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외교학석사학위논문

**British Euroscepticism Manifested in  
Cameron's Bungling Referendum  
Promise**

2018년 8월

서울대학교 대학원

정치외교학부 외교학전공

박 주 연

# British Euroscepticism Manifested in Cameron's Bungling Referendum Promise

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이 논문을 외교학석사학위논문으로 제출함

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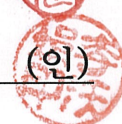
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## **Abstract**

After the result of Brexit vote in 2016, there has been an increase of literature trying to explain the factors that led to it. Out of many variables, British Euroscepticism has gained scholarly attention as the main cause that attributed to Britain's troubling relationship with the European Union since its membership. Out of varying facets of Euroscepticism such as economic, political, and cultural that contributed to Britain's opposition to supranational entity, it has most usefully been conceived as a systemic feature of British Politics. This indicates that political Euroscepticism has persisted in the parliamentary arena where the ministers had persistently displayed their discontent towards the EU in voting. As a result, the increasing political Euroscepticism threatened the intra-party cohesion from 2010 to 2015 as the Members of Parliament (MPs) rebelled more frequently against the government to have invited David Cameron to utilize party management tactics more aggressively. Thus, this thesis attempts to answer what led David Cameron to promise and hold the national referendum on EU and more specifically, what led him to move from the six tools of intra-party management to the final one of holding a referendum. In other words, Brexit referendum promise was a political gamble of then Prime Minister, David Cameron. Nonetheless, political Euroscepticism was not a new phenomenon that emerged only from Cameron's term, but rather it was boiling inside the British political realm for decades. The Conservative Party under David Cameron's leadership is observed from 2005 to 2010 because while a call for a national referendum occurred repeatedly throughout Britain's marriage with the EU, it was ultimately a self-inflicted result of Cameron. He had misjudged and erred in deciding to go ahead with referendum in 2016 instead of 2017 because he was confident that he had successfully renegotiated the terms.

Therefore, to understand the nature of high level political Euroscepticism found in the British parliament displayed through dissent during Cameron's

premiership, a further scrutiny of British Euroscepticism before Cameron is outlined. The structure of the thesis is organized into five chapters. After a brief introductory chapter, theoretical framework and research design on Euroscepticism, leadership behavior, and intra-party model are delineated. By looking at the economic, cultural, and political Euroscepticism, possible explanations of how each facet may have intensified into causing Brexit can be identified. Yet, Chapter 3 demonstrates that it was decisively the British Political Euroscepticism of the Conservative Party that had ultimately impacted Brexit. Furthermore, the UK nature of political system and other leaders' strategies on EU such as those of Thatcher and Major are compared to Cameron's leadership tactics. Then, Chapter 4 introduces ways to measure dissent and the significance they have on affecting the intra-party nature and tactics Cameron utilized. Finally, it explains how Cameron's tactics varied with increasing Euroscepticism that made the need for putting the EU issue on a national referendum more urgent. This study's finding is that intra-party cohesion influences leadership behavior even if it means taking radical measures such as moving the decision to the electorate level, which elites usually attempt to avoid. This is likely to be the outcome of political Euroscepticism within the Conservative Party that threatened the viability of the party.

As David Cameron sought to solve the intra-party dissension by promising a national referendum, it soon proved not to be enough. To make matters worse, Cameron was juggling his EU partners, allies, and citizens in addition to his Eurosceptics. As he attempted to appease all sides, he further antagonized them all leaving him with no credibility as the leader. Consequently, his renegotiated EU membership terms did not appear convincing enough to make the UK exit the union.

Keywords: Euroscepticism, Brexit, Leadership behavior, David Cameron, Intra-party

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## **Chapter I. Introduction**

On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 the vote came out as 51.9% ‘Leave’ to 48.1% ‘Remain.’ The UK decided to file for a divorce in 2016 during its second national referendum on European Union (EU) membership. As the 2016 British Referendum results indicate, it was a close call compared to the 1975 Referendum that made UK stay in the European Community (EC) with 67.2% Remain to 32.8% Leave results. Something must have happened during the UK’s forty-three years of marriage with the EU to have made the UK turn against the organization so drastically to exit the union it had entered by enduring two vetoes. While there were various factors that led British citizens to vote “Leave” last June, British Political Euroscepticism has been responsible for leading the British to finally exit the EU. It was the Conservative Party led by David Cameron that decided to hold the national referendum on the UK’s membership. Again, in the British political history, this 2016 national referendum was not the first citizen vote on the membership of EU for the people had the opportunity to express whether to stay in the then European Community (Common Market) in 1975, but this time, the 2016 Referendum result came out differently. This came as a surprise because most of elites including the government have predicted the outcome to come out as ‘remain’ instead of ‘leave’. In addition, the official stance of David Cameron’s government was that Britain would be better off in the EU by renegotiating the terms with the EU rather than leaving the union completely.

While there are many facets of Euroscepticism in Britain, contemporary British Euroscepticism has most usefully been conceived as a systemic feature of British Politics. Since the 1970s, everywhere in Europe, Euroscepticism has flourished in the political realm as the European issue became more politicized in the national electoral arena. Politicization of the European issues in national political parties has been witnessed in many other European countries as the consensus on Europe became restraining unlike ‘permissive consensus’ that allowed the European integration in the



beginning. However, why the British case remains as an exception is because unlike other European countries where the anti-EU sentiments are present usually in the periphery parties, the British anti-EU sentiments are found in the main political parties. Both Conservative and Labour parties have dealt with EU issue by taking different positions since the joining of the EU in 1973. Initially, it was the Conservative Party that was for entering the EU and the Labour who opposed such membership. This has changed as Conservative Party became more Eurosceptic throughout UK's marriage with the EU.

## Chapter II. Theoretical Framework and Research Design

### 1. Roots of Euroscepticism

In the UK, the term, Euroscepticism can be traced back to articles in the British newspaper, *The Times*, in 1985. It began to be used to refer to a section of the right of the Conservative Party that increasingly objected to the European Integration project including the creation of an economic and monetary union.<sup>1</sup> Euroscepticism is a phenomenon that first originated in the UK but has spread across Europe. This means that it's not area-specific or country-specific anymore. However, what makes the British Euroscepticism an exceptional case is that it made UK one of the first EU member countries to exit. Despite many failed referendums that changed the 'permissive consensus' to constraining consensus' in France and Denmark, UK still remains as one of the most Eurosceptic country as indicated by polls. From the Eurobarometer data, on the question that asked, "Generally speaking, do you think that (country's) membership of the common market European Union) is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?" the public perceptions of the EU are shown.<sup>2</sup>

The figures 1 through 4 show the percentages of EU citizens who thought the membership of the union as bad in the UK, Germany, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Ireland, and EU as a whole. The countries are divided into three groups accordingly to when the member states joined and size to be better compared to the UK. It indicates that while most of the countries experienced increases of bad perceptions of the EU, the UK stands out as one of most Eurosceptic country that has consistently experienced high levels of bad perception throughout the period. For example, the UK's percentage of bad perception was always above the EU average

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<sup>1</sup> Tournier-Sol, Karine and Chris Gifford. (2015) *The UK Challenge to Europeanization : The Persistence of British Euroscepticism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>2</sup> GESIS Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences. (1978-2016) Eurobarometer 10-86.2 [Data file and code book] Retrieved from <https://dbk.gesis.org/dbksearch/gdesc2.asp?no=0008&search=&search2=&db=e&tab=0&notabs=&nf=1&af=&ll=10>. (Accessed March 1, 2017)

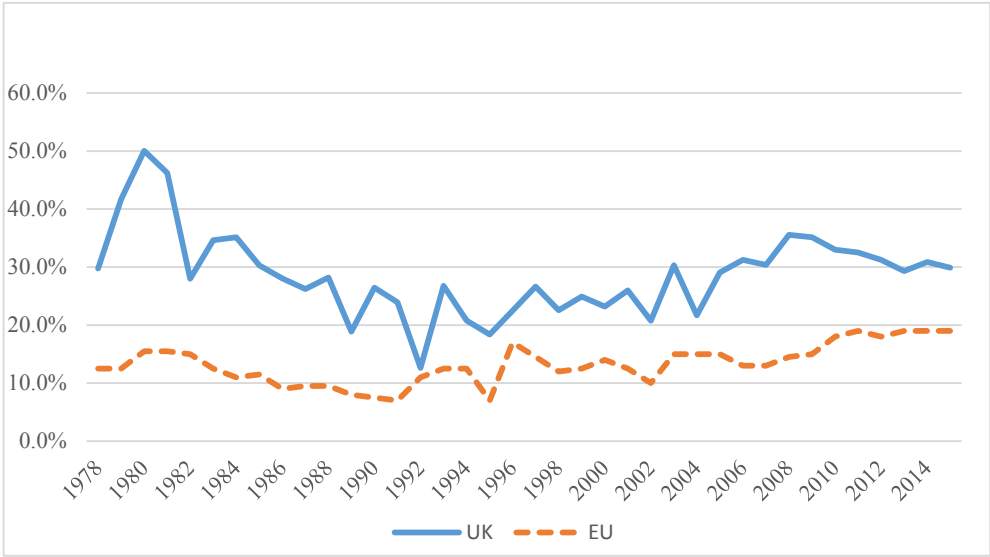
from the joining. It reached its highest peak in 1980 of 50% then experienced ups and downs throughout, but it never dropped below 20%. Even when compared to the EU founding member states and late joiners, the UK still stands out as most Eurosceptic country in the EU. This still holds true when compared to Denmark, which also stands out as a Eurosceptic country for it is known for its skeptical stance after rejecting the EU Constitution in 1997. Furthermore, the citizens of other EU countries that are founding members of the EU such as Germany, Belgium, Italy, France, and Netherlands perceived the EU less negatively than the British ones. In addition, even though both the Dutch and French rejected the Constitutional Treaty in 2005, they are still far less Eurosceptic than the British.

Also, another indicator of British Euroscepticism's importance is that it is found in the mainstream political parties unlike in other European countries. Therefore, the European issue has been the dividing issue among the Conservative and Labour Parties in Great Britain since its EU membership. It is important to note that the British Euroscepticism cannot simply be regarded as a strong dislike of the European Union or as anti-Europe for Great Britain does not solely oppose Europeanization as a whole, but rather supports some parts of European integration. For instance, Margaret Thatcher who was considered to be the founder of Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party still welcomed the economic benefits the EU would bring by allowing the economic liberalism to flourish. This shows that the British Eurosceptics are realistic in a sense that they are not completely against all aspects of the European project for they welcome benefits that result from cooperation within Europe such as prosperity, stability, peace, and the single market. However, they are hostile to the idea of trying to build a European-level power or unified political force that would have its own interest as Europe and exclude the United States.<sup>3</sup>

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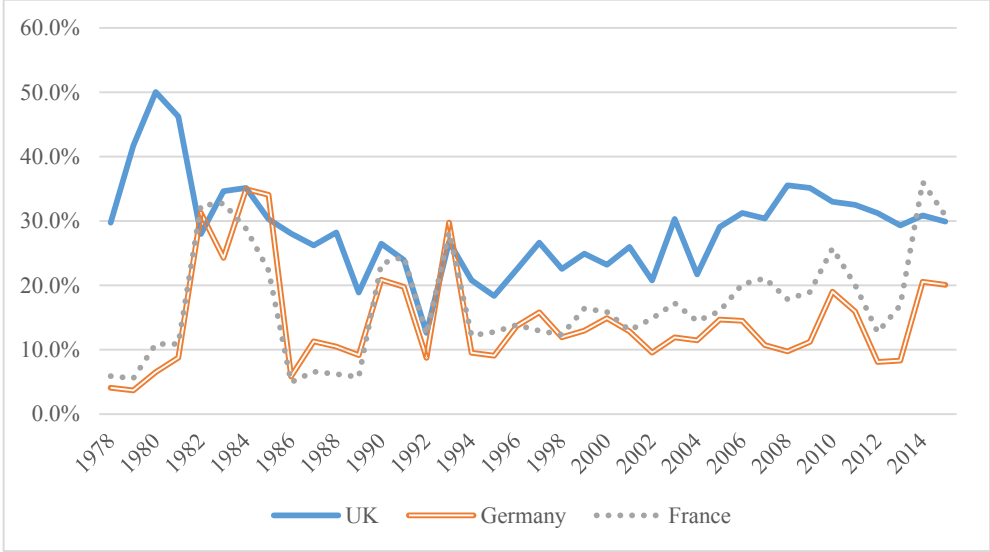
<sup>3</sup> Bache, Ian, Stephen George, and Simon Bulmer. 2011. *Politics in the European Union*. Oxford: OUP Oxford

Figure 1. UK and EU Citizens' Bad Perception of Membership from 1978-2015



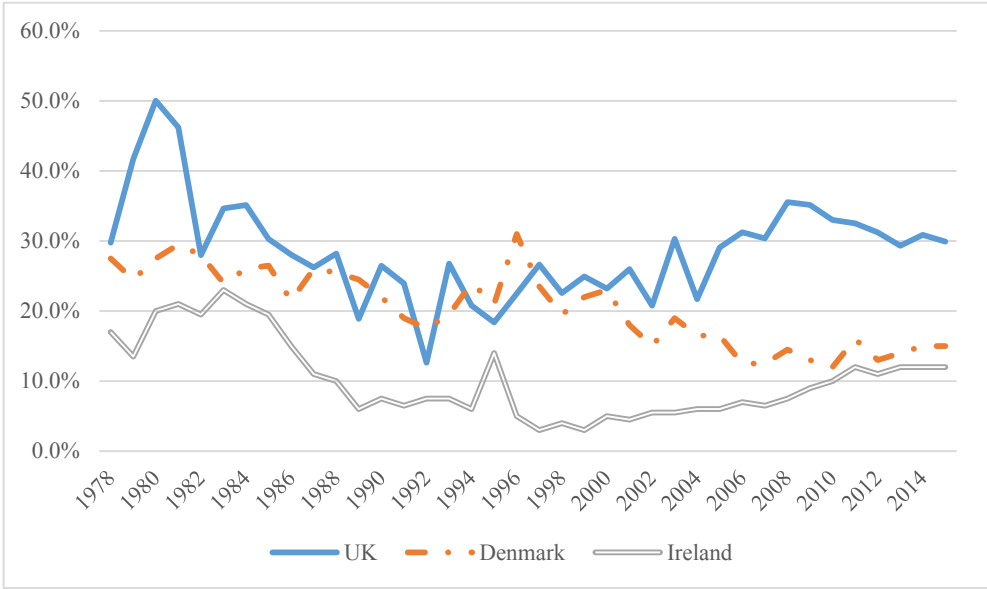
Source: Eurobarometer 1978-2015 (annual average).

Figure 2. Citizens' Bad Perception of EU Membership in Big Three Member States from 1978-2015



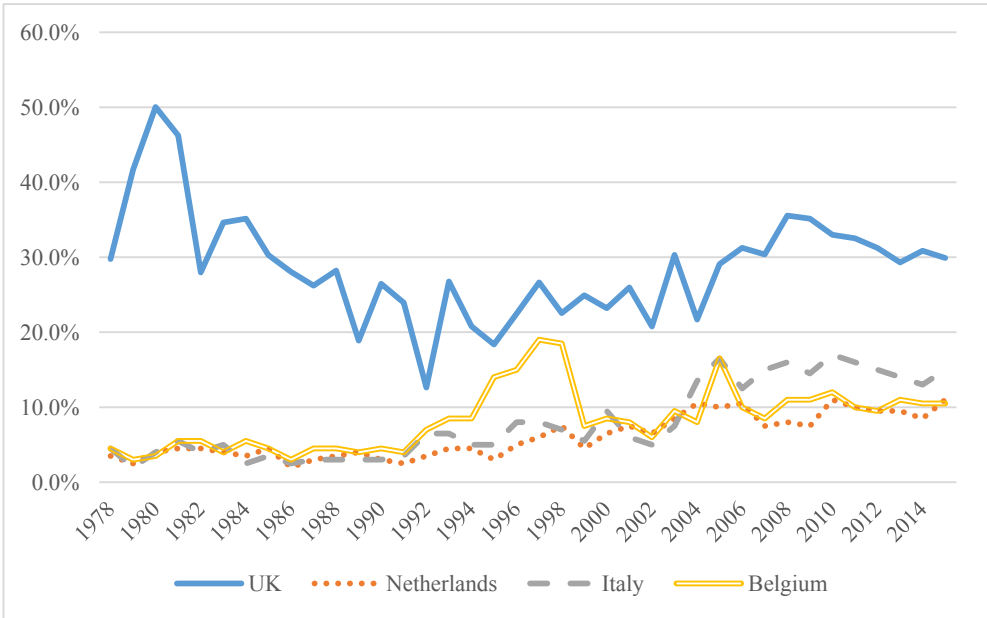
Source: Eurobarometer 1987-2015 (annual average).

Figure 3. Citizens' Bad Perception of EU Membership in Late Joiner Member Stated from 1978-2015



Source: Eurobarometer 1987-2015 (annual average).

Figure 4. Citizens' Bad Perception of EU Membership in Founding Member States from 1978-2015



Source: Eurobarometer 1987-2015 (annual average).

Previous studies have focused on Euroscepticism merely as a hindrance to European integration and Europeanization that limit Europe from emerging as a truly unified supranational entity. Euroscepticism has begun to receive scholarly attention since the late 1990s. As Vasilopoulou notes, the Euroscepticism study is challenging because it adapts accordingly depending on national context, which makes it more difficult to pin point to one particular value and belief system. The first spark that led to plethora of research is Taggart's 'A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems'<sup>4</sup>, in which he used the tools from the Comparative Politics to scrutinize opposition to European Integration. Since then the complexity of the EU system and its policies added with the national context, made the Euroscepticism to be studied in a multidimensional way. As a result, it can be pointed to several subjects such as the EU system as a whole, institutional design, specific policies, or the perceived general direction of the EU policies.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, in most of the previous studies, Euroscepticism has been studied as a dependent variable that resulted from various factors such as public opinion, external events, political parties, and institutions. Consequently, there are many ways of defining and categorizing different types of Euroscepticism. Taggart and Szczerbiak have made distinctions between the 'hard' and 'soft' Euroscepticism. 'Hard' Euroscepticism refers to principled opposition to the EU that entails rejection of the entire project or a wish for complete withdrawal. On the contrary, 'soft' Euroscepticism is characterized by qualified or contingent opposition to European integration that include opposition to specific policies or nationalized context opposition. Furthermore, Kopecky and Mudde advanced the literature by conceptualizing Euroscepticism in four different categories of Euro-enthusiasts, Europragmatists, Eurosceptics, and Eurorejects based on Easton's

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<sup>4</sup> Taggart, Paul. 2003. "A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems." *European Journal of Political Research*. 33(3) 363-388.

<sup>5</sup> Vasilopoulou, Sofia. 2013. "Continuity and Change in the Study of Euroscepticism: Plus ca change?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*. 51 (1) 153-168.

differentiation.<sup>6</sup> In 2006, Flood published his six-point continuum of rejectionist, revisionist, minimalist, gradualist, reformist and maximalist. Meanwhile Conti set up a five-point-continuum of hard Euroscepticism, soft Euroscepticism, no commitment, functional magnitude and motivation, and finally Vasilopoulou attempted to conceptualize it in three categories of rejecting, conditional and compromising Euroscepticism. The various categorizations of the Euroscepticism, show that there are many ways to conceptualize Euroscepticism and that it all depends on how the EU is perceived. It can follow the general trend of seeing EU in terms of economic benefits and costs, infringing national sovereignty, or be perceived in terms of democratic adequacy and inadequacy. In other words, the concept itself cannot be explained plainly in a single term for it is composed of diverse definitions and meanings. The abovementioned literature has focused on identifying Euroscepticism as a whole, which has been gaining more attention in various European countries as more expressions of doubting the supranational entity have been found. While such conceptualization is helpful, since they focus on the degree of Euroscepticism or base their typology on degree of their opposition or support for the EU, it is not sufficient to explain the political Euroscepticism of the British Conservative Party I attempt to study in this paper. Also, because the Euroscepticism was mainly studied as a dependent variable, the various factors leading up to Euroscepticism is examined, but information on what results from it is lacking. Hence, I want to study the Euroscepticism as an explanatory variable to explain how it affected the leader to finally incorporate national referendum, which meant moving the issue from the elite level to the citizen one. To achieve my paper's goal of examining effects of political Euroscepticism of Conservative Party in Great Britain, in the next section I will look at the existing literature on British Euroscepticism by dividing it into three distinct types.

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<sup>6</sup> Kopecky Petr and Cas Mudde. 2002. "The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe." *European Union Politics* 3(3), pp.308-329.

Given the multidimensional nature of the British Euroscepticism, it can be described to encompass economic, political, and cultural dimensions. However, out of varying dimensions, I will focus on the political one to argue that the political Euroscepticism of Members of Parliament is what exacerbated UK's discontent of EU, which were expressed in parliamentary dissent to subsequently have pressured the leader to hold a national referendum. While the political Euroscepticism has been present in the British parliament since the negotiations of UK membership into the European Community, it was most active in presence of David Cameron. In other words, Eurosceptic sentiment did not suddenly emerge in the 1980s, but rather, it was existent from the British application for the membership. This indicates that within the political realm, Euroscepticism found in the parliamentary parties slowly gained more momentum each year to have finally led to leaving the party leader with no other choice, but to hold the national referendum on the issue in 2016.

