politicisation in the context of different modes of contestation of European integration. This thesis has largely concentrated on domestic elections, reflecting the domestic focus of postfunctionalism’s model of politicisation. Referendums offer an alternative to this, and the UK’s 2016 referendum on EU membership appears to be an obvious and interesting example. The postfunctionalist politicisation model is



particularly well-suited to studying events such as referendums, since these represent a very clear case of decisions on European policy being made in the arena of mass politics: rather than simply an example of policy makers having to ‘look over their shoulder’ when making policy on Europe, referendums involve politicians devolving this decision-making directly to citizens. As noted above, the recent UK referendum is a case where postfunctionalism may be able to offer a much-needed explanatory framework for understanding the causes of the result.

Wider questions arise from this thesis about the nature of the media’s role as an intermediary actor in the arena of mass politics. While the communications studies literature contains a growing body of work on the effects of media discourses on the attitudes of citizens, the conduct of political debates, and on the wider discursive environment, the project of integrating this knowledge into political science is incomplete. Understanding how and when the media are significant actors which might constrain or influence the actions of parties and other actors is another area where more work needs to be done. This thesis has presented evidence that the media can be important in determining which messages citizens receive from parties. However, further evidence is required to expand this analysis beyond newspapers, especially in light of the declining circulation of print newspapers and the increasing importance of the internet for news consumption. The dynamics of news production also face changes as social media becomes more widely used and becomes an important site of discourse production. Although some studies have begun to address this (for example, de Wilde et al 2013), the influence of the internet and social media discourses on European integration remains relatively unexplored. Online media have the potential to involve citizens more actively in the construction of discourses on European integration, and in the processes of politicisation and contestation. Therefore, understanding decision making in these new media is an important step in building a more comprehensive picture of the influence of discourses on European integration in the mass arena.

Questions also remain about precisely when and why media actors choose to reframe party messages and thus play a role in shaping the content and character of debates. A wider study of media reframing of party discourses on European integration might be able to identify trends in this behaviour where the current study could not. Understanding the conditions in which media actors choose to substantively reframe party discourses, and the ways in which they represent party attempts at intervention in public debates, in more detail, would allow for greater specificity in the MAP model. Ultimately, this thesis has presented theory of European integration that takes into account the highly complex nature of mass-mediated public debates that connect citizens with parties, the media, and other actors. Only by understanding the dynamics of these debates can we fully understand the the current state of the contestation of

the EU across its member states and the implications that these debates have for the future of Europe.

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