In the academic context, Euroscepticism in the political realm has further complicated the relationship between the UK and the EU. Three competing explanations have been advanced for this problematic relationship in the domestic political realm: behaviorist school, party school, and institutionalist school. First, the behaviorist school focused on the importance of leadership behavior and placed emphasis on the way in which the key players have viewed the world. Thus, Baker and Seawright highlight that in the UK, the leaders and British governments' weak motivations were the driving force in less enthusiastic support for European membership. Next, the political parties are emphasized as the source of difficulties in Britain's relationship with Europe. Howe argued that the nature of divisions inside both the Labour and Conservative parties inhibited a thoroughgoing discussion on Europe. On a similar note, Forster argued that the changing nature of the integration project is what makes it difficult for the British political party leaders to justify and explain to their own supporters. On the other hand, the institutionalist group highlights structural explanations as the cause of Britain's problematic relationship with the



integration project. Wilks and Aspinwall points to the electoral system which disproportionately rewards the winning party in parliament system as the main source. Furthermore, the adversarial nature of British politics further made it common for the opposition to oppose the government even in areas where agreement exists between them on the substance of policy.<sup>7</sup> These explanations do help us to understand the dynamics of British political parties, but again since these studies explain structural features for causing Euroscepticism, they still fail to explain what effects Euroscepticism had on the leader.

Therefore, to further examine what role the British Political Euroscepticism has played part in influencing the government and its relationship with the EU, Forster Anthony outlines how the Eurosceptic MPs have succeeded in dividing the two main political parties in the UK in his work, *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics*. He emphasized the impact of skepticism, both on the parties and Britain's policy towards Europe. Most of the studies before him have focused on the Conservative Party alone as encompassing such anti-feeling of the EU. However, he argues that for most of the post-war period, opponents of closer integration were active inside their own political parties in all mainstream parties. Furthermore, he explains that the reason why Euroscepticism in the British political realm did not dominate politics earlier was due to MPs' fear of being charged with disloyalty for party cohesion was the norm. As a result, it allowed the passages of treaties with the European Union as well as its marriage with the EU for forty-three years. In the earlier periods, the MPs' only parliamentary tactics mainly comprised the tabling of Early Day Motions (EDMs) to show discontent within the parliament and voting with the opposition party was highly exceptional.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> George, Stephen. 1998. *An Awkward Partner: Britain in the European Community*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Forster, Anthony. 2002. *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics: Opposition to Europe in the Conservatives and Labour Parties Since 1945*. London, Routledge.

## **2. Intensification of Euroscepticism through Brexit**

Following the literature on Euroscepticism, a further question of how different facets manifested as Brexit remains puzzling. The intensification of Euroscepticism in various facets such as economic, cultural, and political have occurred. Foremost, Britain has been sensitive regarding economic terms with the EU for they have joined the EC based on the analyses of economic calculations, utilitarian cost-benefit considerations, and positive sum game.<sup>9</sup> Thus, when they were first joining the union, the positive aspects outweighed the negative ones for them to encouragingly desire joining, and the pro-membership group included business groups that focused on economic gains through the European integration. The single market and growing European integration meant that the UK could benefit from a bigger, liberal market where it could advocate trade liberalism. Nonetheless, once, the negative aspects of the EU were highlighted, the Eurosceptics focused on the economic loss the Britain was experiencing. As Gamble argues, the first friction of economic contribution to the EU surfaced during Thatcher's term. The UK was not satisfied with how much it contributed and not receiving enough back. Britain was a major contributor due to the Common External Tariff (CET) and through VAT payments, which were the main sources of Community's revenues. In return, Britain received relatively little because the budget supported CAP where the subsidies were paid to small-scale agricultural production farmers, thus, Britain with efficient, large-scale production could not receive funds from it.<sup>10</sup> While Thatcher succeeded in getting Britain's money back in 1984, since then the UK has become more sensitive in economic terms especially with

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<sup>9</sup> Armen Hakhverdian, Erika van Elsas, Wouter van der Brug Theresa Kuhn. 2013. "Euroscepticism and education: A longitudinal study of 12 EU member states, 1973-2010." *European Union Politics*. 14 (4).

<sup>10</sup> Armen, Erika van Elsas, Wouter van der Brug Theresa Kuhn. 2013, pp.18-19.

the contribution it made to the EU despite the budget being only 1 percent of the whole national income at the time.<sup>11</sup>

The cultural Euroscepticism focuses on opposition to EU due to feelings built on historical experience that were passed down from generations to generations. Therefore, it is regarded as opinion claiming that European integration is impossible because there is no common European culture.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, they believe that there is presently no European identity nor the necessary preconditions for a European identity to be fostered in the near future. As a result, it was common for the British to not associate or identify themselves as Europeans throughout the UK's membership.<sup>13</sup> One component of this cultural Euroscepticism is its history. William Wallace articulates the historical argument of British by explaining that historical experience is what provoked Britain's general antipathy toward integration process for it threatened their sovereignty and national identity.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, such special feeling comes from its distinctive history that is in stark contrast to that of continental Europe since its concept as an island empire. On a similar note, as Wellings contends that Britain considers itself completely different from that of the European continent with its historical roots. Nonetheless, he argues that the English nationalism is not just an identity itself, but is rather generated by opposition to European integration, which defends the UK's sovereignty against the encroaching powers of the EU. Therefore, Wellings' view of Euroscepticism is not simply driven by economic pressures, but also with the search of national redefinition, embrace of populist politics, and nationalism.<sup>15</sup>

Other current theories that involve explaining cultural British Euroscepticism are by using national rhetoric that see the British people as having special beliefs about

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<sup>11</sup> BBC. 2009. Full text: Cameron speech on EU. BBC. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8343145.stm> (searched on 2017.04.22)

<sup>12</sup> Leconte, 2010. *Understanding Euroscepticism*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>13</sup> Leconte, 2010, p.15.

<sup>14</sup> Wallace, William. 1991. "Foreign policy and national identity in the United Kingdom's, *International Affairs*, 67, 65-80.

<sup>15</sup> Wellings, Ben. 2010. *Losing the Peace: Euroscepticism and the Foundations of Contemporary English Nationalism*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

themselves. This includes their notions of considering themselves as special, exceptional, and nationally different from others. Among the cultural Eurosceptics, the immigration issue was perceived to be problematic with the refugee crisis that further exacerbated Euroscepticism in 2015. This group has mainly been concerned over enlargement because they feared the integration with different peoples and cultures. The current rule on asylum in the UK is that it follows the Dublin III Regulation, which enables people who arrive in Europe and have a family member in the UK to have their asylum claim transferred to the UK.<sup>16</sup> The UK had firmly secured its borders when it opted out of Schengen Area, in which 26 participating European countries decided to officially abolish passports and all other types of border control among the Europeans.<sup>17</sup> However, with the war in the Middle East, the EU countries began to accept those who were fleeing the violence and subsequently this became a controversial issue in the UK. The leave campaign that featured the refugee crisis as the main reason for leaving the union produced posters that read, “We must break free of the EU and take back control of our borders.”<sup>18</sup> This reflected that the cultural Eurosceptics had felt negatively towards the immigration policy regarding refugees who were considered to bring adverse effects on Britain. Additionally, in the first weeks of the EU referendum campaign in 2015, the number of migrants was announced to be 330,000, which made many British voters anxious with the number. The leave campaign had in fact advocated for leave vote by emphasizing the scale of migrant number, and paradoxically, the regions with the most migrants voted to remain while the regions with less migrants voted to leave.<sup>19</sup> This indicates that the UKIP or

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<sup>16</sup> BBC. 2016. “Schengen: Controversial EU free movement deal explained. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13194723> (searched on 2018-04-28)

<sup>17</sup> BBC. 2016. “Schengen: Controversial EU free movement deal explained. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13194723> (searched on 2018-04-28)

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-06-24/how-brexit-campaign-used-refugees-scare-voters>

<sup>19</sup> The Guardian. 2016. “Fear of immigration drove the leave victory-not immigration itself.” <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/24/voting-details-show-immigration-fears-were-paradoxical-but-decisive> (searched on 2018-05-16).

political advocates against the membership had utilized the cultural Euroscepticism to divide the party further.

While all three facets of Euroscepticism are helpful in explaining the exceptional characteristics of British Euroscepticism, it was ultimately the political actors that utilized such Euroscepticism to further divide the government and parties on the European issue. In Britain, the political Euroscepticism has been observed mainly through party politics. Historically, party unity has been the most important platform where politicians have continuously become more preoccupied with party cohesion and protection of strong, centralized government on the European issues. To put it another way, the ministers' high level of Euroscepticism had caused the discord in the intra-party intactness of the Conservative Party that consequently called for leadership management. While economic, cultural, and immigration policies in regards to refugee crisis did indeed intensify Euroscepticism in Britain, they are not sufficient to grasp the whole picture for the insights on political dynamics are missing. British economic Euroscepticism is wanting because the British still welcomed having access to the European market for they believed that the best economic model to promote was market liberalism. This was largely based on the Keynesian model that emphasizes greater acceptance of neoliberal focus, price stability, and market forces.<sup>20</sup> As a result, the Conservatives were overwhelmingly pro-membership during the 1975 European Referendum unlike the Labour Party who passed a resolution supporting withdrawal since the party was closer to trade union for such integration would potentially damage employment and social spending. Therefore, during the first referendum, the issue had more inter-party conflict nature for the Conservatives unlike in the second referendum where the issue had turned into a completely intra-party problem. Furthermore, such cultural Euroscepticism based on nationalistic tendency is common among other countries and not only restricted to the UK. Thus, the British Euroscepticism cannot

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<sup>20</sup> Whyman, Philip. 2008." The Heritage of the 1975 European Referendum for the British Trade Union Movement." *Labor History Journal*. 49(1), pp.23-45.

solely be explained in terms of cultural distinctiveness. On a similar note, the cultural Euroscepticism was exacerbated by the refugee crisis because many British people were anxious of incoming migrant workers. While this is helpful to gauge how much the voters were affected by the immigration policies and cultural Eurosceptical campaign, since it was the political parties and politicians that utilized this aspect of Euroscepticism to leave the campaign. Thus, political Euroscepticism should be studied as the main driving force behind the Brexit referendum.

### **3. Leadership Behavior in Intra-Party Model**

In a parliamentary system, the support of a majority of ministers votes is an important factor that determines success of the government. In order to ensure stability of the government, parties have to be strongly organized, cohesive, and disciplined.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, factions, coalitions, and backbenchers exist inside the political parties to serve as alternatives to the existing governmental policies. While the goals of each coalition may be different, generally, according to the coalition theory, political parties are typically treated as unconstrained unitary actors that strive to maximize goods such as office, policy, votes, or resources.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, there have been many studies that dealt with political parties with the basic assumption that parties prefer coalitions that include themselves as members and are close to their policy preferences.<sup>23</sup> Such assumption is helpful when considering both inter and intra party politics. Yet, since the focus of this paper is on the relationship between the leader and the MPs, closer examination of intra party relations theories is necessary.

Party behavior has been studied through the institutional and organizational circumstances. On the complex issue of intraparty dynamics, Kam, Bianco and Smyth

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<sup>21</sup> Lupia, Arthur and McCubbins 1994. "Who Controls? Information and the Structure of Legislative Decision Making." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 19(3), pp.361-384.

<sup>22</sup> Maor, Moshe.1998. "The relationship between government and opposition in the bundestag and house of commons in the run-up to the Maastricht Treaty." *West European Politics*. 21 (3), pp. 187-207.

<sup>23</sup> Warwick, Paul. 2005. "Do Policy Horizons Structure the Formation of Parliamentary Governments?" *The Evidence from an Expert Survey.* *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(2), pp. 373-387.

have argued that the backbench preferences normally act as a considerable constraint on ministerial appointments, and subsequently the ideological proximity of ministers to the parliamentary party will become more significant. There are several different approaches to intra-party relations. First, under the coalition theory, all assume that parties are unitary actors in a sense that they not only behave, but also think as an entity.<sup>24</sup> Under such assumption, many scholars have studied organizational structures that are most effective in coalitions. Their argument is that the party behavior is not exogenously given but determined by the intra-party politics. Strom claimed that the parties with decentralized decision procedures in which the authority is transferred from the party leader or parliamentary party group to the other extra-parliamentary bodies are less effective in coalition negotiations because they are constrained by their ideologically motivated activists.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, Maor has proposed that decentralized parties are stronger in coalition negotiations because they are able to handle intra-party conflicts within the party and not in public. While these authors highlight organizational structures that call for coalition formations and give basic structure of what intra-party politics may look like, they are not sufficient for examining deeper relationships between the leader and the MPs.

Instead, to study the intra-party politics model, what weakens the intra-party cohesion or unity should be scrutinized first. The theoretical literature on party unity encompasses scholars utilizing various ways to measure party cohesion. While there are many ways to measure party unity, Rice index has been the most common measurement for voting unity among legislative parties, which was developed by Stuart Rice in 1925.<sup>26</sup> Rice score is calculated to reflect the levels of cross-voting among members of the same party and it ranges from zero if the numbers of MPs

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<sup>24</sup> Green-Pedersen, Christoffer. 2010. "Bringing Parties into Parliament: The Development of Parliamentary Activities in Western Europe." *Party Politics*, 16(3), pp.112-132.

<sup>25</sup> Muller, Wolfgang and Strom. 2003. *Coalition Governments in Western Europe*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>26</sup> Rice, Stuart. 1925. "The Behavior of Legislative Groups." *Political Science Quarterly* 40: 60-72.

voting aye equals the number of MPs voting no to one if all members vote together.<sup>27</sup> It is calculated by subtracting the percentages of aye votes and percentages of no votes. Another most widespread aggregate measure of dissent, which was first used by Norton is computing the frequency of dissent by counting the percentage of dissenting divisions in the parliament. In addition to frequency of dissent, Kam utilized other ways to measure dissent by calculating its extensivity and depth to explain the general patterns of dissent in the British parliament.<sup>28</sup> Following the intra-party politics model of Dorey, the cost of dissent is high on the unity of the party. Friction between MPs and the party is inevitable and for the MPs, electoral re-election prospects are their utmost priority. Therefore, while there are certain benefits for MPs to joining party organizations it also entails costs. For instance, if the unpopular party policy endangers their re-election prospects, then a MP has two possible choices. First, a MP may engage in a constituency service to build up a personal vote that is independent of the his or her party and its policies. Second, a MP may dissent in voting to distance oneself from the party's position.<sup>29</sup> By doing so, a MP may contribute to the defeat of one's government by giving majority to the opposition party.<sup>30</sup> Once such dissent occurs, it is considered to be significant because it can be damaging to show disunity of the party to the electorate. In other words, there are both internal and external negative effects of dissent. It is internally damaging to the party in parliament, and externally damaging party's image to the electorate. The main actors in the formal model of intra-party politics consists of the MPs and the leader as main actors in the model. They act accordingly by the following assumptions. First, party leaders and MPs play to different electoral audiences. Both sides know that this situation generates incentives for the MPs to distance themselves from the unpopular government policies. Second,

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<sup>27</sup> Rice, 1925, p. 63.

<sup>28</sup> Kam, Christopher 2009. *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>29</sup> Kam, Christopher. 2009, pp.15-17.

<sup>30</sup> Hix, Abdul, and Gerard Roland. 2005. "Powers to Parties: Cohesion and Competition in the European Parliament, 1979-2001." Cambridge University Press. 35 209-234.



the MPs believe that dissent may win them votes, though they also recognize the side effect of possible limitations to their advancement and invites discipline from the party. Then finally, the leaders are equally aware of the damage the dissent can inflict upon their parties, so they counter with a variety of tactics.<sup>31</sup> If such dissent is left unchecked, it would lead to a serious collective action problem within the party.<sup>32</sup> In line with Owens' explanation on party cohesion, the legislators are purposive, and they typically join to work with political parties because parties offer a possibility of working with like-minded fellow ministers and allow instant access to a party brand name that can enhance their electoral prospects. Furthermore, significant amount of legislative resources such as promotion to committee, leadership positions, and influence over the distribution of patronage are given. As a result, being a member of the governing party rather than the opposition party or coalition offers significantly greater benefits.<sup>33</sup> In exchange, MPs are expected to show party loyalty in voting.

Thus, in my paper, I attempt to study the relationships between the MPs and the party leader to measure party cohesion. All the parliamentarians are assumed to be strategic actors concerned with policy-making, career advancement, and re-election.<sup>34</sup> Even though the leaders and party members both benefit from cooperation, the friction between them are inevitable if the policies are controversial, and it may bring consequences for the party. Therefore, the system works as the following: an MP who wishes to exercise policy influence or enjoy the fruits of higher office must attain a cabinet post, but since the party leaders control advancement to the cabinet, the importance of maintaining good relations with party leaders is highlighted.<sup>35</sup> For instance, as one of the MPs describes, "As a backbencher you can say what you like, take up whatever issue you like, mix with unpopular trade unionists, MPs or

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<sup>31</sup> Kam, 2009, p. 25.

<sup>32</sup> Owens, John. 2003. "Part 1: Cohesion Explaining Party Cohesion and Discipline in Democratic Legislatures: Purposiveness and Contexts." *Journal of Legislative Studies* 9(4), pp.12-40

<sup>33</sup> Owens. 2003, p.35.

<sup>34</sup> Muller and Strom. 2003, pp.25-28.

<sup>35</sup> Kam, 2009, p.33.

journalists—and the whips can't touch you. It is only when you are tempted by ambition for office that you are no longer free.”<sup>36</sup> This shows that it has been a norm for MPs' loyalty to be exchanged for career advancement. However, this has been seen as a temporary strategy for eventually, a point is reached where an MP realizes that promotion is not forthcoming and that little is to be gained by obediently voting with the party line.

Compared to other parties, the Conservative Party unity was expected to be the norm. The Conservative MPs' voting loyalty is a product of agreement with their leaders and feelings of loyalty toward them and such loyalty was the norm in the party for the voting behavior during the 1970s remained unharmed with only 0.1 to 10% of dissent rate.<sup>37</sup> Crowe argues that this was possible because the Conservative style of policy making did not require overt use of power due to its tradition.

Kam has explained intra-party discipline of the British parties to examine why dissent is significant and what implications it has on the party leader. The dissention can have pernicious electoral effects on a party even if it does not immediately alter legislative outcomes.<sup>38</sup> This leads the party to attempt to manage the party more carefully for it can also destabilize a party's leadership. One example is the Conservative rebellion against the then party leader, Ian Duncan Smith, who saw the downfall of his authority since 2002 due to such dissension.

Luebbert developed an intra-party model that assumed a party leader to be motivated by the desire to remain party leader, even if this meant sacrificing what others might consider as best interests of the party.<sup>39</sup> This is especially the case for the party leaders because most party leaders' journey is downwards if they cannot hold

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<sup>36</sup> Usherwood, Simon. 2002. "Opposition to the European Union in the UK: The dilemma of public opinion and party management." *Government and Opposition*, 37. 211-230.

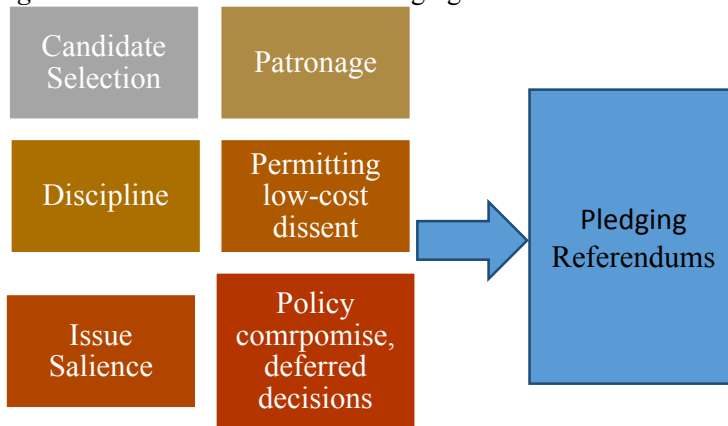
<sup>37</sup> Crowe, Edward. 1986. "The Web of Authority: Party Loyalty and Social Control in the British House of Commons." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 11(2), pp.161-185.

<sup>38</sup> Kam, 2009, p. 34.

<sup>39</sup> Luebbert, Gregory. 1986. *Comparative Democracy: Policy-Making and Government Coalitions in Europe and Israel*. New York: Columbia University Press.

onto their leadership successfully. Therefore, they are likely to fight hard to stay on top with some damages to the party as a whole in the process. Obviously, the interests of the leader and the rest of the party may diverge that may account for their different behaviors. Typically, legislative leaders have a range of inducements to place in front of individual members.<sup>40</sup> Leaders may incorporate various methods for managing dissent by using the institutional tools available to them. Most studies have pointed out patronage, committee appointments, procedural measures, and chief whips as possible tools available to leaders in a legislative system.<sup>41</sup> The most recent study by Lynch and Whitaker have identified seven methods for managing party cohesion or intra-party management: (1) Candidate selection, (2) Patronage, (3) Discipline, (4) Permitting low-cost dissent, (5) Issue Salience, (6) Policy compromise and deferred decisions, (7) Pledging referendums.<sup>42</sup> Depending on the issue and leader, party leaders will attempt to employ different methods simultaneously or separately to quell dissents effectively.

*Figure 5. Leader's Methods of Managing Dissent*



Source: Kam, 2009, p. 6

<sup>40</sup> Blondel, Jean, and Maurizio Cotta, eds. 1996. *Party and Government: An Inquiry into the Relationship between Governments and Supporting Parties in Liberal Democracies*. New York: Macmillan.

<sup>41</sup> Kats, Richard. 1980. *A Theory of Parties and Electoral Systems*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

<sup>42</sup> Lynch, Philip and Richard Whitaker. (2013). "Where There is Discord, Can They Bring Harmony? Managing Intra-Party Dissent on European Integration in the Conservative Party." *The British Journal of Politics*. 15. 317-339.

Having control over the candidate selection can be significant for it can mean having control over the composition of a parliamentary party. Accordingly, to prevent dissenters in the parliamentary party, the leader may choose to not select them in the candidate selection process. The goal of the leadership is to select a group of ministers that can be expected to be cohesive and thus display unity without the need of further disciplinary measures. On the side of ministers, nomination of candidates is important because this is a way for them to gain access to the party label and its privileges in campaigning and electoral process.<sup>43</sup> When the MP's place is determined by party leaders, the minds of candidates are likely to be much more concentrated on loyalty to the party line.<sup>44</sup>

Patronage is another method a party leader may incorporate to reduce dissent once the party gets elected with majority. Then the party leader acquires the power to appoint or promote his supporters within his party. This includes appointment to ministerial posts, cabinet members, and committee chairs. While the number of posts to cabinet is limited, MPs still expect their leaders to handout such posts for career advancements. In addition, the loyal members may be put on the honors list submitted to the Queen, alongside those of retiring ministers and others who have rendered faithful service to the nation or the party.<sup>45</sup> Regarding the dissenters, the leader may promote them to bind them to party policy and mollify them

Leaders may also utilize discipline method to manage intra-party dissent. One of the ways leaders discipline their ministers is by withdrawing the whip. This indicates that the MP is no longer the member of the parliamentary party and not subject to its rules. In other words, a leader is may subsequently expel MPs who provoke extreme disapproval of their party's leadership. While MPs remain in post,

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<sup>43</sup> Sieberer, Ulrich. 2006. "Party Unity in Parliamentary Democracies: A Comparative Analysis." *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 12(2), 150-178.

<sup>44</sup> Bowler, Shaun, David Farraell, and Ian McAllister. 1996. "Constituency Campaigning in Parliamentary Systems with Preferential Voting: Is There a Paradox?" *Electoral Studies* 15: 461-76.

<sup>45</sup> Crowe, Edward. 1986. pp.161-163.

they effectively become independent of the party they once belonged to. However, it should also be noted that removing the whip and expulsion must be used with caution for they could exacerbate tensions. The use of power to secure loyalty of the MPs may arouse hostility or resentment in the object of its exercise and it is not always the most efficient way to bring about desired behavior.<sup>46</sup>

The party leadership may also permit low-cost dissent in the beginning if it not perceived to be very serious or threatening to the party as a whole. This can either be by granting MPs a free vote in Parliament or by tolerating membership of Eurosceptic groups in the parliamentary party. In the parliament voting, MPs are put under pressure to vote a certain way by their party leaders. This is to ensure that the party vote along the party line. However, leaders may allow free votes on issues that are seen as a matter of conscience that usually include ethical issues. Thus, permitting free votes indicates that the leadership is allowing the MPs to vote based on individual choices rather than forcing them to strictly follow the party stance.

The government is considered to be the key player in the policy-making process in parliamentary democracies.<sup>47</sup> This is due to party controlling the legislative majority and floor. Consequently, the government sets the policy agenda, pushes major policy changes by introducing bills in the legislative process and gets its initiatives passed with much trouble. Thus, the agenda-setting role the party leaders play is important for it allows them to emphasize policies they deem salient and mute issues that are threatening. The leaders may use this tactic of issue salience to control what legislative agenda

Party leader adopt policy compromises and lowest common denominator decisions to dampen internal tensions.<sup>48</sup> Thus leaders may postpone conflict by adopting imprecise and open-ended positions. This has been utilized in policies that are

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<sup>46</sup> Crowe, Edward. 1986, p.164.

<sup>47</sup> Brauningner, Thomas and Marc Debus. 2009. "Legislative Agenda-setting in Parliamentary Democracies." *European Journal of Political Research*, 48: 804-839.

<sup>48</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2013, p. 323.

deemed to cause turmoil once the leader makes a decision that is unpopular or contrary to the opinion of the majority. This can be done through leaders to adopt policies that may be different from their original stances on certain issues to slightly change their stance to encompass more support from the party members.

The main purpose of holding referenda is for legitimating or refusing legitimating policy or constitutional changes. European leaders have turned to referenda regarding European treaties or laws that required superseding political power to the supranational level. There have been two popular views on what implications the national referendums on EU have. One is providing the government with the opportunity to check the reality of how the voters perceive certain policies that since the polls do not give an accurate picture of what voters want. It has been described to have different outcomes than the polls. For example, Butler and Ranney have pointed out that it is not uncommon for referenda to produce results apparently at odds with the findings of polls taken in the months before a referendum.<sup>49</sup> Thus, it is a way for the government to accurately gauge the true feelings of the voters on specific issues. On the other hand, other interpretation of the referenda on Europe is that the voters are expressing their feelings on the general performance of their governments rather than the EU itself. This highlights the extent to which European issues are politicized as the domestic party issues.<sup>50</sup> A referendum on European issues has been utilized as a possible solution to mending divisions for the governing parties. This is because it can allow ratification if a parliamentary majority is doubtful, respond to public demand, and bring electoral advantages.<sup>51</sup> Since the governing parties control the timing of referendums and sequence them to not damage their electoral prospects, they have been utilized to possibly boost their party's democratic credentials. For instance, in

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<sup>49</sup> Franklin, Mark, Cees van der Eijk, and Michael Marsh. 1995. "Referendum outcomes and trust in government: Public support for Europe in the wake of Maastricht." *West European Politics*. 18(3), pp.101-117.

<sup>50</sup> Franklin, Mark, Cees van der Eijk, and Michael Marsh. 1995, pp.105-107

<sup>51</sup> Franklin, Mark, Cees van der Eijk, and Michael Marsh. 1995, p. 115.

Scandinavian parties, they have often pushed the EU issues away from Parliament and into the electoral arena through referendums.

As a result, this leads me to hypothesize that as internal dissent of the Conservatives increases the likelihood of unsuccessful coordination among the party members, it is more likely for the leadership to actively utilize tools available to them to manage intra-party dissent. Applying this model to David Cameron's period, I argue that while Cameron managed the Conservative Party as a party leader and a prime minister, he was running out of options as he had attempted to use all of the outlined methods to prevent his party from severe divisions. Therefore, pledging referendum was his last resort which he had pursued. In other words, failing all other methods have weakened his relative power within his party and government that pressured him more to keep his promise of holding a referendum ultimately.

While Lynch and Whitaker have simply outlined the leadership methods without giving values or ordering them, I have outlined the seven methods by grouping them into six and one. This indicates that the level of dissent during Cameron's parliament was perceived to be too severe for him to move from using the six tools simultaneously to the final one.

#### **4. Research Implementation**

Therefore, my research question is the following: What led David Cameron to promise and hold the national referendum on EU? Specifically, what made him move from six tools of intra-party management to the final one? I argue that this was due to the growing political Euroscepticism inside his party and parliament. However, political Euroscepticism was not a new phenomenon that newly emerged under Cameron's leadership. Rather, it had gained its momentum under Thatcher that reached its peak during Cameron's premiership. It is indicated that throughout Britain's marriage with the EU, a call for national referendum among the MPs frequently occurred. However, it was ultimately David Cameron who was forced to keep his

promise of holding the referendum. Inevitably, Cameron was pressured by increasing political Euroscepticism in both the Conservative Party and the parliament from 2005 to 2015. The Euroscepticism in his parliament during 2010-2015 was more severe compared to that of 2005-2010, and Cameron was unceasingly losing his place because he had to sooth dissent from his party members, coalition partners, and supporters on many issues simultaneously. In addition, the tools that a leadership could utilize to minimize intra-party dissent have been actively sought by Cameron during this period. However, since he was running out of options to pacify Eurosceptics in his party as the level of political Euroscepticism kept increasing, he had to use the last resort of holding the national referendum. This study aims to explain the behavior of David Cameron in the context of political Euroscepticism literature, more specifically through the lens of leadership management of dissent in intra-politics model.

Most of studies on behavior of the MPs in Parliament have yielded both qualitative and quantitative measures. The most effective way of studying their behavior has been through examining the voting records.<sup>52</sup> Cohesion and leadership management are important especially in parliaments. As Bowler, Farrell, and Katz contend in their work, “the maintenance of a cohesive voting bloc inside a legislative body is a crucially important feature of parliamentary life.”<sup>53</sup> The definition of party cohesion is the extent to which group members can be observed to work together for the party’s goals.<sup>54</sup> For the party cohesion to be present, the two conditions need to be met. First, the party members must regularly accept and act upon the commands of the leader or leaders.<sup>55</sup> Second, to make the MPs follow the orders, the leader has “ways and means of inducing recalcitrant members to accept and act upon commands.”<sup>56</sup> In

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<sup>52</sup> Baker David, Andrew Gamble, Steve Ludlam, and David Seawright. 1999. “Backbenchers with Attitude: A Seismic Study of the Conservative Party and Dissent on Europe. Ohio State University Press. Columbus.

<sup>53</sup> Bowler, Shaun, David Farrell, and Richard Katz. “Party Cohesion, Party Discipline, and Parliaments.” Ohio State University Press. Columbus.

<sup>54</sup> Ozbudun, Ergun. 1970. *Party Cohesion in Western Democracies: A Causal Analysis* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

<sup>55</sup> Bowler, Shaun, David Farrell, and Richard Katz., p.4

<sup>56</sup> Bowler, Shaun, David Farrell, and Richard Katz., p.5



other words, two conditions are related because the leadership has to convene more aggressively when cohesion is low. Therefore, to understand the parliamentary nature, the assumption that the existence of unified blocs of legislators is the beginning. To observe such political Euroscepticism found in the Conservative Party, I use the Parliamentary sources such as roll-call votes data of Parliamentarians, interviews of the MPs, David Cameron's speeches, and press conferences scripts to examine the intra-party cohesion under Cameron's leadership. These sources will be used to measure the party cohesion under Cameron and how these have led him to use various tactics to keep his party from falling apart. Under such circumstances, he was eventually led to keep his promise of holding a referendum. Hence, the political Euroscepticism in the House of Commons from 2005 to 2015 was measured through dissent, political speeches, party manifestos, and public speeches of MPs, and defections to UKIP of MPs. Consequently, these will impact the leader's decision on which tactic to use.

*Hypothesis 1: If the political Euroscepticism or the level of dissent in the House of Commons is present, but not threatening to the party as the dissension is not extensive nor deep, the party leader will try to utilize tools to keep intra-party fissure as small as possible.*

*Hypothesis 2: If the political Euroscepticism or the level of dissent in the House of Commons is present, and it is threatening to the viability of the party as shown by deep, extensive, and frequent dissent, the party leader will resort to holding the referendum as a tool of intra-party management.*

In sum, the existing research on the reasons of the UK discontent or doubting of the EU or British Euroscepticism reaches different conclusions depending on which

facet it was studied on. Their findings imply that various factors should be taken into account when examining the relationship between the UK and the EU.

The ultimate goal of leader's management of intra-party dissent is to display his or her party as credible to continue holding on to the power. Thus, Cameron had rigorously utilized dissent management methods to quell his critics. However, once he was re-elected in 2015, he could not abandon his promise of holding the referendum on negotiated terms as he had promised initially in 2013 because by that time, he had no allies left. This was due to his low intra-party cohesion. Accordingly, because he had focused on appeasing his dissenters, he had antagonized his European allies, business leaders, and close allies. Furthermore, his attempts were not seen as sufficient in the Eurosceptics' eyes either, for they wanted more radical measures against the EU. Thus, my paper aims to overcome the aforementioned limitations of the existing research on British Euroscepticism and answer why David Cameron was led to keep this promise on national referendum through evaluating how he had incorporated tools available to him in managing dissent and unforeseen consequences that were brought upon him.

## **Chapter III. British Political Euroscepticism Before Cameron**

This study is concerned with the impact of Euroscepticism on the UK and how it was ultimately manifested in the 2016 Brexit. Generally, the Euroscepticism has been employed as a generic label for a negative point of view towards the EU. According to Collier, British Euroscepticism is defined as general opposition of the EU that focuses on two interconnected processes, economic and political integration within Europe. In addition, the term, Eurosceptics is commonly applied to the Conservative MPs who oppose Europe. Following this definition, I argue that the political Euroscepticism deeply rooted in the Conservative Party since the UK's membership into the EU presented had ultimately called the need for the leadership intra-management. Though the way in which British Euroscepticism has evolved over time has been multifaceted in nature as Anthony Forster describes, it ranges from a relatively latent questioning of the value of involvement with the European project to full and open doubts about the benefits of EU membership.<sup>57</sup> Previous research on it has been studied chronologically by highlighting the evolution and manifestation within the British political arena. However, since Brexit occurred in 2016 with the national referendum, the focus should rather be on the processes and decisions that led to leadership letting the citizens decide. Therefore, Cameron's leadership should be examined in more details.

There are several competing explanations for the problematic relationship between the Great Britain and EU. Among these, I will focus on the party school explanation that point to political parties as the source of the difficulties in Britain's relationship with Europe. One way to study party-based Euroscepticism is through observing the domestic contextual factors by country.<sup>58</sup> While this school usefully

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<sup>57</sup> Forster, 2002, p.12.

<sup>58</sup> Taggart, Paul. 2003, pp. 380-384.

locates the European issue within the political arena, it has often overlooked the intra-party nature of the European question and opposition to it. Therefore, I attempt to bridge this gap by exploring intra-party nature of the British Conservative Party and answer the question of why the political Euroscepticism was so dominant in the party. Furthermore, such intra-party nature can be explained by the degree of party cohesion because in the British political arena, the topic of Europe has always been the source of internal divisions in the mainstream parties such as the Labour and Conservative.<sup>59</sup> As the internal political Euroscepticism increased, it became more difficult for Labour and Conservative party leaders to justify and explain the European Integration developments to their own supporters.<sup>60</sup> In other words, a lack of party cohesion in the Conservative Party lowered its credibility to lead British politics for it prevented a united response from the UK during the 2005-2015. This indicates that the party cohesion was often jeopardized due to differing degrees of opposition being manifested in the parliamentary arena. Even though, the fear of not following the party line kept the voting with the opposition party to stay at the minimum level during the earlier period.<sup>61</sup> As more opportunities emerged for the MPs to oppose government policy, the scale of opposition in the Conservative Party increased. Both Thatcher and Major have been removed from office due to the European question conflict within their cabinets and party. Therefore, this study is focused on answering the question of why Cameron had promised to use the final tool of managing dissent during his tenure over the European issue.

Usually the leaders are reluctant to move important political decisions to popular arena because while referendums are elite-initiated events, they can have elite-defying consequences. They are used for immediate effect, but their institutional

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<sup>59</sup> Howe, Martin. 1996. "Monetary Policy after Maastricht: How much Independence will Britain Possess?". In: Holmes M. (eds) *The Eurosceptical Reader*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

<sup>60</sup> Howe, 1996, pp. 286-288.

<sup>61</sup> Forster, 2002, pp.35-37.

impact has a considerable weight and they are not easily forgotten.<sup>62</sup> This means that leaders are more careful with committing to referendums on issues that they consider divisive. Since British domestic politics has become more tightly attached to the European issues, it had become more natural for party leaders to worry about the electoral consequences of their European policies. David Cameron had decided to keep his pledge of holding a referendum, because of changing dynamics both within his party and parliament from 2005 to 2015 and even after he was re-elected with majority in 2015. Notable changes within this period include changes in party ideology and strategy follow change in the composition of the dominant group within a party, the distribution of power between groups, and leadership change.<sup>63</sup> With such changing nature, the dissent in parliament was more frequent, deep, and extensive that required the prime minister to take action in managing his party more. Given that majority of parliamentarians are elites who were chosen by the people to vote for them, allowing popular vote is a huge step. This is especially so in Britain where parliamentary sovereignty is considered to be both important and sacred. Hence, it is a meaningful step for leaders to take to give up on their parliamentary sovereignty to let the people decide instead.

## **1. The UK Political Nature**

Compared to other systems of government, the traditional British political system emphasizes the party unity. Therefore, it is commonly viewed as a unitary state in which stability was prized and founded on a strong, centralized government and party system.<sup>64</sup> It was founded upon the principle that ‘government knows best’, which made the British cherish parliamentary sovereignty. Also, compared to other countries

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<sup>62</sup> Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2008. “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus.” Cambridge University Press. 39, pp.1-23.

<sup>63</sup> Harmel and Tan, 2003. “Party actors and party change: Does factional dominance matter? European Journal of Political Science Research, 42(3), pp.409-424.

<sup>64</sup> Vines, Emma. 2014. “Reframing English Nationalism and Euroscepticism: From Populism to the British Political Tradition.” British Politics. 9(3), pp.255-274.

in Europe, the British model has enjoyed a long and remarkable history of political stability. The system of the UK has moved from its traditional status as a classic example of majoritarian democracy towards that of consensus democracy. This indicates that both competition and cooperation between party elites have emerged. Therefore, the British model is unique in that it has both majoritarian democracy and consensus democracy. The majoritarian democracy or the winner-takes-all principle generates a set of features such as the concentration of executive power in the hands of one-party governments, fusion of executive and legislative power with the cabinet dominating the legislature, and a two-party system based on a single dimension of competition and a first-past-the-post electoral system. On the contrary, the consensus model of democracy includes characteristics that are exact opposite of the majoritarian democracy that include: a clear separation of legislative and executive power so that it is impossible for the latter to dominate the former, a multi-party system based on multiple dimensions of political conflict and a proportional electoral system. While the two systems are contrasting, the recent observations show that the UK model has become somewhat complicated for it has become difficult to describe the model as having characteristics of one system because after 1974, pluralism has emerged. As a result, Liiphart has noted that the significant increase in parliamentary defeats for major government proposals had become more frequent. Such changed rules of the game increased the need for inter party cooperation. Furthermore, with the expansion of different election arenas the areas where the part systems operate expanded as well. Therefore, the British party systems operate in electoral, legislative, and executive arenas and at local, regional, national, and European levels of jurisdiction.

The dominance of two-party system in British politics ensures that inter-party cooperation remains low such as cross-party negotiations and collaborations. Consequently, cohesive intra-party nature remains as the norm with party discipline being used in the parliament because the “British parliamentary parties are renowned

for their discipline and cohesion.”<sup>65</sup> The primary discipline method that the leaders use is granting majority of ministerial jobs to MPs who owed their status as party candidates.<sup>66</sup> Studying the competitions and cooperation between the members of British political parties will allow us to understand the how the political Euroscepticism manifested in the parliamentary arena. This will further attempt to answer the question of why all governments came into office as relatively supportive of European integration, but became more skeptical by the end of their period in office. Furthermore, since the leadership role is emphasized in the British political system the responsible government is defined as a government that is acting responsible by taking effective measures to dominate the Parliament instead of submitting to Parliamentary control.<sup>67</sup>

Compared to other periods in British political history, Euroscepticism represents a widespread attitude in the party with each parliamentary grouping taking various forms of Euroscepticism. Overall, the British Euroscepticism is a general attitude ranging from skepticism to outright hostility about to Britain’s involvement in moves towards supranational European integration and that it has become a structural development in British politics.<sup>68</sup>

I only focus on the Conservative Party because Euroscepticism first emerged from the Conservative Party with the term being used once to refer to the right wing of the party who opposed European Integration. Also, in the end, Brexit occurred during the Conservative era, which indicates that Brexit was a failure of Conservative Party’s policy for the official stance of the party at the time was to remain in the reformed EU. Furthermore, it was the failure of David Cameron’s strategy that moved the EU issue

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<sup>65</sup> Beer, Samuel. 1965. *Modern British Politics*. London: Faber & Faber.

<sup>66</sup> Kats, Richard and Peter Mair. 1992. *Party Organizations: A Data Handbook on Party Organizations in Western Democracies, 1960-90*. Sage.

<sup>67</sup> Vines, 2014, p.257.

<sup>68</sup> Alexandre-Collier, 2015a. Euroscepticism under Margaret Thatcher and David Cameron: From Theory to Practice. *Observatoire de la société britannique*, La Garde: UFR Lettres et sciences Humaines. [Observatory of the British society, La Garde : UFR Letters and Human Sciences].

to the public arena. While it is true that the low party cohesion on the European issue further divided the party that exacerbated political Euroscepticism within the UK, it was ultimately the failure of prime minister, David Cameron's strategy of holding a referendum. He had made moves to hold the referendum out of his firm belief that he had successfully renegotiated the terms. Therefore, a closer examination of the relationship between Cameron and his MPs along with the party cohesion of the Conservative Party during his leadership and how he had managed to quell dissent would help shed light onto why he was led to choose the last management tool of holding a national referendum during this period.

## **2. Why the Conservative Party?**

Various forms of Eurosceptic parties exist in the European political realm. Single issue Eurosceptical parties that only exist to express Euroscepticism and to mobilize electors on the European issue while protest-based parties with Euroscepticism that take anti-EU positions as adjunct to their general opposition to the functioning of political function systems. Established party with Eurosceptical position are defined as parties that have been in government or that have attempted to promote themselves as worthy of support because of their proximity to the governmental parties. Then finally, Eurosceptic factions occur when a significant faction of an existing party expresses opposition while the party overall expresses support for European integration. This can be a result of defections of prominent figures or by publicly breaking off from the overall party position. The Conservative Party is the most obvious example of a party that has a Eurosceptic faction. Taggart found that by looking at factional conflicts within parties, all Eurosceptical factions exist in parties that are either governing parties or are in governing coalitions at the time of the election. This indicates that frequent conflicts about European issue should be studied in intra-party nature rather than inter-party quarrel.



In ideological terms, nationalism competes with neoliberalism in Conservative Party's core beliefs. Throughout the history of the party, the clash between the two has dominated the internal politics especially since the Maastricht Treaty. The clash was between nationalists who resisted dilution of national sovereignty in principle and neoliberals who were mainly concerned with achieving economic integration by all means.<sup>69</sup> As a result, while both Labour Party and Liberal Democrats have settled on policies of slightly pro-Europeanism to British membership of the EU, the Conservative Party added with more ideological dimension is still more deeply, and more publicly, riven by factionalism on the issue of Europe.<sup>70</sup> Conservative Euroscepticism is not simply a set of attitudes, but a type of parliamentary behavior that has the potential to be damaging to the party organization.<sup>71</sup> It is widely acknowledged that the Conservative Party has been the most successful political party during the 20th century, with the notion that this constituted the 'Conservative century'.<sup>72</sup> The Conservatives were in office for 89 out of 141 years, either governing alone, or as the dominant partner in a coalition government from 1874 and 2015.<sup>73</sup> As a result, the Conservatives were able to develop a "strong identity as a party of government because they have generally been the party in government."<sup>74</sup> Nonetheless, it has undergone many political collapses and devastating electoral results. The most disastrous result for the party would be to fall apart and not get elected again. The Conservative Party has experienced successes and failures throughout its existence, but it survived and still holds on to power firmly, which can be attributed to the Conservative Party's strategies and tactics it has employed for survival. As the name

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<sup>69</sup> Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2008, pp.15-16.

<sup>70</sup> Daddow, O. 2015a. Interpreting the Outsider Tradition in British European Policy Speeches from Thatcher to Cameron. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 53(1), pp. 71–88.

<sup>71</sup> Daddow, 2015a, p.84.

<sup>72</sup> Seldon, Anthony and Mike Finn. 2015. *The Coalition Effect 2010-2015*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>73</sup> Wheatcroft, George. 2005. *The Strange Death of Tory England*, London: Penguin Allen Lane.

<sup>74</sup> Gamble, Andrew. 1974. *The Conservative Nation*. Routledge.

suggests, it is a party that tries to maintain the status quo and tradition.<sup>75</sup> However, this does not mean that the Conservatives only stuck to the traditions and values of the past all the time, but rather adapted with the changing political order to meet the needs of the electorate.<sup>76</sup> As a result, the party has emphasized its survival that is based on skills. The Conservative Party has not engaged itself in ideological debate around what conservatism is, which emphasizes that it is difficult to point out exactly what it represents and encompasses.<sup>77</sup> This indicates that there is no single Conservative dogma and no particular text which Conservatives can hold as representing the basis of their beliefs.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, the Conservative Party does not simply reject changes for they are aware that the society is evolutionary, but rather accepts controllable, gradual, and moderate changes to win elections and hold office. In their minds, dominating and leading reformation issues were ways to protect values and interests of the Conservative Party, and this kind of thinking has guided the Conservative Party in the British politics since its inception. As Maude concludes, the “Conservative Party can digest almost anything and turn it to some account which makes the character of the party as a product of a varied political inheritance,”<sup>79</sup>

Another important aspect of the Conservative Party is that its structure is hierarchical and emphasizes its leader. Once the party wins and enters the government, the leader selects the members of the Conservative front bench and those who will lead the party organization. Furthermore, once in office, the prime minister enjoys the prerogatives of the monarch’s first minister. With such privileges, the leader has enjoyed the loyalty of MPs and party activists. Another key point is that the party depends on the leader to lead.<sup>80</sup> This again highlights the importance of a party leader

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<sup>75</sup> Kang, Won Taek. 2008. *The Art of Survival: A History of the British Conservative Party*. Seoul: East Asia Institute Press.

<sup>76</sup> Norton, Philip. 1978. *Conservative dissidents: Dissent within the parliamentary Conservative Party 1970-1974*. London: Temple Smith

<sup>77</sup> Norton, 1978, p.54.

<sup>78</sup> Norton, 1978, p.55

<sup>79</sup> Brauning, Thomas and Marc Debus, 2009, p.820.

<sup>80</sup> Beer, 1965, p.22.

and explains the reason why the Conservative leaders have perceived Europe question to be threatening to their party because it was unnatural for the Conservative party to experience such disloyalty. Conservatives have always known that the object of political activity is power, and that sustained and obvious disunity of the party would prevent the party from holding office or power.<sup>81</sup> This practical wisdom has traditionally acted as a limit to division and a factor of cohesion. Thus, the task of Conservative leadership is to provide coherent and cohesive leadership to an institution which embraces “a diversity of interests, attitudes, and prejudices.”<sup>82</sup> Nonetheless, since the 1970s, there have been frequent Conservative dissidence in the House of Commons on various domestic and foreign issues.<sup>83</sup> The most current and unrelenting issue that exemplifies this is the European one.

The Conservative Party attempted to change internally with democratization and organization reforms of 1998 that generated a shift in the party’s balance of power with the party leader gaining more power.<sup>84</sup> However, this still meant that the leader had to depend on the MPs to sustain the party cohesion because the loyalty of the ministers were not automatically give like in the past. This was due to MPs becoming highly dependent on their local associations and gave priority to their constituents sometimes at the expense of their leaders after local associations became autonomous from the central office due to reforms.

The 2016 referendum was not the first referendum to be held in the UK over the EU membership and Harold Wilson held the membership referendum in 1975. While the European issue remained as having a relatively low issue salience for the public in 1975 and 2016, both leaders turning to the popular vote on EU membership indicates that the issue had become too salient for the leaders to ignore. Nonetheless, a stark difference between the two is that Harold Wilson was the leader of the Labour

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<sup>81</sup> Maor, 1998, p.45.

<sup>82</sup> Norton, 1978, p. 76.

<sup>83</sup> Lubbert, 1986, p.121.

<sup>84</sup> Alexandre-Collier, 2015a, pp.15-17.

Party while David Cameron led the Conservatives. In 1970 the Conservatives were in power and Prime Minister Ted Heath began a diplomatic effort to join the EEC. While the opposition to membership of the EEC was found in both parties, the largest internal divisions were found in the Labour Party.<sup>85</sup> Two polarized groups that emerged include a group led by Tony Benn who opposed the Common Market on the basis of economics and the other group was led by Roy Jenkins that composed of Europe enthusiasts or pro-Europeans wanting the membership on the basis of ideological and economic reasons. Ultimately, Heath passed the 1972 European Communities Bill signaling the beginning of UK's marriage with the EU. Then by the 1974 general election, Labour Party leader Wilson gave in to anti-Europeans in his party by including a promise of a referendum in Labour's election manifesto. As an opposition party in 1975, the Conservative Party reiterated its commitment to membership of the European Community as it had fought the last three elections on a pro-European footing.<sup>86</sup> Thus for the Conservative Party, the division over the European issue was inter-party rather than intra-party. At the time Conservatives believed that being part of the European Community's single European market would bring economic prosperity by allowing access to 250 million people to British business, industry, and jobs market. In addition, the Conservatives believed that being part of the Community would allow Britain to exert greater political influence to allow more leverage on diplomatic relations and common defense capabilities.<sup>87</sup> In conclusion, the Conservative campaign urged that the membership was right for "Britain cannot go it alone in the modern world."<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, then party leader, Margaret Thatcher insisted on a yes vote to

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<sup>85</sup> BBC. 2011.02.17 "The Birth of Parliament"

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle\\_ages/birth\\_of\\_parliament\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/birth_of_parliament_01.shtml) (searched on 2018.02.28)

<sup>86</sup> Seller, Dawn. "The 1975 Referendum on Europe." The Oxford University Politics Blog. 28

September.2016, <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/1975-referendum-europe/>

<sup>87</sup> Seller, Dawn. "The 1975 Referendum on Europe." The Oxford University Politics Blog. 28

September.2016, <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/1975-referendum-europe/>

<sup>88</sup> Seller, Dawn. "The 1975 Referendum on Europe." The Oxford University Politics Blog. 28

September.2016, <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/1975-referendum-europe/>

Europe concluding that “Britain does not break Treaties.”<sup>89</sup> This can be contrasted with the official stance of both parties in 2016 for the exact opposite opinion was found in the mainstream parties. Unlike in 1975, as the ruling party in 2016, the Conservative Party was divided as the Labour Party was over the European issue. Also, more importantly, it switched its stance from pro-European to anti-European within four decades. Likewise, the Labour Party had become pro-European by 2016. This was a complete swap of stances of both parties, which highlights that while the citizens’ perceptions did not change from the beginning very much for the bad perception of the EU remained above 20% during most of four decades, the political ministers’ perceptions fluctuated intensely to have caused more trouble in the British political era despite the European issue remaining as having a low issue salience.

### **3. Evolution of the Eurosceptics**

Traditionally the Conservative MPs were considered to be more pro-European than the MPs of the other two parties. For instance, it was the Conservative Prime Minister, Edward Heath who ultimately took Britain into the Common Market in 1973, and at the time the Conservatives welcomed the idea of EU to spread its economic liberalism. Yet within decades, opinion within the Conservative Party shifted from pragmatic pro-Europeanism to what by the 2010 general election could be described as pragmatic Euroscepticism. However, the government’s official position on the EU was less critical of the EU and still believed that the UK’s interest could still be served within the EU even if it meant repatriating some of its powers to the EU.

Eurosceptic MPs who challenged closer supranational engagement with the continental powers have been active since the 1960s. The groups can be described as anti-Marketeers who opposed the European Community initially and finally evolved into Eurosceptics. The number of these sceptics has waxed and waned, fluctuating

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<sup>89</sup> message from the Leader of the Party No. 6 <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/1975-referendum-europe/>

approximately from forty to sixty, although there has always been a greater number of passive sceptics than those MPs actively willing to oppose their party. For example, in the late 1950s and the 1960s, 30-40 MPs opposed Macmillan's policy of entry to the EC. Then in the 1970s, some 60 MPs opposed to membership, with 41 MPs opposing the 1971 EC Bill and 16 backbenchers willing to oppose the terms of negotiation in April 1975. Next, between 1973 and the late 1980s, the number shrank to 7 Conservative MPs who were willing to disobey the government on the ratification of the Single European Act.<sup>90</sup> By the time of the Maastricht Treaty, the total number of Eurosceptics had once again grown to around 69 with 46 routinely willing to disobey the government on almost all of its European legislation and nine willing to put the issue before loyalty to the party. After 1997 at least 3/4 of the parliamentary Conservative Party embraced a form of Euroscepticism. To put it more concretely, the party's choice of leaders along with its 1997 and 2001 general election manifestos reflected this. Due to uncertainty about the entry, the Conservative Party's 1970 manifesto stepped back from its previous unconditional commitment to membership, and offered a more modest commitment 'to negotiate, no more no less.'<sup>91</sup> However, once the British leadership of both major political parties had decided to commit Great Britain to explore the possibility of membership of the Common Market, the oppositions in both parties surfaced. The Conservative Party was in government in this period with Edward Heath as the prime minister. In 1971, after nearly seven months of negotiations the government of Edward Heath put to a vote the principle of entry followed by the presentation of the European Communities Bill before Parliament for ratification. The ratification process took nine months and culminated in a vote on 13 July 1972 in which the House of Commons passed the European Communities Act by 301 votes to 284.<sup>92</sup> Such a long ratification time indicates that the parties were divided

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<sup>90</sup> Forster, 2002, p. 101.

<sup>91</sup> Forster, 2002, p. 102.

<sup>92</sup> Forster, 2002, pp.107-110.

on the issue. The official Labour stance on it was to abstain on the parliamentary party voting. Nonetheless, what made possible for Heath to manage the approval for the policy of Common Market membership was through the exploitation of government resources and tactics that eventually gave him his party's loyalty.

Changes at the European level inevitably forced British politics to be once again dominated by the question of Europe. Attempts by Labour and the Liberal Democrats to finally put the EU onto the agenda in the 2009 European Parliament elections were heavily criticized by questions of MPs' expenses and a general sense of loss of rust in professional politicians.<sup>93</sup> This helped United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) gain electoral support which allowed it to win sixteen percent of the popular vote and thirteen MEPs, against the Conservatives' twenty-seven percent and twenty-five seats.<sup>94</sup>

By the mid-1990s all three main parties were discussing that they would offer a referendum before taking the UK into the Euro. Thus when it came to David Cameron, he gave a 'cast-iron guarantee' that if the Treaty had not come into effect by the time his party took office he would hold a referendum.<sup>95</sup>

In Britain, party manifestos have served as important guides for parties to outline their policies and goals. Therefore, one of good indicators of how the policies of parties have changed is through examining the party manifestos. Changes in party policies can be measured by manifesto coding, as undertaken by the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP). Figure 3 uses CMP data to map changes in Conservative policy on European integration since 1974. It shows a higher proportion of negative statements on European integration after 1987 but the trend is not uniform. It is apparent that the percentage of negative statements in the Conservative manifestos has increased from 1987 onwards, which is marked by Thatcher's growing Euroscepticism

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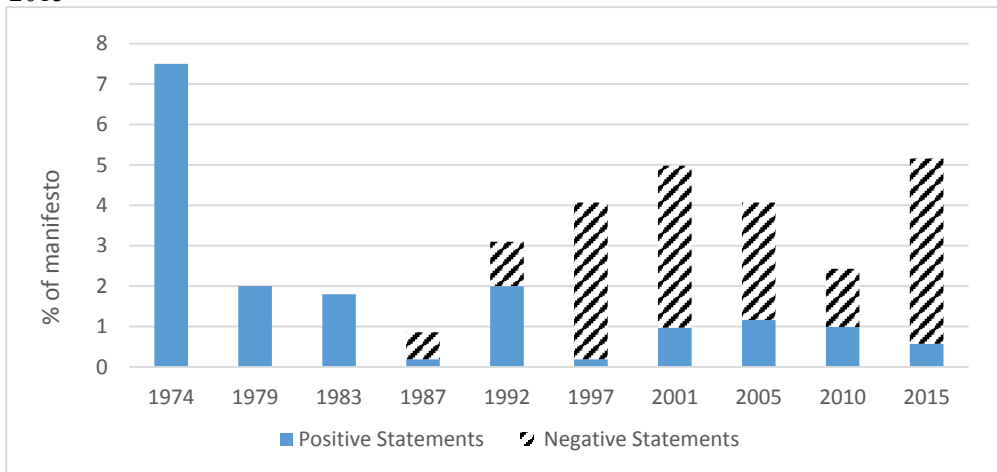
<sup>93</sup> Smith, 2010, p. 99.

<sup>94</sup> Smith, 2010, p. 101.

<sup>95</sup> Wheatcroft, 2005, p.120.

that divided the party from then on. After Thatcher's fall, her successor Major also experienced his party turning to more negative direction regarding Europe in 1992 especially over joining the euro. Once the Conservative Party was the opposition from 1997 to 2010, the negative statements on Europe dominated its manifestos indicating that the Eurosceptic feelings within the party had gained more influence. Then once the party had entered the government in 2010, the negative statements have been toned down as evident by a balance between negative and positive statements due to a coalition government with the Liberal Democrat Party. Finally, in 2015 election manifesto, the negative statements on Europe reached its highest and tripled from 2010. Considering the year, the Conservative Party took Britain into the Common Market within the decades that followed, it shifted its opinion from pragmatic pro-Europeanism to pragmatic Euroscepticism throughout the years as evidenced by the figure below.

*Figure 6.* Views towards Europe in Conservative General Election Manifestos, 1974-2015



Source. Comparatives Manifesto Project



In 2005, when Cameron had first become the leader of the Conservative Party, many MPs had considered him to be a Eurosceptic, and he was elected with the support of many Eurosceptic MPs. However, as he formed his government between 2010 and 2015, many were surprised by his pragmatic stance on Europe. As a result, the internal divisions over Europe became increasingly clear, as some MPs defected and even promoted the view the Britain would be better off out.<sup>96</sup> Mainstream parties in the British politics have always considered the European issue as the ‘shield issue’, on which they felt there was little to be won and rather much to be lost.<sup>97</sup>

#### **4. Leaders’ Differing Strategies on EU**

In the UK, with the political structure granting the winning party with immense amount of power, the party leadership role is very important. In addition, the increasing personalization of British politics indicates that voters’ perceptions and judgments about the party leaders have become increasingly important in recent general elections.<sup>98</sup> This has not been a new phenomenon in the history of British politics for many party leaders from both main parties such as Harold Wilson, Sir Alec Douglas Home, Margaret Thatcher, Michael Foot, John Major, Neil Kinnock, Tony Blair, and David Cameron all have been important for campaigning and carrying winning votes in general elections. As a result, the Conservative Party places great emphasis on the position of the leader for the leader is the source of all policy. Once something goes wrong in the Conservative Party, the blame usually lies with the leader. A successful one must be supported and sustained by all while the unsuccessful one must be on alert at all times, which makes loyalty and disloyalty strong political

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<sup>96</sup> Smith, Julie. 2015. *Europe: The Coalition’s Poisoned Chalice*. In *The Coalition Effect, 2010-2015*. Edited by Anthony Seldon and Mike Finn: Cambridge University Press

<sup>97</sup> Smith, 2015, p. 125.

<sup>98</sup> Dorey, Peter. 2010. “Faltering before the finishing line: The Conservative Party’s performance in the 2010 general election.” *British Politics*, 5(4), 402-435

weapons of the ministers.<sup>99</sup> As a result, this kind of attitude towards leadership springs from the party's general endorsement of hierarchy and has turned out to be both a blessing and a curse for a leader since it gives leaders more freedom to act during a more precarious tenure but also can be restraining since leaders can be required to take definitive stance even in issues they might not want to.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, once the party leaders become prime ministers after winning the parliamentary majority, more pressure is placed upon the prime ministers to keep their party intact. The divisiveness of the EU as a policy issue for the Conservatives has been a significant factor fueling public perceptions of party disunity.<sup>101</sup> Baker and Seawright called it as "one of the dominant and most divisive issues of modern British politics," that have divided the Britain in various levels from electoral voters, within Cabinet, and both inter and intra parties.

Within the Conservative Party, leaders with significant authority had greater success in managing intra-party divisions.<sup>102</sup> The European question has been a key issue in Conservative leadership elections since Margaret Thatcher's downfall in 1990.<sup>103</sup> Margaret Thatcher's approach to EU was known as 'No, No, Yes'. She had supported Britain's continued membership, and had also criticized the decision of the Labour government not to join the European Monetary System. However, once she was in government, a different pattern emerged. It was during Thatcher's premiership that the Conservative Party has become more Eurosceptic which turned the relationship between the UK and EU more conflictual that increased the division within the party as well.<sup>104</sup> Ironically, this period saw series of policies that took Britain more deeply into ever closer union. In the beginning years of Thatcher's leadership, the main focus was

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<sup>99</sup> Dorey, 2010, p. 403.

<sup>100</sup> Dorey, 2010, p. 404.

<sup>101</sup> Dorey, Peter. 2007. "A new direction or another false dawn? David Cameron and the crisis of British conservatism." *British Politics*, 2(2). 136-166

<sup>102</sup> Dorey, 2007, p.140.

<sup>103</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2007, p.33.

<sup>104</sup> Baker, David and David Seawright. 1998. *Britain for and Against Europe: British Politics and the Question of European Integration*. Clarendon Press. Oxford.

on achieving free-market economy in Britain and thus had strong attachment to promotion of single market. In her eyes, the Single European Act (SEA) was a way to achieve such goal for it was aimed at creating a single European market including the removal of border controls and customs duties on intra-EC trade. As a result it would effectively facilitate the free movement of goods, capital and labor between member-states.<sup>105</sup> The Single European Act was passed with very minimal challenges from the House of Commons because Thatcher was focused on achieving her commitment to economic liberalism, free trade and flows of capital. “Thatcherites were wholeheartedly in favor of the provisions relating to the Single Market. An open market in Europe was what we had always wanted.”<sup>106</sup> Again, this reinforces the idea that Thatcher and her supporters or Thatcherites were too attached to the economic implications of the treaty that non-economic implications of the SEA were rather easily overlooked.<sup>107</sup> Nonetheless, Thatcher was successful at making such strategy work because she was able to convey a sense of direction, lead a government that knew what it was about and what it would deliver. But most importantly, she knew what her government could do and not do when it came to realizing her policies. She used the same tactic regarding all European policies, which explains why she was so successful at maneuvering European policies. Furthermore, when Great Britain was signing up for the SEA, Thatcher was only facing few anti-marketeers in her party whom she was able to easily defeat. A new wave of Euroscepticism came during the second half of the 1980s when the social Europe agenda part of the Treaty surfaced again as the topic of debate. This agenda called for a transition to a single market and free trade being matched by a corresponding increase in employment protection and rights for workers whose conditions or security of employment might be significantly weakened by

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<sup>105</sup> Shin, Jong- Hoon. 2012. “European Integration History: in Political and Historical Perspectives.” Korean Journal of Interdisciplinary Study. 25.

<sup>106</sup> Letwin, Shirley. 1992. *The Anatomy of Thatcherism*. London. Fontana.

<sup>107</sup> Letwin, Shirley, 1992, p.45.

greater economic liberalization, completion, and deregulation.<sup>108</sup> Thatcher strongly opposed the social part while supporting the economic liberalization. Thatcher's own preference led her to officially mark a new phase of Euroscepticism in 1988 by the Bruges speech publically. This marked Thatcher's move from an instrumental and pragmatic position on EU to an ideological one.<sup>109</sup> While Thatcher had campaigned for getting 'our money back' from the EU by complaining that the UK was not receiving enough rebate back compared to the contribution it made, the speech itself was an important turning point for Thatcher's position. Before this change, most of the Eurosceptic MPs focused on an anti-Market position who opposed liberalizing EU-wide market Thatcher was advocating. However, after 1988, the Eurosceptic MPs had become more anti-Europe as Thatcher began to highly criticize the EU as being the back door of socialism. "We haven't worked all these years to free Britain from paralysis of socialism only to see it creep through the back door of central control and bureaucracy in Brussels,"<sup>110</sup> This highlights Thatcher's growing concern with the direction the European institution was taking, and her growing suspicion of the EU was mainly targeted on blaming the Franco-German bloc, the European Commission, and Britain's own Foreign Office.<sup>111</sup> The Conservative Eurosceptics suspected that because the Foreign Office was too conciliatory and cordial in EU diplomacy, it failed to protect the British interests.<sup>112</sup> In fact, the Foreign Office was more pro-European than the prime minister and thus Thatcher's Bruges speech caused dispute inside her cabinet.<sup>113</sup> One of the strongest criticism within her Cabinet came from Geoffrey Howe, then Foreign Secretary who strongly urged editing the Bruges speech. Howe was "deeply dismayed by the Bruges speech,"<sup>114</sup> for he knew that it would release

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<sup>108</sup> Dorey, 2007, pp.140-142

<sup>109</sup> Forster, 2002, pp. 157-158.

<sup>110</sup> Dorey, 2007, p.148.

<sup>111</sup> Dorey, 2007, p.149.

<sup>112</sup> Whyman, 2008, p.32.

<sup>113</sup> Dickie, James. 1992. *Inside the Foreign Office*. London. Chapmans.

<sup>114</sup> Howe, 1996, pp. 65-67.

Conservative Euroscepticism that had been boiling inside the party for a long time. Despite Thatcher's previous adroitness in handling the European issue, it began to divide her own Cabinet further with her chancellor Nigel Lawson resigning over disagreement with her over Britain joining the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) and Foreign Secretary, Geoffrey Howe resigning over her increasingly vocal anti-Europeanism. Howe was mainly concerned with growing Conservative Euroscepticism damaging Britain's economic and business interests as well as country's political influence and credibility in Europe.<sup>115</sup> This kind of internal party division cost Thatcher's premiership that culminated to her resignation after a leadership challenge. Nonetheless, pro-Europeans in the Conservative Party such as Kenneth Clarke, Michael Heseltine, Douglas Hurd, and Chris Patten still remained strong to oust most Eurosceptic Thatcher at the time.<sup>116</sup>

John Major experienced similar dissent over Europe while he was Prime Minister from 1990 to 1997. He was constantly undermined by Conservatives who did not consider him to be anti-European enough.<sup>117</sup> After Thatcher's resignation, Major had gained the support of the Eurosceptics initially for he was pragmatic on European integration unlike his competitors, Michael Heseltine and Douglas Hurd who were pro-Europeans. Also, absence of a Thatcherite Eurosceptic candidate or direct successor of Thatcher helped him attract Eurosceptic support. However, this began to change as Maastricht Treaty caused another wave of Euroscepticism. Major called a leadership election in 1995 to reassert his authority, but he was only able to keep his place with the support of the Pro-European votes. Major's cabinet was also divided over the European issue for the vociferous Eurosceptics such as Michael Howard, Peter Lilley, Michael Portillo and John Redwood were inside his cabinet.<sup>118</sup> Major's intra-party management proved to be further problematic with defections to other parties that

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<sup>115</sup> Dickie, James. 1992, p. 38.

<sup>116</sup> Dorey. 2017, p. 37.

<sup>117</sup> Dorey, 2017, p. 35

<sup>118</sup> George, 1998, p.21.

subsequently dwindled the parliamentary majority strength. While the 1992 general election resulted the Conservative majority in the parliament, it was a landslide with 21 seats compared to 101 seats in 1987.<sup>119</sup> In addition, MPs elected in 1992 comprised of an influential group capable of challenging the government's policy. Consequently, according to Norton's survey, under such influences, the Conservative parliamentary party as a whole moved to a more skeptical position during the 1992-1997 Parliament. In this political context, Major found it harder to impose his authority on the rebellious Eurosceptics, especially as they have become aware of their strength increasing. While there are many explanations for this growing Conservative Euroscepticism inside the party, since the focus of this paper is to observe the leadership management, how Major responded to the crisis will be examined. During this period, for the first time, Eurosceptics had legally binding targets by offering clear points of their opposition with their arguments becoming more economically analyzed.<sup>120</sup> Also the Britain's ejection from the ERM in 1992 and near collapse of the ERM itself in July and August 1993 also helped give more support to the Eurosceptics' case. In response to such crisis Major's administration issued a consultation paper on Europe committing itself to a referendum if a Conservative government recommended the Euro, but such action came late.<sup>121</sup> The official position of the government further increased the Eurosceptic cause for it stated that it was most unlikely that the other governments would meet the convergences criteria, and that as a consequence no decision to join a single currency would be necessary in the lifetime of the Parliament of 1992 to 1997.<sup>122</sup> With Thatcher's influence left in the Parliament, the government's only means to re-election was a more Eurosceptic platform, opposing the abolition of the pound and making a manifesto commitment to a referendum.<sup>123</sup> Major continued to resist making a decision

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<sup>119</sup> George, 1998, p.26.

<sup>120</sup> Forster, 2002, p.227.

<sup>121</sup> Raunio, Tapio and Simon Hix. 2000. "Backbenchers learn to fight back: European integration and parliamentary government." *West European Politics*, 23:4, 142-168

<sup>122</sup> Raunio, Tapio, and Hix, 2000, p.150.

<sup>123</sup> Forster, 2002, p.230.

on whether to join the single currency, in part because he was convinced that the government would be able to shape decisions on the single currency whether Britain was a member or not.<sup>124</sup> In 1997, the strength of Eurosceptic feeling within the Conservative Party reached its peak with 78 MPs in favor of a referendum not only on the issue of single currency, but on Britain's continued membership of the EU itself.

John Major was not vocal about the European Integration issue and showed more interest in domestic politics. As the economic recession worsened, the popularity of the Conservative Party also dwindled. The intra-party division was more severe within the party regarding the European issue. With the Black Wednesday shock, Major government argued that Britain should leave the ERM and subsequently, more political Euroscepticism gained influence internally.<sup>125</sup> As a result, the party was already divided over the European issue and to make the matters worse for the Conservative Party, Major was defeated in 1997 General Election. Therefore, the European issue that divided the party since Thatcher and ruptured Major's government did not disappear but became a dormant issue that would cause trouble once woken up. The European issue was commonly referred to as 'sleeping giant' that surely would cause trouble in the future.

While both leaderships had also experienced severe opposition from their own MPs, they did not resort to promising referendum. This was largely due to their leadership styles as Thatcher had used her strategies carefully and Major had tried his best to avoid the European issue at all times. Furthermore, the dissent of Eurosceptics between 2010 to 2015 had substantially become different from other periods that the leader had to utilize more tactics. In addition, the emergence of UKIP as a possible alternative to the Conservative Party meant that the Conservatives were fighting to keep their electoral support on the issue as well.

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<sup>124</sup> Raunio, Tapio. 2002. "European Integration and Leadership Autonomy." *Party Politics* 8(4) 405-422.

<sup>125</sup> Kang. 2008, pp.23-25.

## **Chapter IV. Cameron's Poisoned Chalice**

All post-war prime ministers have found British European policy to be a 'poisoned chalice' that required them to handle with great care. This is because it has been the source of contestation between and within the UK's main political parties. The issue has especially been conflictual within the political arena because the Conservative MPs have continuously displayed their Euroscepticism in Parliament. The view has long been held that public opinion on Europe was favorable towards European integration, but did not see the issue as salient.<sup>126</sup> Nonetheless, the European issue continuously became the object of contestation in British political parties. In the beginning, the citizens' 'permissive consensus' allowed the process of European Integration to proceed and remain with the consensus of the elites without heavy objections. Yet, it reached its limit when the EU took steps toward ratifying the Maastricht negotiations. Several countries such as France, Ireland, and Denmark experienced objections from their citizens that subsequently led them to hold the referenda on ratifying Maastricht.<sup>127</sup> As the pattern of restraining consensus emerged in other European member states, also dominated Britain. Next, as the opinion of the EU membership at the electoral level began to alter, the political Euroscepticism found inside the Conservative Party since the British membership into the EU began to react more aggressively. Furthermore, it threatened the cohesiveness of the party that successively called for more active role of the leadership through intervening more vigorously by utilizing the intra-party tactics.

### **1. Measures of Dissent**

Dissent or voting against the party line parliament interrupt the cohesion of the party. Although an MP may display discontent with the government policies by

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<sup>126</sup> Kang, 2008, p. 27.

<sup>127</sup> Kang, 2008, p. 30.



proposing legislation amendments, speaking against the party to promote alternative policies, or signing Early Day Motions (EDMs), the most definitive way is to defeat the proposed legislation altogether by voting against the party. Hence, in a given vote, an MP vote contrary to his or her party leadership's instructions is counted as dissenting. Once such dissent occurs, the party unity is injured and leadership behavior responds accordingly. The party cohesion or the number of MPs' dissenting votes can be described in terms of Rice index. It is calculated by taking the absolute value of subtracting percentage of majority votes from the percentage of minority votes.<sup>128</sup> The index is expressed with the range of 0 to 1. The party cohesion is stronger as it is closer to 1 and weaker as it approaches 0.

Whereas the Rice index is helpful to see how much the party is cohesive, it is difficult to gauge the meanings for the properties of dissent are missing. Therefore, Kam's description of dissent expressed in terms of its frequency, extensivity, and depth would be more helpful in understanding the nature of dissent. Dissent is described to be extensive if the party suffers repeated rebellions by small and different groups of MPs over the same issue consistently. On the other hand, it is deep if it experiences a few isolated but massive rebellions.<sup>129</sup> The frequency of dissent, which is the most common way to measure dissent can be measured by aggregating the percentage of divisions in a parliament that witness at least one MP voting contrary to the party line.<sup>130</sup> For instance, the percentage of dissenting votes experienced by the party over the parliamentary term would equal to 100 if every voting during the term saw at least one of the party's MPs vote against it. This indicates that if the same one MP continuously dissents in a division, the frequency of dissent still increases. Then, the dissent is deep if the MP dissent votes is composed of various MPs and not just the same MPs rebelling repeatedly. In other words, there must be a large number of MPs

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<sup>128</sup> Rice, Stuart. 1925. "The Behavior of Legislative Groups." *Political Science Quarterly* 40: 60-72.

<sup>129</sup> Kam, 2009, p.111.

<sup>130</sup> Cowley, 1999, p.136.

dissenting to describe the dissent as deep.<sup>131</sup> The depth is measured by counting the number of dissents that composed of more than 10 MPs dissenting. The dissent in European policies have long been visible since the issue has been divisive for the Conservatives Party throughout the UK's membership. Accordingly, the dissent on the European issues has persistently increased as well. In 1961, one Conservative MP rebelled and 24 abstained on a vote on European Economic Community (EEC) entry. By the time Edward Heath attempted to take Britain in the ECC, 39 Conservative MPs or 12% of the parliamentary party voted against EEC entry, which implies that the European Communities Act 1972 was only passed with the Labour support.<sup>132</sup> In the 1990s, the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty proved to be contentious with 50 Conservatives or 15% of the parliamentary party rebelling on 62 divisions during ratification of the Maastricht Treaty.<sup>133</sup> Then after the Danish referendum, 84 MPs signed EDM urging a fresh start on Europe. Thus, the party cohesion on Europe was eroding from the 1970s and it reached its peak in 2011, during Cameron's term. In October 2011, 81 Conservatives or 27% rebelled on a benchmark motion on EU referendum. It can be seen that the number of dissent increased over time, but more importantly the nature of divisions has changed as well.

## **2. Cameron as the Leader of the Opposition (2005-2010)**

Although David Cameron was the party leader of the Conservative Party, the leadership tools available to him were limited because he did not control the parliament and furthermore, dissent was not a major problem for the leadership at the time. The figure below indicates the percentages of dissent on European matters during Cameron was in the leadership of the Conservative Party from 2005 to 2010. The MPs voted 50 times on European issues from 2005 to 2010 in total and the 23 rebellions occurred.

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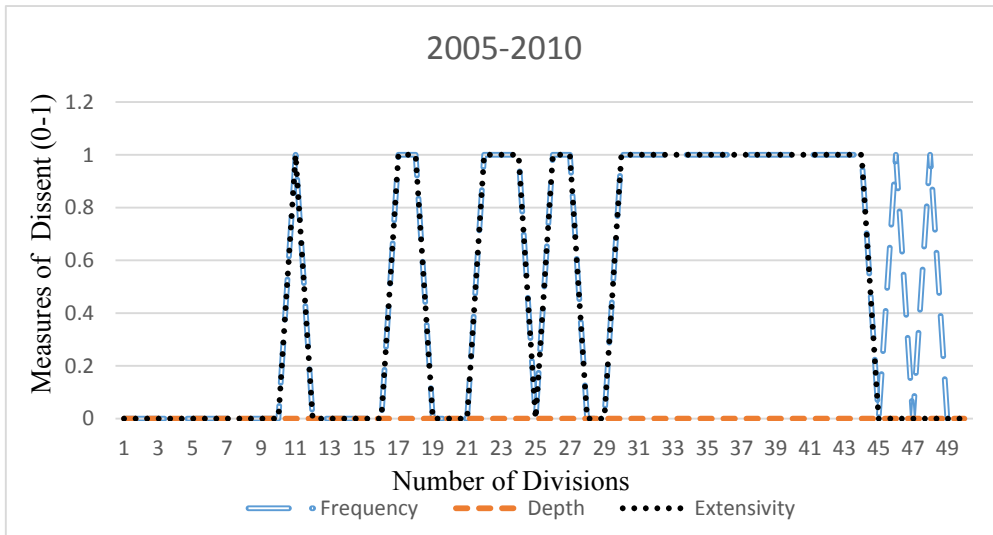
<sup>131</sup> Kam, 2009, p.120.

<sup>132</sup> Norton, 1978, p.178.

<sup>133</sup> Norton, 1978, p.179.

Out of those rebellions, the frequency, depth, and extensivity were calculated. As the flat, dotted-line shows the dissensions were not deep at all, but rather frequent and extensive. This signifies that a few number of MPs consistently voted against the party line. Such dissent is not threatening to the party because it meant that the party was still able to disregard it because only a few number of rebels had to be disciplined. Consequently, the dissent was not severe during this period.

*Figure 7. Measures of Dissent in Frequency, Depth, and Extensivity from 2005-2010*



Source: Kam Calculations Applied to Divisions from Hansard

A closer look at divisions that experienced dissent shows that the Pro-European MPs dissented to vote with the Labour MPs on most of frequent dissenting votes. Since the Conservatives were minority in government, the MPs' dissensions were less costly for it meant that the government was still able to pass pro-European legislations with the majority of Labour MPs added with Conservative rebels.

Low level of Euroscepticism presented through a few number of dissensions was not alarming to the leadership. As a result, Cameron was confined to using only a

selected number of tools such as candidate selection, patronage, and discipline between 2005 and 2010. This period fits with Hypothesis 1 because the political Euroscepticism in the House of Commons or the level of dissent present was not threatening to the party as the dissensions were not extensive nor deep, but just frequent. Consequently, the party leader tried to utilize his tools to keep intra-party fissure as small as possible. This is again highlighted by Cameron using only a few of his intra-party management tools because the Conservative Party remained cohesive on the European issue during this period.

The issue regarding the European Parliament (EP) elections surfaced as a divisive issue during the 2005 Conservative leadership contest. The European Parliament elections have become more important in the British politics as it was served as another arena for the parties to compete. Since there is no genuine European party system that serves to inhibit any restructuring of domestic party competition at the European level, the political control of the EP always remained under the influence of national arena.<sup>134</sup> As a result, the European issues are contested and the European arena remains as second-order elections behind domestic level elections. Therefore, the national parties function quite effectively as gatekeepers within the European arena. They work to ensure that the representatives who win election to the European Parliament remain bound to their domestic party organizations.<sup>135</sup> The Conservative Party had a difficulty finding ideological allies in the European Parliament as relatively few center-right parties in the EU shared its free market, and intergovernmentalism.<sup>136</sup> Conservative MEPs have been allied members of the center right pro-integrationist European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED) group in the EP since 1992. However, with the growing Euroscepticism within the Conservative Party, the differences with the EP ally became starker on the grounds of a principled objection to

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<sup>134</sup> Mair 2000 p. 28

<sup>135</sup> Mair 2000 p.38

<sup>136</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2007, p. 29.

the group's formally federalist aspirations. Subsequently, their alliance became more contentious. Cameron utilized candidate selection in the EP elections initially as one of his tools to elicit party loyalty to win leadership contest. He had pledged to pull out of EPP-ED alliance, which many Eurosceptics had advocated. Therefore, it was his promise that helped David Cameron win his leadership victory among the Eurosceptic candidates in 2005. Eurosceptic MPs made their support conditional upon a commitment to leave European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED). Therefore, both candidates, Liam Fox and David Cameron had committed to the withdrawal from the EPP. Specifically, Cameron had made both private and public assurances to Eurosceptic MEPs and MPs.<sup>137</sup> Thus on the second ballot, Cameron had gained greater support from Eurosceptics that led him to become the party leader.<sup>138</sup> However, after winning the leadership contest in June 2006, he had failed to find new allies in the EP immediately, which forced him to announce that a new group would not be formed until after the next elections to the EP in 2009.<sup>139</sup> Such delay was due to the difficulty in persuading other mainstream parties to join a new group in 2006 and increasing opposition among the Conservative MEPs. As a result, this angered many of Cameron's initial supporters. When he saw that he had to postpone such action, he used his tactic of possible deselection of candidates that kept many Eurosceptics from rebelling further. While such tactic succeeded in 2005, it lost its power by 2009. Despite such effort, the EP election results raised questions about whether the Conservative could win an outright victory in the upcoming general election that reinforced concern among many backbenchers and parliamentary candidates.

As a national party leader, Cameron was allowed to intervene in candidate selection for election to the EP. In doing so, he had to be sensitive to the balance of

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<sup>137</sup> Grob-Fitzgibbon, Benjamin John. 2016. *Continental Drift: Britain and Europe from the End of Empire to the Rise of Euroscepticism* Cambridge, United Kingdom.

<sup>138</sup> Tiersky, Ronald. 2001. *Euro-skepticism : A Reader / Edited by Ronald Tiersky*. Europe Today:Rowman and Littlefield, Inc.

<sup>139</sup> Tiersky, 2001, p.25.

opinion within the delegation and, particularly, the views of the delegation leader.<sup>140</sup> However, because Cameron could not handle the issue of selecting candidate MEPs properly, he antagonized both pro and anti-EPP MEPs. Luckily for Cameron, the Eurosceptic reaction was muted because at the time they were afraid of losing whip and possible deselection from the Conservative Party. The European Parliament system in Britain uses the closed list system used in multi-member constituencies, in which the party determines the order in which candidates appear on the party list. As a result, the loyalists can be placed at top of the list and dissidents are demoted to the bottom of list that make them almost impossible to win.<sup>141</sup> However, it's rather the party leadership that has the final say in the process of selecting candidates for the EP elections rather than the party members.<sup>142</sup> This means that the incentives for dissenters to dissent is further reduced. Cameron has intervened in candidate selection for elections to the European Parliament in 2009 when he was the party leader. He had placed incumbent MEPs, who were generally more pragmatic at the top of list. Nonetheless, the Conservative delegation became slightly more Eurosceptic with the retirement of some pro-European MEPs. This did not prevent Eurosceptics from complaining that they were disadvantaged and that the party worked against them in the candidate selection process.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, in 2009, the candidates were required to abide by the leader's decision on European Parliament group membership. This has led to defection of Roger Helmer MEP to UKIP after a dispute with Conservative Co-Chairman. Furthermore, Cameron had discouraged 2010 election candidates from supporting Better Off Out (BOO).<sup>144</sup>

Another method a party leader may incorporate to reduce dissent is through patronage. It includes appointment to overseas delegation in the House itself, and

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<sup>140</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2007, p. 37.

<sup>141</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2013, p.329.

<sup>142</sup> Webb, 2000. *The Modern British Party System*, London. Sage.

<sup>143</sup> Warwick, 2005, p.377.

<sup>144</sup> Webb, 2000, p.14.

similar rewards. Even though Cameron had a limited means of granting patronage because he was a party leader, he still attempted to use it. For instance, he had drafted A-List of prospective parliamentary candidates in 2005. He had an aim of broadening the number of Conservative Members of Parliament, potential peers of the realm and MEPs from minority groups and women candidates by including them in his A-List. However, many had criticized such list, and were discontent with his initial A-List of prospective parliamentary candidates that further led them to dissent.

Party leaders adopt policy compromises and lowest common denominator decisions to dampen internal tensions.<sup>145</sup> Thus leaders may postpone conflict by adopting imprecise and open-ended positions. Both Thatcher and Major have adopted these positions of ‘when the time is right’ regarding joining the ERM and Major’s ‘wait and see’ position on EMU membership. It was not different for Cameron either. In the 2010 general election, all three main parties sought a reformed Europe. Party politics aside, the language used by the three main parties in their manifestos was remarkably similar. Like the Conservatives, the Labour claimed that ongoing commitment to the EU was necessary, nonetheless, it still called for a reformed Europe in which the Britain could continue to defend its interests and secure global change in the British way. In addition, the differences remained marginal in that there was little sign of any federal agenda from the Liberal Democrats, while the Conservatives’ language was more constructive than the rhetoric of some of its parliamentary candidates, who favored withdrawal from the EU.<sup>146</sup> In the Conservative Party’s 2010 manifesto, it claimed, “we will be positive members of the European Union but we are clear that there should be no further extension of the EU’s power over the UK without the British people’s consent.”<sup>147</sup> This signified that the Conservative Party’s referendum lock would shape the European policy and further the coalition

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<sup>145</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2013, p.333.

<sup>146</sup> Smith, 2015, pp. 234-235.

<sup>147</sup> Conservatives.com. 2010. The Conservative Party Manifesto 2010. [online] Available at: <https://conservatives.com/Manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

government's stance. On the other hand, the Liberal Democrats had a pragmatic and interest-based approach towards the EU. The Liberal Democrats' manifesto stated that the "EU cooperation is the best way for Britain to be strong, safe and influential in the future. We will ensure that Britain maximizes its influence through a strong and positive commitment."<sup>148</sup> While all the parties advocated the idea of a referendum if ever Britain was on the verge of joining the Euro, only the Liberal Democrats advocated asking citizens' view on the fundamental question of whether they wished to stay in the EU. This was based on the logic that the EU has evolved significantly since the last public vote on membership over thirty years ago and that referendum was needed to further decide the future.<sup>149</sup> This was similarly reflected in the thinking of some of the Conservatives and UKIP members, but the main difference was that nonetheless, the Liberal Democrats still advocated for remain in the EU stance. To sum up, Cameron's Conservative were not radically calling for immediate withdrawal from the EU during this period, which allowed Cameron to take a more toned-down approach to Europe.

### **3. Cameron as the Leader of the Coalition (2010-2015)**

The 2010 to 2015 period can be described as a phase when the political Euroscepticism or the level of dissent in the House of Commons was threatening to the viability of the party as shown by deep, extensive, and frequent dissent. As it was formulated in Hypothesis 2, consequently, Cameron had promised a national referendum as his last resort. In the beginning of Cameron's first cabinet, the Conservative Party's official stance was to "never adopt the euro and never to ratify a European treaty without prior referendum as it had happened in the case of the Lisbon

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<sup>148</sup>Liberal Democrats.com. 2010. The Liberal Democrat Party Manifesto 2010. [online] Available at: <https://www.libdems.org.uk/manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

<sup>149</sup> Smith, 2015, p. 244.



Treaty.”<sup>150</sup> Accordingly, Cameron had pledged to be a practical, sensible Eurosceptic, promising in the words of his Foreign Secretary William Hague, “to not seek confrontation with the EU and to remain active and activist in the EU, energetically engaging with our partners.”<sup>151</sup> Initially, Cameron sought soft Euroscepticism in contrast with some Conservative politicians’ more Eurosceptic attitudes. The proportion of Eurosceptics in the parliamentary party grew since 1979, with each new intake of MPs showing more Eurosceptic tendencies than the previous ones.<sup>152</sup> Cameron had inherited the Parliamentary Conservative Party that had the potential to be threatened by the latent power of the right wing.<sup>153</sup> The 2010 General Election did not deliver a Conservative an outright majority with only 330 seats preserved. As a result, this ‘right wing’ has been considered as the main influence in Cameron’s decision to form a coalition rather than seek to govern as a minority. Again, this reflects that Cameron was keen on avoiding being obliged to the right wing of his party.<sup>154</sup> The relationship between Cameron and the right wing section of the party was not smooth, and Heppell emphasizes three reasons for this contentious relationship. First, Cameron’s right wing did not approve of Cameron for his failure to deliver outright victory. They mainly argued that it was the fault of the David Cameron’s leadership for failing to deliver outright victory against the weakened Labour government that was hurt by a deep recession and multi-term, discredited Prime Minister.<sup>155</sup> Secondly, they were irritated by the lack of communication Cameron had with his party during the coalition formation process. Thus, they mainly worried about

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<sup>150</sup> Meislova, Monica. 2017. “The Same Ol’ Story...or Not? Patterns of (Dis)continuity in David Cameron’s European Policy.” *Romanian Journal of European Affairs* 17(2), pp.56-71

<sup>151</sup> Lynch, Philip. 2011. “The Con-lib agenda for Europe. In: S. Lee and M. Beech, eds., *The Cameron-Clegg Government: Coalition Politics in an Age of Austerity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 218–236.

<sup>152</sup> Baker, David and David Seawright, 1998, pp. 26-29.

<sup>153</sup> Fabre, Elodie. 2010. “Measuring Party Organization: The Vertical Dimension of the Multi-Level Organization of State-wide Parties in Spain and the UK.” *Party Politics* 17(3) 343-363.

<sup>154</sup> Norton 2011, p. 54.

<sup>155</sup> Kats 1980, p.5.

the policy concessions that had to be made to the Liberal Democrats.<sup>156</sup> And finally, in extension of the coalition government arrangement, the right wing had reservations about the number of ministerial offices granted to the Liberal Democrats.<sup>157</sup> For instance, a total of 95 Conservative MPs who were holding shadow ministerial positions, were expecting office under a majority Conservative administration. However, with the coalition arrangement, 20 of those ministerial positions were granted to Liberal Democrats, which resulted in those Conservative backbench ministers to further be dissatisfied with Cameron for receiving lower-ranking posts than they had initially hoped for.<sup>158</sup> In fact, many Conservative MPs were against Cameron entering coalition with the Liberal Democrats for many believed that they had fundamentally different views on many policies and especially on Europe. As the Chairman of the House of Commons to European Scrutiny Committee, Sir Williams Cash argued, “To enter a coalition with a party that is diametrically opposed over Europe was bound to create an artificial government because the EU is about government and would guarantee that they would not be able to pursue a Conservative policy over the EU, namely the government as Westminster.”<sup>159</sup> Nonetheless, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats entered into a coalition by striking a balance between a positive general statement and the Conservative goal by agreeing to include a provision that “Britain would not transfer any power from the UK to EU without the referendum.” This provision was easily agreed for since there was no prospect of any treaty reform for several years with the Lisbon treaty being seen as the last definitive reform. In other words, they believed that no major reform of the EU treaty would be necessary during their parliamentary term. The Liberal Democrats were mostly silent during the debates in Westminster on the EU Bill from 2010 to 2011, and a pattern seemed to establish on the government benches whereby debates over the EU took

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<sup>156</sup> Kats 1980, p.14.

<sup>157</sup> Norton 2011, p. 69.

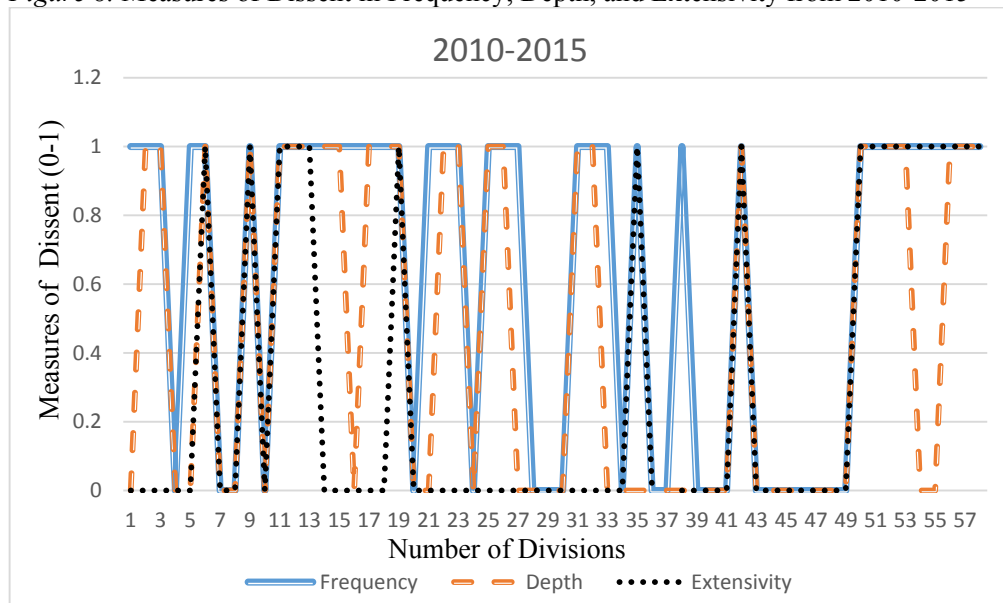
<sup>158</sup> Smith, 2015, p. 107.

<sup>159</sup> Smith, 2015, p. 108.

place within the Conservative Party between different shades of Eurosceptics, rather than between the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.<sup>160</sup>

From 2010 to 2015, the EU divisions were more frequent, deep, and extensive compared to the 2005 to 2010 as indicated by the figure below. This indicates that the political Euroscepticism was more severe in the parliament among the Conservative MPs. As aforementioned, the dissent in parliament was occurring more frequently, but they do not pose a threat as long as such dissents do not show a possibility of a defeated government's bill.

*Figure 8. Measures of Dissent in Frequency, Depth, and Extensivity from 2010-2015*



Source: Kam Calculations Applied to Divisions from Hansard

Nonetheless, the dissenting votes of EU Referendum Bill were all frequent, deep, and extensive. Since the dissenting votes were characterized as deep and extensive, they presented the possibility of government's bill getting defeated. The largest rebellion occurred on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 with 81 MPs dissenting despite a

<sup>160</sup> Alexandre-Collier, 2015b, p. 146.

three-line whip. Two tellers or party whips of Cameron had indicated their support against the government's position. Furthermore, the bill saw a total of 13 abstention votes with one both vote.<sup>161</sup> This instance was a huge embarrassment for Cameron for it indicated that his own Conservative MPs were not disciplined. While the call for a referendum was defeated with the help of Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs, the perception that the Conservative Party was divided and that they did not trust their leader was again visible. Many Conservative MPs had thought that Cameron was mishandling the EU referendum issue and their concerns were confirmed by his three-line whip. For instance, immediately after announcement of Cameron's plan to impose three-line whip, the leader Tory backbencher told reporters that "his party's high command is in complete panic over the Commons vote on an EU referendum."<sup>162</sup> Many other MPs also complained of not understanding why Cameron had decided to make the vote a show of strength.<sup>163</sup>

Cameron had sought to use pragmatic approach, but until 2013, his EU policy was characterized as passive for he had deliberately chosen to remain more or less silent on the European issue. Nonetheless, Cameron still attempted to utilize intra-party management tools of patronage, discipline, permitting low-cost dissent, issue salience, policy compromise, and deferred decisions on EU.

First, while patronage was limited due to a formation of coalition, Cameron still attempted to utilize this tactic to somewhat quell his dissenters. For example, Eurosceptic, Kenneth Clarke was included in the shadow cabinet, but he did not go far enough to promote any of the Better Off Out (BOO) members.<sup>164</sup> As a result, Cameron had not been able to use patronage method sufficiently to quiet Eurosceptics'

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<sup>161</sup> Cowley, P., & Stuart, M. 2012. "The Cambusters: The Conservative European Union Referendum Rebellion of October 2011." *The Political Quarterly*, 83 (2)

<sup>162</sup> BBC. 2011.10.20 "EU referendum: Cameron to impose three-line whip".  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-15384889>(searched on 2018.02.28)

<sup>163</sup> BBC. 2011.10.20 "EU referendum: Cameron to impose three-line whip".  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-15384889>(searched on 2018.02.28)

<sup>164</sup> Fabre, 2010, p.350.

objections to Cameron on European issues. The circumstances of creating a coalition with the Liberal Democrats had prevented him from delivering more benefits and incentives to his own MPs.

Discipline can be used by the leadership by incorporating communication and persuasion in voting. It is important for party to deliver on its promises because the candidates were selected by their local parties and depended for their election on their party label.<sup>165</sup> Members of Parliament were elected on party labels, thus the expectations that they support their party loyally are more natural. As a result, the party cohesion rapidly became a feature of voting behavior in the House of Commons.<sup>166</sup> Consequently, it was difficult for an individual backbencher to cause problems or dissent for they were dependent on the party leadership. Accordingly, until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Conservative Party remained very hierarchical and essentially regimented.<sup>167</sup> For example, during the 1950s, voting cohesion remained the norm and even if few oppositions were raised, they remained minimal for the majority still voted together. Things began to change after 1970 when the Conservative MPs voted against their own side. However, the level of dissent reached its peak during Cameron's term. He inherited a parliament that was composed of the MPs more prepared than before to vote against their own side. In addition, the political chaos of the 2009 changed the parliament composition because many MPs caught up in the expenses scandal chose to leave politics.<sup>168</sup> He had to crack down on his MEPs in the European Parliament for using public money for personal use, Cameron had to reshuffle his cabinet in 2012 that demoted even his close friends such as MP Michael Gove. He was demoted from education secretary to a lower role of chief whip in Cameron's attempt to neutralize Tories' increasingly toxic relations with the teaching profession. Such instance showed

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<sup>165</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2013, p. 328.

<sup>166</sup> Slapin, Kirkland, Lazzaro, Leslie, and Grady. 2017. "Ideology, Grandstanding, and Strategic Party Disloyalty in British Parliament." *American Political Science Review*, 112 (1), pp.15-30.

<sup>167</sup> Cowley, Philip. 2015, p.232.

<sup>168</sup> Cowley, Philip. 2015, p.234.

other MPs that longstanding friendships or policy affinities with the Prime Minister would not save them from replacements.<sup>169</sup> Also with retirements, the political nature of the parliament changed accordingly and the successes at the 2010 General Election polls brought more than a third of the new MPs into the Parliament.<sup>170</sup> As a result, Cameron was led to use more tactics more actively. One way of disciplining is through a usage of whips; which parties use to discipline their members when they act in ways that go against the interests of the party. In other words, the whips may be used by party leaders to instruct them to vote in a certain way on government policies. The influence of the whips ensures that the government wields great power. For example, the three-line whip is imposed which is the hardest form of discipline a leader may impose in voting by giving specific instructions to MPs that they must vote in the way that the party wants them to. For the MPs, the use of three-line whip means that they must toe the party line or face sanctions. Subsequently, it is a way for leaders to make sure that the serious defeats do not occur. Cameron had imposed a three-line whip on EU referendum vote. He had ordered his party to oppose the bill, but even his whips had disobeyed him. This deep dissent meant that MPs questioned Cameron's authority and showed the erosion of the party unity.

Another way of disciplining party members for a leader is to expel MPs who support a rival party on the EU issue. Historically, ten former MPs and MEPs were expelled for backing stance that was opposite of the party's official stance.<sup>171</sup> Cameron expelled party donor Stuart Wheeler for backing UKIP, but his tactic wasn't as effective for he did not punish all of them. For instance, Norman Tebbit was not disciplined despite the fact that he had committed similar offense. It should also be

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<sup>169</sup> The Guardian. 2014.07.14 "Michael Gove demoted to chief whip as Cameron shows no sentimentality. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jul/15/michael-gove-chief-whip-david-cameron-reshuffle-cabinet> (searched on 2018.04.01)

<sup>170</sup> The Guardian. 2014.07.14 "Michael Gove demoted to chief whip as Cameron shows no sentimentality. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jul/15/michael-gove-chief-whip-david-cameron-reshuffle-cabinet> (searched on 2018.04.01)

<sup>171</sup> Lynch and Whitaker, 2013, p.333.

noted that removing the whip and expulsion must be used with caution for they could exacerbate tensions. The use of power to secure loyalty of the MPs may arouse hostility or resentment in the object of its exercise and it is not always the most efficient way to bring about desired behavior.<sup>172</sup> Many believed that once the MPs get elected on party label, they are expected to be disciplined. For instance, in Timothy Kirkhope's interview who was the party whip during the Maastricht negotiation argued that in his view the MPs had agreed to party discipline when they had accepted the Conservative party nomination for Parliament. This tactic indeed worked on enough Conservative MPs to pass the legislation. Thus the 1975 referendum and 2016 referendum on membership of European Union are exceptions that allowed such discipline to suspend officially.

During his premiership, Cameron was well aware of the European problem remaining as a contentious issue thus he had also permitted low-cost dissent in the beginning. There are some ways in which the leaders may allow dissent to be expressed in low-cost ways. This can either be by granting MPs a free vote in Parliament or by tolerating membership of Eurosceptic groups. In February 2011, Cameron gave backbenchers a free vote on the issue of European Court of Human Rights that involved implementing European Convention on Human Rights ruling that banning prisoners from voting was a breach of their human rights and unlawful. MPs had voted to maintain the ban on prisoners from voting. This meant that Cameron had allowed Eurosceptics an opportunity to express their discontent to European judicial encroachment. It was his way of allowing low-cost dissent for this was less costly than an EU policy rebellion.<sup>173</sup> In contrast, he rejected a free vote on the EU referendum motion in fear of signaling higher support among Eurosceptics for a referendum that might have made him harder to manage. Eurosceptic pressure groups have existed

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<sup>172</sup> Costello Rory and Robert Thomson. 2016. "Bicameralism, nationality and party cohesion in the European Parliament." *Party Politics*. 22(6):773-783.

<sup>173</sup> Fabre, 2010, p.355.

since 1990s and MPs' membership into such groups were tolerated in the hope that it would remove dissent from Parliament.<sup>174</sup> But rather, the Eurosceptics were further radicalized. Therefore, Cameron had allowed the MPs to show low-cost dissent on issues that were not costly such as overriding the European Court decisions to satisfy the Eurosceptics to a certain degree but did not go far enough to allow a free vote on the EU referendum motion that would surely be costlier. This was apparent in the way Cameron had answered some of reporters' questions on allowing free votes during the press conference. He was asked,

*"I think that Andrew Marr went on to ask directly about a free vote and you said, 'I've been clear that won't happen.' So you read us a partial quote on that."*

He answered,

*"Well look, this is a big question for Britain, and we want to get the answer right. And what I was saying yesterday was that I don't believe the government will be a bystander in this, the government will have a clear view. Now, the view I want us to get to is a successful renegotiation, reform of the European Union, and being able to recommend that Britain should stay in the European Union. And of course in that case the government's not going to be a bystander; the government will have a very clear view."*

From his response, he is not directly stating his stance on whether he would allow free vote or not, but rather just states that the government will have a stance in reforming Europe. This again highlights his tactic of not allowing possible high cost dissent on EU policies by not holding EU referendum votes as free votes for he knew that this issue was more difficult to manage.

Another tactic of Cameron was to make the European issue as less salient as possible. The increasing political Euroscepticism meant that the European issue was

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<sup>174</sup> Usherwood, Simon, 2002, pp. 214-215.



gaining momentum inside the British political realm. Cameron had attempted to keep the EU issue off the table. Contrary to his will, the EU debate has been progressively externalized by Conservative party leadership or abandoned to parliamentary Eurosceptic factions which mobilized opinion on the question of a referendum on the future of the UK. While he had asked his MPs to stop ‘banging on Europe’, he could not keep the issue not salient between 2010 to 2015 especially with the UKIP emerging as a threat to the Conservative Party.

Nonetheless, comparing voting patterns of the Conservative MPs to Cameron display the erosion of party cohesion. The table 1 shows the number of MPs who voted identically with the Prime Minister from 2010 to 2013 on European policies

Classification (n=299)	Number of MPs who voted identically to Cameron in European divisions	Explanation
Most Skeptical	136/45.5%	Voted identically to Cameron 0-25% of times
Somewhat Skeptical	137/45.8%	Voted identically to Cameron 26-50% of times
Somewhat Loyal	17/5.7%	Voted identically to Cameron 51-75% of times
Most Loyal	9/3.0%	Voted identically to Cameron 76-100% of times

*Table 1.* Conservative Party Classification based on how identical the members voted with David Cameron from 2010-2013 on European Issues

The groups were divided by the calculating the aggregate number of times the MPs voted identically to Cameron. Loyalty towards Cameron is divided into four groups of classifications. The MPs are described as most skeptical if they voted 0 to 25% of times similar to Cameron while somewhat skeptical if the identical rating is from 26% to 50%. Moreover, MPs who voted 51% to 75% identically to Cameron are defined as

showing somewhat loyalty with 76% to 100% corresponds to MPs who shows most loyalty throughout the divisions. As illustrated by Table 1, around 91.7% of MPs were somewhat and most skeptical of Cameron and only 7% of MPs kept their loyalty to him. This again reiterates the discord of the Conservative Party and the skepticism about the leader. The resentments that many backbenchers possessed were exacerbated by uneven management tactics of David Cameron. For instance, Cameron was accustomed to ignoring his backbenchers as he walked through the lobby in the House of Commons, leaving many feeling slighted.<sup>175</sup> Additionally, this period saw more MPs dissent as Cameron's irresolute stance regarding the EU for he had refused to firmly promise a national referendum on the British membership. Consequently, he had to give in to the pressure and he had finally declared that he was in favor of an in-out referendum in the future on the basis of a new settlement for the UK in the EU in speech at Bloomberg.

#### **4. Promising Referendum**

In 2007, Cameron gave a cast-iron guarantee that he would call a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, but two years later, he made complete U-turn on his guarantee, declaring his decision not to pursue a public vote on the Lisbon as it had already been incorporated into the law of the EU and could not be reopened.<sup>176</sup> In 2013, Cameron was forced to promise “fundamental, far-reaching change,” but he lacked a clear vision on how to achieve it. A referendum on European issues has been utilized as a possible solution to mending divisions in the governing parties. If the majority is doubtful, it can respond to public demand and bring electoral advantages.<sup>177</sup> Since the governing parties control the timing of referendums and sequence them to not damage their electoral prospects, they usually make referendum pledges close to an election that

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<sup>175</sup> Seldon and Finn, 2015, p.101.

<sup>176</sup> Tsebelis, George and Geoffrey Garrett. 2000. “Legislative Politics in the European Union.” *European Union Politics*. 1(1): 9-36.

<sup>177</sup> Usherwood, 2000, p. 212.

could possibly boost the party's democratic credentials. For instance, in Scandinavian parties, they have often pushed the EU issues away from Parliament and into the electoral arena through referendums.

In the UK, other leaders have also pledged referendums on EU issues. Even though only two have been realized including Harold Wilson's 1975 referendum on EEC membership terms and David Cameron's 2016 referendum on EU membership terms, Tony Blair and John Major have also made such promises. Tony Blair pledged referendums on the Euro and the Constitutional Treaty and John Major's cabinet member, Hague proposed that future EU treaties be put to referendums that fostered a new EU policy discourse of democracy and trust. On a similar note, Cameron had described a Lisbon referendum as a 'cast iron guarantee', which he backtracked once the treaty was ratified.<sup>178</sup> All leaders may have used such strategy to ensure intra-party cohesion, but most have also experienced more inter-party challenges from the other parties. During the 2010-2015 period, Cameron was experiencing more intra-party problem for most of his own Conservative MPs had rebelled against him while the Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs voted with him on European policies.

Therefore, Cameron's initial tactic may have been to depress dissent in his party with a cast-iron guarantee but the consequences proved to be more severe. The European Union Act 2011 was put into force that included a 'referendum lock' requiring any future treaty transferring powers from the UK to the EU to be put to a binding referendum. This also limited the government's power of being able to agree to remove border controls that required referendums. Nonetheless, this was not enough to satisfy the Eurosceptics and it became more difficult to halt the momentum for a referendum.

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<sup>178</sup> Costello Rory and Robert Thomson, 2016, p.777.

During the first half of Cameron's leadership of the Conservative Party, 2005-2010, the most contentious issue pertaining to the EU concerned the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>179</sup> He had argued that the Lisbon Treaty should be subject to a referendum prior to ratification. However, when other member states have ratified the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, Cameron announced the abandonment of the Conservatives' referendum justifying that "We cannot hold a referendum and magically make the Lisbon Treaty disappear, any more than we could hold a referendum to stop the sun rising in the morning."<sup>180</sup> This meant that following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by all member states, no practical purpose would be served by holding the previously promised referendum. Cameron's rationale behind such step back was constitutionally and politically realistic as long as the UK was part of the EU. So, he had promised that "in future, the British people must have their say on any transfer of powers to the European Union."<sup>181</sup> However, this alarmed the Conservative Eurosceptic MPs, which made them seriously question whether Cameron was serious about resisting any European policies. To assuage such discontent within his party, he had come up with a new Conservative policy on the EU, one which insisted that the Lisbon Treaty was the red line that must not be crossed. In other words, no further ceding of sovereignty would be permitted unless clearly approved by the British people. This was reflected in the 2010 manifesto of the Conservative Party which pledge that "in future, the British people must have their say on any transfer of powers to the European Union...any proposed future treaty that transferred areas of power, or competences, would be subject to a referendum."<sup>182</sup> Again, this pledge did not stop the Eurosceptic MPs from

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<sup>179</sup> Downs, William M. 1999. "Accountability Payoffs in Federal Systems? Competing Logics and Evidence from Europe's Newest Federation," *Oxford Journals*. 29:87-110.

<sup>180</sup> BBC. 2009. Full text: Cameron speech on EU. BBC. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8343145.stm> (searched on 2017.04.22)

<sup>181</sup> Dorey, 2010, p.422.

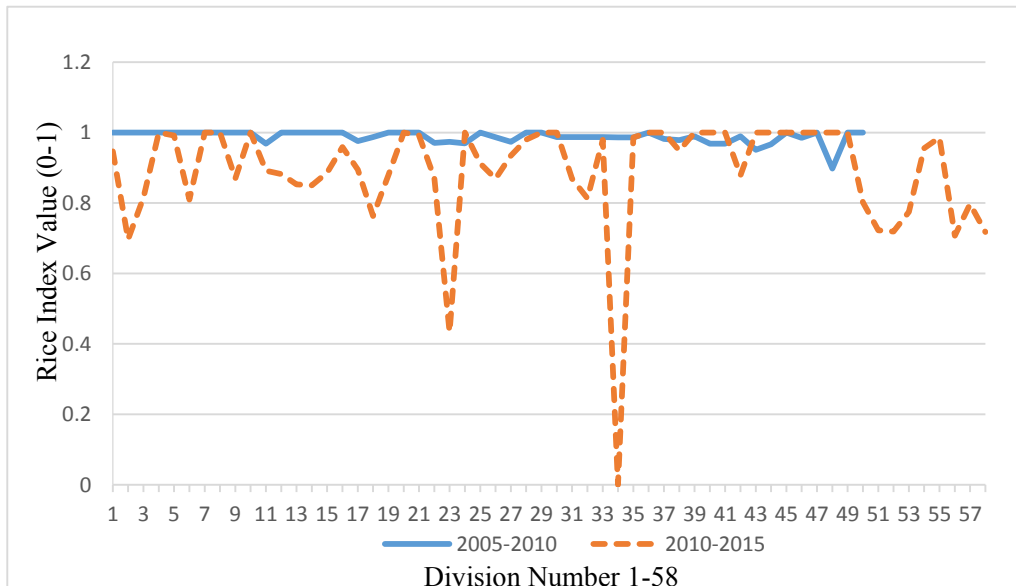
<sup>182</sup> Conservatives.com. 2010. The Conservative Party Manifesto 2010. [online] Available at: <https://conservatives.com/Manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

speaking out against the government for the Eurosceptics continued to demand for a referendum through dissenting on European policies votes, debates, and EDMs.<sup>183</sup>

The figure below indicates Rice index of the Conservative Party in terms of voting on policies related to the EU from 2005 to 2015. As it is evident from the figure, the party voting cohesion persisted as the norm from 2005 to 2010 with the Rice index remaining close to 1 in most of the divisions. On the other hand, from 2010 to 2015, the Rice index value fluctuates more recurrently, and more importantly the values not only deviate from 1, but also diverge from 1 more widely in bigger intervals.

Accordingly, this description fits with the behavior of the MPs under Cameron. When the 2005-2010 and 2010-2015 periods are compared, the biggest rebellion rate reaches its apex during Cameron's 2010-2015 parliamentary term as it will be shown in the following section.

*Figure 9. Rice Index Score from 2005 to 2015*



Source: Rice calculation applied to divisions from Hansard

<sup>183</sup> Conservatives.com. 2010. The Conservative Party Manifesto 2010. [online] Available at: <https://conservatives.com/Manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

The Prime Minister had to concede to the demands of the Eurosceptics to holding a referendum in January 2013 through his speech at the London office of Bloomberg Media Company, in which he announced that a referendum would be held in the next post 2015 Parliament.<sup>184</sup> This was a change from his attitude in October, 2012. During the press conference, Cameron had again restated his position of not supporting an in/out referendum. This stance was changed within three months as he had finally pledged a national referendum.

*“I think the problem with an in/out referendum is it actually only gives people those two choices: you can either stay in with all the status quo, or you can get out. Most people in Britain, I think, want a government that stands up and fights for them in Europe, and gets the things we want in Europe that changes some of the relationship we have in Europe.”*<sup>185</sup>

It is important to note, however, that Cameron’s pledge to a referendum was not motivated by his desire for direct democracy, but rather it was his last resort method for managing his party. As Clarke argues, Cameron’s pledge was issued in his urgent need to manage the issue inside the Conservative Party. “It was obvious that David had taken the decision mainly for reasons of party management, in the context of the constant backdrop of Right-wing nationalist Conservative backbenchers agitation on Eurosceptic causes.”<sup>186</sup> Following his pledge, Cameron’s stance on EU membership was rather positive than his Eurosceptics. This highlights that Cameron had used the referendum as his strategy of managing his party rather than out of his true desire for the UK to withdraw from the EU. This again is evident in his positive tone of the referendum speech. In it, he emphasized that the European Union “is a means to an end-prosperity, stability, the anchor of freedom and democracy both

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<sup>184</sup> Conservatives.com. 2010. The Conservative Party Manifesto 2010. [online] Available at: <https://conservatives.com/Manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

<sup>185</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister’s Office. “Press Conference at the European Council.” 22 October 2012. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camersons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camersons-speech).

<sup>186</sup> Clarke, Michael. 2015. *The Coalition and Foreign Affairs in The Coalition Effect, 2010-2015*. Edited by Anthony Seldon and Mike Finn: Cambridge University Press

within Europe and beyond her shores- not an end in itself... For all our connections to the rest of the world- of which we are rightly proud—we have always been a European power, and we always will be.”<sup>187</sup> While Cameron was pledging his party to a referendum, he was still hopeful of the benefits the EU would bring to the Britain. Thus, he had hoped that Britain would remain within the EU for he further went, “This is Britain today, as it’s always been: independent, yes—but open, too. I never want us to pull up the drawbridge and retreat from the world. I am not a British isolationist. I don’t just want a better deal for Britain. I want a better deal for Europe too. So, I speak as British prime minister with a positive vision for the future of the European Union. A future in which Britain wants, and should want, to play a committed and active part.”

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Dorey explains that Cameron had taken such steps as party of his strategy because he had hoped that by the time this referendum was held, he would have successfully renegotiated the terms and conditions of Britain’s membership of the EU and reclaimed various powers from Brussels.<sup>189</sup> This was the right strategy at the time because the opinion polls showed positive standing for the pro-EU stance. For example, the summer 2012 poll, conducted by YouGov showed that if a referendum was held after successful renegotiation of Britain’s relationship with the EU, and David Cameron recommended that Britain should remain a member of the EU under the revised terms, then 42% would vote remain, while 34% would still vote to Leave the EU. There were 19% of respondents who were undecided at this time while 5% claimed that they would not vote.<sup>190</sup> The public opinion served as a positive indicator for Cameron to pursue his strategy for he was sure that he would be able to renegotiate the terms, he would be able to persuade the undecided citizens to vote remain.

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<sup>187</sup> Michael, 2015, p. 11.

<sup>188</sup> Conservatives.com. 2010. The Conservative Party Manifesto 2010. [online] Available at: <https://conservatives.com/Manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

<sup>189</sup> Tsebelis, 2000, p.25.

<sup>190</sup> YouGov poll. The Survey Results 25 June 2012

The figure below shows whether Cameron's referendum promise had an effect on the loyalty of his MPs. As the result shows, the percentage of most skeptical MPs decreased, but most of the MPs still moved to somewhat skeptical group rather than to the loyal groups. This shows that many of Cameron's critics were not satisfied by his promise in 2013 and continued to rebel against him. A total of 78% of the MPs still doubted Cameron's leadership over the EU issues and did not vote with him on the European matter.

Classification (n=299)	Number of MPs who voted identically to Cameron in European divisions	Explanation
Most Skeptical	47/15.7%	Voted identically to Cameron 0-25% of times
Somewhat Skeptical	185/61.9%	Voted identically to Cameron 26-50% of times
Somewhat Loyal	47/15.7%	Voted identically to Cameron 51-75% of times
Most Loyal	20/6.7%	Voted identically to Cameron 76-100% of times

*Table 2. Conservative Party Classification based on how identical the members voted with David Cameron from 2013-2015 on European issues*

Though the intra-party nature with growing political Euroscepticism among the ministers was the principal reason for David Cameron's pledge, the growing threat of the openly Eurosceptic party, UK Independence Party (UKIP) was another factor. UKIP had emerged as more threatening to the leadership, which made it feel more obliged to take action. At the 2014 European Parliament election in the UK, the UKIP had won the largest share of the overall vote and the largest number of seats.<sup>191</sup> This reflected the strong anti-EU sentiments among parties across the continent.

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<sup>191</sup> Goodwin Matthew and Caitlin Milazzo, 2015. "Britain, the European Union and the Referendum: What Drives Euroscepticism?" Europe Programme Briefing, p.1-12



Nonetheless, in the 2015 general election, UKIP emerged with only one seat in the House of Commons, but more than 12.5 percent of the electorate had voted for it.<sup>192</sup> This was perceived by Cameron to be more intimidating as his leadership standing within the Conservative Party was already threatened by his volatile MPs. Added to this intra-party cohesion, Cameron faced forceful UKIP that appealed to anti-EU, anti-Westminster, and anti-immigration message.

## **5. Road to One Fateful Day**

The 2015 General Election delivered a majority of the Conservative Party. While Cameron did not have to worry about forming a coalition with other party, he was still under pressure due to his own MPs. His term was highly stigmatized by the challenge of fulfilling the expectations he had generated on the issue of EU renegotiations. Throughout the late 2015 and early 2016, he focused on bargaining to win concessions from his EU partners, but his approach was widely criticized as lax and unconvincing by the Conservatives. Finally, in February 2016, the new settlement was approved, which Cameron claimed would give the UK ‘special status’ in the EU and that this would not require them to exit the EU. This indicated that during the referendum campaign, Cameron came to adopt a softer version of Euroscepticism. With Cameron treating the EU question mainly as a party management problem, he tried to contain its salience and neutralize it. Often, he “put tactics before strategy in his handling of Europe”.<sup>193</sup>

What remained to be problematic was what his predecessors have all experienced too, internal division in his own Cabinet. Some of his closest and usually most supportive colleagues doubted the political or tactical efficacy of such referendum<sup>194</sup> His

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<sup>192</sup> Goodwin Matthew and Caitlin Milazzo, 2015, p.3.

<sup>193</sup> Meislova, Monica. 2017. “The Same Ol’ Story...or Not? Patterns of (Dis)continuity in David Cameron’s European Policy.” *Romanian Journal of European Affairs* 17(2), pp.56-71

<sup>194</sup> Dorey 2017. “Towards Exit from the EU: The Conservative Party’s Increasing Euroscepticism since the 1980s.” *Politics and Governance*, 5(2), pp.27-40

Chancellor, George Osborne, “did not just think a referendum was a bad idea, he thought it was a disastrous idea,” because it would only present the electorate with a stark In/Out, all or nothing choice. Furthermore he argued that it could be risky for several uncontrollable forces such as anti-government sentiment, and political opportunism from opponents including anti-government sentiment, and political opportunism from opponents.<sup>195</sup> Other Cabinet members such as Kenneth Clarke was appalled by Cameron’s pledge and again showed doubts of presenting voters with a simple binary ‘Yes/No’ choice on such issues.<sup>196</sup> In addition, Deputy Prime Minister in the Coalition Government, the Liberal Democrat Nick Clegg also highly criticized it as “a willful elevation of internal party problem to the level of a national plebiscite, in which he could not the logic of asking millions of citizens a question just because a single political party was unable to make its mind up for itself with the increasing pressure from UKIP.”<sup>197</sup> This again illustrates the divisiveness of the European policy impact on the Conservative Party. Nonetheless, in the following press conferences, the Prime Minister was continuously asked on whether he would continue supporting the EU Referendum Bill in Parliament.<sup>198</sup> Once Cameron was losing his place within the domestic sphere, he tried to show to his MPs his toughness on the EU policies in the European arena.

The Labour Party criticized the Conservatives for not being able to deliver the right policies on Europe because they saw Britain as both isolated and marginalized. Nonetheless, this does not indicate that they had opposite stance on Europe for they still supported the membership like the government. There were important strategic considerations for Cameron in the general sphere of foreign affairs. Most importantly, he was concerned with the need to maintain the UK’s image as a significant

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<sup>195</sup> Seldon, Anthony and Mike Finn. 2015, p. 50.

<sup>196</sup> Clarke, 2015, pp.89-92.

<sup>197</sup> Lynch, Philip. 2011, p.236.

<sup>198</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister’s Office. “Prime Minister Statement.” 19 December 2013. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech).

international actor and partner in the face of inevitable public spending cuts that the economic crisis of 2010 presaged.<sup>199</sup> Therefore, he tried to deliver a foreign policy that was centered on more enlightened self-interest. Also, the personality and style of David Cameron and his internal party difficulties had an impact on Britain's response to the European problem.<sup>200</sup> Cameron's low performance in European Council meetings led to low credibility within his party that further hurt his leadership image. Furthermore, his poor performance in the EU arena confirmed the doubts of the MPs at home who further doubted his renegotiation terms.

As Cameron was pressured to keep his pledge in early 2009 of pulling the Conservatives out of the main center-right European People's Party grouping, he found himself to be in a more isolated position among the European leaders, which made him unable to attend key meetings with fellow center-right leaders in the European arena. This inevitably proved to be detrimental to his ability to influence European affairs once he took office.<sup>201</sup> Cameron had attended his first EU summit on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010. In his first encounter with the European leaders, his view on EU was that he wanted to work together with other European countries to achieve the economic stability, the growth and action on European deficits in the interest of all countries and in the interests of a strong, stable economy.<sup>202</sup> He had urged other European leaders to take vital steps to change their financial plans to combat economic and Eurozone crises. A year later, he addressed the British by declaring that he had gone to Brussels with one objective of protecting the Britain's national interest and preserving economic benefits of UK experiences due to EU. While he supported the role of EU institutions, he still wanted safeguards for Britain's national interests. He again emphasized that the UK is not in the Schengen, Single Currency, nor Euro-Plus pact unlike those countries who

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<sup>199</sup> Clarke, 2015, p.346

<sup>200</sup> Smith, 2016, p.371

<sup>201</sup> Smith, 2016, p.378

<sup>202</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister's Office. "Press Conference." 21 May 2010. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-may-2010-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-may-2010-david-camerons-speech).

joined abovementioned measures of passing unprecedented powers from their nation states to Brussels.<sup>203</sup> It was also during this summit that Cameron had vetoed the EU Treaty that still allowed other member states to go ahead with the negotiations to agree upon a treaty on their own on Eurozone Crisis. He had believed that such move was victory for Britain for he would not have to sign, comply with, ratify, pass through Parliament, or amend any of the British laws. However, many Conservative MPs such as Bernard Jenkin and senior Conservative MEP Daniel Hannan criticized him for discarding the veto by accepting any role at all for EU institutions in the new fiscal pact.

In the June 2012 European Council meeting, Cameron had three objectives: to urge action by the Eurozone to deal with the immediate crisis, to draft a growth package firmly focused on Britain's priorities, and to put down a clear marker about what Britain pays into Brussels and budget negotiations.<sup>204</sup> While he may have explicitly stated these objectives to his fellow leaders at the meeting, the possibility of realizing them all was questioned. Also, the changing relationship of the UK and the European Union was evident.

Cameron had repeatedly made more radical proposals regarding EU spending in the winter summit of 2012 under the plan of "making our economies competitive, dealing with uncertainty in the Eurozone, keeping the EU budget under proper control and making sure the EU speaks with a strong and united voice on the key international challenges."<sup>205</sup> After negotiations, he had admitted that the Council was unable to reach agreement on a seven-year budget framework, which he described as a "proposal that would have risked UK taxpayers paying for unaffordable increases in the EU's

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<sup>203</sup>United Kingdom, Prime Minister's Office. "Prime Minister Statement on the European Council." 12 December 2011. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-december-2011-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-december-2011-david-camerons-speech)

<sup>204</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister's Office. "Press Conference at the European Council." 26 June 2016. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2016-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2016-david-camerons-speech).

<sup>205</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister's Office. "Press Conference at the European Council." 22 October 2012. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-October-2012-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-October-2012-david-camerons-speech).

annual budget”<sup>206</sup> as Britain was a net contributor. Cameron’s stance on ‘Britain first’ during the negotiations of budget and contribution was pressured by Tory MP Mark Reckless who called for multi-annual financial framework that was passed in the Parliament. Thus, in the subsequent European Council, Cameron had to fight for this position that represented the sovereign will of Parliament.

In the end, the European Council agreed to limit the overall EU spending for the next seven years, starting in 2014 in February 2013 summit. He had emphasized that this was possible because he had worked with like-minded allies such as Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Denmark. He was often isolated at Brussels summit with no ally to vote with him. Therefore, this was a feat for Cameron and many also perceived this change to be significant for the MPs “felt a whole lot better, and if this will change his attitude about how to do business in Europe.”<sup>207</sup> Furthermore, Cameron was asked if his Bloomberg speech in January that declared his initiative to hold an in-out referendum in the future on the basis of a new settlement for the UK in the EU has helped him perform better in the summit. From such questions, it can be inferred that since Cameron did not have support of his ministers, it was assumed by British that he did not have the sufficient power to shape European policies in the European arena. This further lowered his credibility for it was evident that he did not have people on his side to elicit cooperation both within his own parliament and in the European Council summit meetings. Nonetheless, he emphasized that he had a strategy for how it can make change in Europe by making strong alliance within the European sphere as well.

In the following months, Cameron had insisted on his position to holding a referendum on a reformed EU which was more open, more flexible and better for the UK. Moreover, he promised that he would focus on reforming EU before holding an in and out referendum on membership in 2017 but it was conditional upon his re-election.

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<sup>206</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister’s Office. “Prime Minister’s Statement.” 26 November 2012. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2012-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2012-david-camerons-speech).

<sup>207</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister’s Office. “Press Conference at the European Council.” 11 February 2013. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-february-2013-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-february-2013-david-camerons-speech).

In fact, this was part of his strategy to keep negotiating with the European leaders to deliver better deals for the UK while quelling dissent of his party back home at the same time. In the following years, he had indeed frequently called for meetings, calls, conferences held between Cameron and main EU leaders. Angela Merkel, Enrico Letta, and Herman van Rompuy to persuade them to agree to a special deal for Britain in the future.

Another defeat for Cameron at the European Council came in June, 2014 over the appointment of European Commission's president, Jean-Claude Juncker. David Cameron had vehemently opposed his appointment in fear of politicizing the European Commission. He stated that he did not believe 'spitzenkandidaten' process to be democratic. He saw it as a breach of the Lisbon Treaty for it was agreed that it is for EU heads of government to propose the candidate to the head the European Commission. Rather, he argued that under spitzenkandidaten, a back-room deal to join forces after the election in support of the lead candidate of the party that won the most seats was conducted without the negotiations between the European institutions and ratifications by the national parliaments. Instead, he claimed that they "must focus on finding the best candidate for Commission President who can deliver reform, drive growth, create jobs, and accept that Europe's needs are best served by action at the national level."<sup>208</sup> Despite his effort to persuade other leaders to vote with him in opposing Juncker, the European Council voted Juncker as the next president of the European Commission. Only Hungary had been persuaded to vote with Britain. Again, this was a blow to Cameron who had consistently relied on Germany that prevented him from forming an alliance with other leaders to secure what he wanted in the EU. Such style was starkly contrasted with his predecessor, Tony Blair who had understood the need to work with colleagues from other EU member states, whether from the same

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<sup>208</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister's Office. "Press Conference at the European Council." 13 June 2014. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech).

party family or not.<sup>209</sup> Thus David Cameron has relied on the bilateral relations of Germany as an end in themselves rather than the means to an end to secure what they wanted in Europe. This reflected as a problem for the backbenchers who complained, “David Cameron isn’t really engaged—not in the EPP; not part of the alliances. Consider how European policy has developed over the year. There is a semi-detached approach to Europe.”<sup>210</sup> This indicates that Cameron was already seen by his MPs to be less credible when it came to negotiate with Europe for his inability to build alliances. Nonetheless, he did secure reducing the EU budget and a reduction in the British contributions to EU. However, Merkel was not able to support him over the appointment of Juncker because of constraints of domestic politics in Germany. Cameron had initially believed that he had Merkel’s support to block Junker and he had publicly worked with Merkel and Mark Rutte, the Dutch Prime Minister and Swedish minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt. At the end, the UK was isolated and disengaged that led Cameron to be viewed by the British to have overplayed his hand and incompetent at convincing other European leaders. After such defeat, at the following conference, Cameron was clamored for not being able to win in the EU diplomacy. For instance, he was compared to Margaret Thatcher who was “isolated, but won” while Cameron was just “isolated”. Furthermore, he was seen as incompetent in the way he had pursued European diplomacy that was evident in one of the questions reporters asked during press conference, “I just wondered whether you thought that this episode has showed how few allies Britain has in Europe and the precariousness of depending on Angela Merkel to deliver British objectives.”<sup>211</sup> They also highlighted the fact that it should have been easy to block Juncker for he was a man who few of the leaders really wanted. This in turn blamed Cameron’s incompetence for losing his promise, which

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<sup>209</sup> Smith, 2016, p.386

<sup>210</sup> Smith, 2016, p.387

<sup>211</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister’s Office. “Press Conference at the European Council.” 30 June 2014. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech)

further made him lose reliability as a strong advocate of British interests as he had claimed himself to be.

Thereafter, Cameron had echoed similar stance in the European Council of needing to reform Europe and Britain's position in it. In time for the 2015 General Election, Cameron wanted to renegotiate parts of the treaties governing the UK and EU relations, in particular the primacy of the European Court of Human Rights and the policy that provides the freedom of movement of labor before putting the membership of the EU to a referendum. In the 2015 Conservative Party Manifesto, he had pledged that "Real change in our relationship with the European Union" and committed to "hold an in-out referendum on our membership of the EU before the end of 2017."<sup>212</sup> However, such attempts of re-negotiation and the referendum have antagonized his European allies, business leaders, allies, and above all, the anti-EU wing of his party.

Soon after he was voted in for a second term in May 2015, the European Union Referendum Act 2015 was introduced in the British Parliament to begin the process of Brexit vote. After his re-election, victory, he was still positive that he would be able to bring the changes he had envisioned as 'reformed Europe' that would suit the British interests better. Subsequently, he announced his plans for an in-out referendum at the June 2015 meeting of the European Council but highlighted that the first step was the negotiation process that would have to be discussed in the following European Council meeting. Nonetheless, during this period his party was still divisive. The Prime Minister was answering questions regarding fractious Conservative Party even after the election over the manner in which the referendum would be carried out.<sup>213</sup> Moreover, Cameron was asked what the reactions of the European leaders were like when he had brought up UK agenda on Europe. "When you eventually got around to talking to leaders together last night, you talked about other big crises that are on the

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<sup>212</sup> Conservatives.com. 2015. The Conservative Party Manifesto 2015. [online] Available at: <https://conservatives.com/Manifesto> [Accessed 20 November 2017].

<sup>213</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister's Office. "Press Conference." 8 June 2015. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech)



agenda of Europe. Did you feel a bit awkward? Did you – crashing in with that, or did you sense as you looked around the room that people were grateful that you were bringing up the British renegotiation, or were they rolling their eyes slightly?”<sup>214</sup> Back home, it was known to everyone that he had already lost his credibility of his ministers of his ability to deliver a good deal on Britain in Europe.

A week before the 2015 winter summit, Cameron made a statement to Parliament by setting out four things he needs to achieve for the UK’s renegotiation package in the areas of economic governance, competitiveness, sovereignty, and social benefits and free movement. However, as there were signs of doubt from the EU leaders such as Donald Tusk who claimed that “his hopes of getting an EU Treaty change are close to mission impossible,” the skepticism of Cameron’s ability to negotiate at the European table and to expect him to deliver good benefits to the UK seemed more doubtful. Then in November 2015 he delivered a speech on Europe to Chatham House that set out the case for EU reform and reaffirming his commitment to an EU referendum before the end of 2017 along with writing a letter to Donald Tusk that contained four areas where he was seeking reform as part of negotiations on the UK’s membership of the EU. On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the European Union Referendum Act received Royal Assent for the holding of a referendum in the UK and Gibraltar on whether the UK should remain a member of the EU.

Donald Tusk wrote to the Members of the European Council on his proposal for a new settlement for the UK within the EU. After much discussion in the February 2016 European Council meeting, David Cameron outlined his negotiations to secure a deal giving the UK special status in the EU. Subsequently, Cameron delivered a speech to the Parliament’s House of Commons in February 2016, that the referendum would be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> of that year. Cameron had decided to hold referendum after securing his renegotiation with the EU as explained in the government’s official report

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<sup>214</sup> United Kingdom, Prime Minister’s Office. “Press Conference at the European Council.” 26 June 2015. [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/european-council-june-2015-david-camerons-speech)

on, “The best of both worlds: The United Kingdom’s special status in a reformed European Union.” On his part, he may have been confident enough to hold then with the ever more present Eurosceptics in his party especially since his party had won in 2015 election on such negative platform on Europe. Nonetheless, because Cameron did not have enough credibility in Britain on whether he could deliver a good deal for the UK added with his lack of allies in the European Council seen through his repeated defeats many had seriously doubted the benefits the renegotiated deal would bring to the UK. As a result, he was not seen as a credible negotiator working for Britain especially in the eyes of his own ministers. By this time, he had lost many of his allies all within the Conservative Party, Britain, and the EU.

## Chapter V. Conclusion

This thesis brought the analysis of leaders' management tools to quell dissent in the parliament. The study aimed to explain how the intra-party nature during David Cameron's leadership eroded to result in high political Euroscepticism to have him promise and hold a national referendum, which ultimately resulted in 2016 Brexit. Chapter 2 introduced the literature on various facets of Euroscepticism and how each facet intensified in Britain. Among them, political Euroscepticism has ultimately led to constant rebellions of the Conservative Party. It also explored how other existing explanations of Brexit are limited by recalling that it was the political forces that pressured the leadership to hold the referendum. Furthermore, with such intra-party dissent, the number of methods the Conservative leadership utilized to manage its intra-party dissent were outlined in details. These included various institutional tools available to them as the following: candidate selection, patronage, discipline, permitting low-cost dissent, policy compromise and deferred decisions, pledging referendums, and issue salience.<sup>215</sup> Then Chapter 3 explored the distinctiveness of the British Euroscepticism and how it was manifested in the Conservative Party with comparisons to other leaders as well. Finally, in Chapter 4, Cameron's leadership from 2005 to 2015 is examined to how the political Euroscepticism was expressed in the party to have made Cameron utilize all tactics available in the intra-party management tools. Cameron had repeatedly sought to 'stop banging on about Europe', which was his way of keeping the Europe salience low. This has repeatedly been done in British politics as parties attempt to reduce EU salience once it proves internal divisions.<sup>216</sup> Such method has worked for parties that have experienced minor dissent, but it could not save the Conservative Party for it had experienced serious divisions.<sup>217</sup> Throughout this period, Conservative Political Euroscepticism boiling inside Cameron's parliament

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<sup>215</sup> Kam, 2009, p.77.

<sup>216</sup> Lynch and Whitaker. 2013, p.320.

<sup>217</sup> Lynch and Whitaker. 2013, p.327.

was not satisfied and their demands for more radical measures on the EU increased through dissenting on votes, signaling EDMs, and publicly speaking out against the leadership. Consequently, Cameron tried harder to sooth their discontent. The Conservatives had delivered their commitment to ensuring that new powers could not go to Brussels without a referendum. Yet, even with the EU Act that became a law in November 2011, the Conservative MPs began to call for a more concrete way of referendum as well. The backbench debate motion was secured by Tory MP, David Nuttall, that read, “That this House calls upon the Government to introduce a Bill in the next session of Parliament to provide for the holding of a national referendum on whether the United Kingdom should (a) remain a member of the European Union on the current terms; (b) leave the Euroepcan Union; or (c) re-negotiate the terms of its membership in order to create a new relationship based on trade and cooperation.”<sup>218</sup> The official position of the leaders of all three parties were united in their opposition to this motion, but nonetheless, Cameron was moved closer towards the referendum pledge. Cameron’s leadership style, personality, and relations with colleagues proved major factors in the UK’s changing relations with the EU during the coalition government.<sup>219</sup> Also, his need to satisfy all sides of his government resulted in what his critics called his ‘wishy-washy’ style of leadership, which made him seem weak and lacking to lead the government. His move to endorsing a national referendum on EU was a political gamble and his way of making concessions to appease his critics. Nonetheless, Cameron had decided to hold the national referendum a year earlier than he had initially promised for he was confident that his renegotiated deal would be satisfactory for the British. This was a miscalculation in leadership strategy of Cameron for the ‘leave’ verdict came out to his surprise. Thus, the European issue was the dividing factor that affected Cameron to engage certain leadership behavior to manage his highly Eurosceptic party. In other words, the intra-party nature was what

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<sup>218</sup> House of Commons 24 October 2011, vol 534, col. 46

<sup>219</sup> Norton. 2015, p.185.

led Cameron to initially promise a referendum and to go ahead and hold it once he thought he was ready. Despite Cameron's position in supporting the membership to remain, the main opponents composed of his own MPs. Ultimately, when the vote came out as the majority had voted to leave the EU, Cameron resigned accepting his failure in leadership management.

This thesis faces several limitations. First, since the focus of this paper is on the leadership behavior and intra-party nature, it was applied to the single case of David Cameron and Brexit. Although, the theoretical model supported the leadership behavior and shown how Cameron had essentially failed, the motives behind the individual MPs are not studied. There is already a plethora of research on this topic to explore the individual MPs and factors that lead them to dissent. Therefore, a further research that combines MPs' individual motivations with leadership behavior would be interesting in this topic to give more insights about intra-party model.

Nonetheless, this study was able to demonstrate the need for more search on British Euroscepticism and intra-party management as other EU countries are also facing anti-EU sentiments. While the process of Brexit negotiations and outcomes remain unknown, since it is the first country to exit the union, it can serve as the guide for other countries when dealing with Eurosceptic sentiments.

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## 국문 초록

2016 년 6 월 영국 국민들은 유럽연합으로부터 탈퇴에 대해 국민 투표를 실시하였고, 이에 총 72.2%의 투표율에 51.9%의 찬성과 48.1% 반대로 탈퇴를 결정하였다. 이는 영국이 1973 년 유럽 연합에 가입한 이래로, 43 년 동안 지속해오던 관계를 청산하려는 의지를 보여준 결과였다.

이와는 반대의 결과를 예측했던 많은 주요 정책 결정자들과 정치 지역 전문가들은 충격에 빠졌고, 브렉시트의 원인으로서 ‘영국의 유럽회의주의’가 제시되었던 선행 연구들이 재조명을 받기 시작했다. 우선, 선행 연구를 살펴보면, 대다수 연구자들은 유럽 회의주의를 유럽통합이 진정으로 통합된 단계 또는 초국가 단계에서의 기구 역할을 하는 데에 방해 요소로 규명하고 있습니다. Gifford 와 Forster 에 의하면 ‘유럽 회의주의’란 단어 안에 euro-는 유럽연합을 가리키고 있으며 scepticism 은 의심을 가리켜 ‘유럽연합에 대한 의심’을 뜻한다. 이로 인해 유럽지역 연구 정치학 분야에서 주로 유럽 회의주의는 유럽 정신 또는 유럽주의를 반대하는 장애물로서 여겨지고 있다.

이러한 연구들의 흐름은 유럽회의주의가 여러 측면으로 강화되어 결국 영국의 브렉시트를 야기 하였다는 공감대로 연결된다. 즉 유럽 회의주의가 크게 경제적, 문화적, 정치적 측면에 영향을 미쳤고, 각각의 측면들이 결국 영국의 유럽 연합으로부터 탈퇴를 야기하게 되었다는 결과를 도출하고 있는 것이다.

첫째, 경제적 측면에서, 영국은 지속적으로 유럽연합에 의무적으로 납입해야 하는 부담금에 대해 부정적인 생각을 가지고 있었다. 이는 대처 수상의 집권 중기부터 확산되기 시작하였으며, 그 주요 요인은 영국이 다른 국가들에 비해 돌려 받는 환급액이 낮다는 근거를 들어 실질적으로 높은 부담금을 납입해야 한다는 데에 불만을 가지고 있었기 때문이다.

둘째, 영국의 문화 정체성을 연구한 대다수 연구서에 따르면 영국인들은 유럽정체성이 유럽 차원에서 형성될 수 없다고 보며, 특히 영국의 섬나라 역사와 지리학적 위치로 인해 유럽 대륙과는 다른 문화와 정체성을 가지고 있다고 믿어왔다.

특히 유럽 회의주의의 문화적 측면에 대한 경험적 사례로서 영국의 이민자 문제를 들 수 있다. 이미 1999 년도에 영국은 쎈겐 조약, 즉 유럽 내에서 각 국경 출입국 관리 규제를 없애고, 여권 없이 여행할 수 있도록 한 조약에 참여를 유보하기로 결정하면서 무분별한 국가 간 이동을 막은 전례가 있다. 이 결정에 근거하여 영국은 2015 년에 발생했던 시리아 전쟁으로 인한

난민들의 유입에 난색을 표하며 관련 규제를 오히려 강화시키는 방안을 모색했다.

하지만 경제적·문화적 유럽회의주의에 기반을 둔 대다수의 선행 연구는 국내외 정치적인 역동성을 반영하지 못하고 있다. 비록 두가지 측면 모두 영국이 유럽연합에 갖고 있는 반감에 대해 어느정도 설명력을 갖고 있지만, 본 연구에서는 유럽연합의 통합과정이 정치적 영향력으로 이뤄졌고 마찬가지로 브렉시트를 정치적 측면으로 분석하는 작업이 요구된다는 점을 강조하고자 한다.

구체적으로 영국의 정치적 유럽회의주의를 정당 간 정치적 마찰이나 갈등 문제로 정의하는 선행 연구에 더해 본 연구에서는 영국의 유럽 문제와 당 내부의 정치 동학에 초점을 맞추고 있다. 우선 당시 집권당이었던 보수당 지도부의 행보가 중요 외교 사안인 유럽 연합 탈퇴 문제에 미친 영향을 분석하였다. 특히, 캐머런 총리가 7 가지 당내 소속 의원 관리 전략들 중 ‘국민 투표’를 주요 해결 방법으로 채택한 이유를 검토하였다. 당시, 보수당 내 투표 응집력이 떨어진 상태에서 유럽연합 문제에 대한 돌파구로서 캐머런이 제시한 국민투표는 그 자신에게는 분명 승산이 있다고 판단할 수도 있는 정치적 도박이었다고 단언할 수 있다. 왜냐하면 정치적 유럽 회의주의는 브렉시트가 일어났을 때 처음 표출된 현상도 아니었으며 대처 수상 집권 시기 이후 영국 정치 환경의 저변에 계속 끓고 있었던 감정이었기 때문이다.

본 연구가 2005 년부터 2015 년 사이 캐머런의 보수당을 중점적으로 검토하는 이유는 비록 전임 영국 총리들도 캐머런과 마찬가지로 향후 유럽에 관한 조약을 국민투표에 맡기겠다고 약속을 했지만, 1973 년 이후 두번째로 이행되었을 뿐 아니라 결과적으로 유럽연합 탈퇴로 결론지어졌기 때문이다. 특히 캐머런 총리는 2015 년 총선에서 보수당의 승리에 취해 원래 약조한 2017 년보다 이른 2016 년에 국민투표를 실시하기로 결정했고, 결국 자신의 정치적 전략 실패와 판단 오류로 인해 영국의 유럽연합 탈퇴가 결정되었던 것이다.

캐머런이 당내 균열을 막기 위해 소속 구성원들을 관리 및 감독할 수 있는 방법들은 총 여섯 가지였다. 첫번째 방법은 유럽 의회의 선거 후보 선출이다. 당 대표는 공천 명부에서 본인에게 더 충성스러운 후보를 명단 위에 우선 작성할 수 있기에 상위에 위치한 의원 후보 일수록 선출될 가능성이 높아지는 것이다. 두 번째로, 정치적 지원이다. 이는 특히 당 대표가 내각 구성을 할 때, 내각 직책을 부여하여 의원들의 진급이나 정치적 전문성을 높이는데 도움을 주는 방법이다. 세 번째는 소속의원들에게 당 규율을 엄격하게 지키게 하는 것으로 투표 때 원내



총무를 동원하여 당 투표에 따르도록 압박을 가하는 것이다. 네 번째는 심각한 수준이 아닌 어느 정도의 반대표를 허용하는 것으로 의원들의 의견이 완전히 무시당하지 않는다는 여지를 두는 방법이다. 다섯 번째는 지도자가 갈등을 야기할 수 있는 이슈의 현저성(salience)을 상대적으로 낮추는 것이다. 즉 캐머런은 유럽연합 이슈에 대해 가급적 언급하지 않으려 했으며, 차후로 미루는 전략을 사용했다. 그리고 마지막으로 정책 타협은 의원들이 원하는 정책 방향으로 어느정도 수용해 주는 방법으로 캐머런은 처음에는 유럽 정책에 대한 당내 반발에 완강하게 대응했지만, 내부 반발이 거세지자 유럽연합에 좀 더 유럽회의적인 위치를 취하려고 노력하며 때로는 타협을 통해 반대표를 막으려 노력했다.

하지만 2010-2015 년 기간 동안 당내 분열은 위협적인 임계 수준까지 치달았고, 이에 캐머런 총리는 앞서 말씀드린 6 가지 방법이 더 이상 효과적이지 않다는 판단 아래 마지막 방법인 국민투표를 약속했다. 이에 당 결집도를 보여주는 Rice 지수나 Kam 의 수치와 더불어 캐머런의 리더십이 얼마나 효과적이었는지 확인할 수 있었던 지표로 보수당 의원들이 얼마나 캐머런과 비슷하게 투표했는지 측정한 수치를 활용하였다. 2010 년부터 2015 년까지 기간 중 2013 년에 국민투표 약속을 했기 때문에 이 시기를 나눠서 의원들의 투표 형태를 분석하여 당 대표에 대한 충성심을 측정했다. 먼저 2010 년부터 2013 년에 총 299 명의 보수당 의원들 중 273 명의 의원이 유럽연합 의결 안에서 캐머런과 반대로 50% 이상 투표했다는 것을 볼 수 있다. 이는 보수당원들이 캐머런 리더십에 대한 불신을 보여주는 방증이었다. 더불어 2013-2015 년 시기에 캐머런이 국민투표 실시를 약속하자, 비록 의심을 표시하며 반대로 투표하는 의원들의 수는 232 명으로 줄었지만 캐머런이 리더로서 신뢰도를 잃었다는 사실 자체는 변하지 않았음을 보여준다.

결국 국민투표 약속만으로 유럽회의적인 의원들은 캐머런에 대한 불신을 완전히 해소하지 않았다는 점이 여실히 드러났고, 설상가상으로 유럽연합과의 재협상 과정에서 정치적 판단 실수에 대한 책임 추궁까지 가중되었다. 유럽연합의 다른 지도자들과 영국 국민들, 유럽회의적인 의원들, 그리고 그의 오랜 지지자들까지 캐머런에 대한 적대감을 가지면서 그의 신뢰도는 더욱 떨어졌다.

결국 캐머런은 정면 승부를 택해 국민투표 시기를 앞당겨 진행하게 되었다. 영국 지도층에서 특히 더 민감하게 반응하는 의회 주권을 포기하고 국민투표를 통해 국민들에게 중대사에 대한 결정을 맡겼다는 자체에 대한 내부적 반발심도 격화되었다. 게다가 UKIP 은 앞서 반이민자, 반유럽연합, 그리고 반의회주권이라는 정강을 가지고 보수당에 대적하는 당으로서

부상해 2015 년 총선에서 12.5%의 총 투표수를 득표하며 위협적인 당이 되었다. 결과적으로 UKIP 이 준 불안감에 떠밀린 캐머런의 정치적 판단 실수는 영국의 유럽연합 탈퇴뿐만이 아니라 그의 사임으로 이어졌다.

본 연구는 영국의 국민투표 전후 시기에 초점을 맞춰, 영국에서 유럽 회의주의가 국내 정당 정치에 정치적 현저성을 가지게 된 과정을 재구성했다. 구체적으로 당 대표가 당 내부의 분열을 해결하려는 경로를 추적해 그를 설명하려는 논의를 담고 있다. 이를 통해 영국뿐만 아니라, 심화된 유럽회의주의에 직면하고 있는 다른 유럽연합 소속 회원국들, 예컨대 프랑스와 이탈리아 등 국가 지도자의 정치적 판단에 대한 설명도 가능하리라고 기대한다.

주요어: 영국유럽회의주의, 브렉시트, 정치적판단

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