ЕВРОПА И АЗИЯ: ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИХ ИНСТИТУТОВ

EVOLUTION OF BRITISH EUROSCEPTICISM IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20th CENTURY

Evgenii A. Atapin

Voronezh State University, Voronezh, Russian Federation

Abstract. *Introduction.* The United Kingdom is the most prominent example of a Eurosceptic country in the EU. For many years the United Kingdom did not feel a part of Europe. Great Britain was geographically separated from continental Europe and psychologically distant from the European integration movement established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The British Eurosceptic tradition rested on these geographic and psychological characteristics. Eurosceptic traditions included political, economic, linguistic, cultural and historical aspects that made it difficult for the United Kingdom to accept European integration. *Methods and materials.* The research methodology is based on narrative and comparative methods. The materials of the study incorporate statements of certain British politicians about attitudes towards European integration, works devoted to the analysis of Euroscepticism in the United Kingdom and manifestos of some far-right political parties. *Analysis.* A study of the attitude to European integration of the two main political forces of Great Britain, namely the Conservative and the Labour Parties, in the second half of the 20th century is carried out. *Results.* The study results in the creation of a periodization of British Euroscepticism in the second half of the 20th century. Three stages of evolution of British Euroscepticism in the period under study are distinguished: 1) the stage preceding the entry of Great Britain into the European Communities, conventionally called "Labour"; 2) the stage of the United Kingdom's participation in the "common market", conventionally called "Conservative"; 3) the stage of Britain's participation in the European Union, conventionally called "Right-wing populist". Their chronological framework is established and their main characteristics are given.

Key words: United Kingdom, Europe, European Economic Community (EEC), European Union (EU), British euroscepticism, Labour Party, Conservative Party, right-wing populists.

ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ БРИТАНСКОГО ЕВРОСКЕПТИЦИЗМА ВО ВТОРОЙ ПОЛОВИНЕ XX ВЕКА

Евгений Александрович Атапин

Воронежский государственный университет, г. Воронеж, Российская Федерация

Аннотация. Великобритания является наиболее ярким примером евроскептической страны в ЕС. На протяжении многих лет Соединенное Королевство не ощущало себя частью Европы. Великобритания

была географически отделена от континентальной Европы и психологически отдалена от европейского интеграционного движения, заложенного Римским договором 1957 года. Британская евроскептическая традиция была основана на этих географических и психологических особенностях. Евроскептические традиции включали в себя политические, экономические, языковые, культурные и исторические аспекты, которые затруднили принятие европейской интеграции Соединенным Королевством. Основу методологии исследования составляют нарративный и сравнительный методы. Материалами исследования послужили высказывания отдельных британских политиков об отношении к европейской интеграции, работы, посвященные анализу евроскептицизма в Соединенном Королевстве, а также манифесты ультраправых политических партий. Проводится исследование отношения к европейской интеграции двух основных политических сил Великобритании во второй половине XX в. – Консервативной и Лейбористской партий. Результатом исследования является создание периодизации британского евроскептицизма во второй половине XX века. Выделяется три этапа эволюции британского евроскептицизма в исследуемый период: 1) этап, предшествующий вступлению Великобритании в Европейские сообщества, условно названный «лейбористским»; 2) этап участия Соединенного Королевства в «общем рынке», условно названный «консервативным»; 3) этап участия Британии в Европейском союзе, условно названный «правопопулистским». Устанавливаются их хронологические рамки и приводятся основные характеристики.

Ключевые слова: Великобритания, Европа, Европейское экономическое сообщество (ЕЭС), Европейский союз (ЕС), британский евроскептицизм, Лейбористская партия, Консервативная партия, правые популисты.

Introduction. Since the middle of the 20th century the meanings of the terms "Eurosceptic" and "anti-marketer" were equally subject to different interpretations and perceptions, especially in the popular media. The exact meaning of the term "Europe" was also questioned. Sometimes it was not clear which one of the many versions of "Europe" was criticized. From the outset of the debate over Britain's relationship with the emerging European institutions after 1945 it became evident that there was no well-defined understanding of what Europe was and what it should be and therefore what Euroscepticism was. A simplistic Europhobic understanding in which Europe as a whole was condemned was rarely observed. Most of the criticism focused on specific aspects of Europe. This concept has absorbed different meanings. Likewise, European institutions have always been evolving, and European integration should be seen as an ongoing process, the trajectory of which can be multidirectional. Europe in the form of the EU in many respects has little resemblance to Europe of the European Coal and Steel Community and the EEC, the project of which was first announced in 1950, and Europe which is a part of the euro area and the Schengen area has not so much in common with "patriarchal" Europe defined by Charles de Gaulle and the European Free Trade Association, the idea of which was put forward by the UK in the 1950s.

Methods and materials. The aim of this study is to systematize the features of the development of British Euroscepticism in the second half of the 20th century by highlighting the stages of its evolution. To achieve this goal the preconditions for Britain's sceptical attitude towards Europe and European integration initiatives in the middle of the 20th century are studied, the views of the largest British Eurosceptics are analyzed, the features of the manifestation of Euroscepticism in the two main British political parties are investigated, and the influence of right-wing populist forces on the public attitudes to the EU membership is revealed.

Analysis. *Prerequisites of British Euroscepticism. Labour Euroscepticism.* The issue of British exceptionalism remains controversial. Is Britain really a European state? This is probably the most fundamental question that took the central place in the debate about Britain's relationship with the rest of Europe throughout the second half of the 20th century. Many Eurosceptics either answered this question unequivocally negatively or stressed that the UK should not be a part of the EEC-EU integration space. Hence the ambiguity has always been inherent in the problem of Britain's place and role

in European integration processes. Although the issue of British leadership in the EU was regularly raised in parliamentary discourse, the opposite view of the UK as an outsider and a state with an undefined role in the EU was constantly present throughout the entire period of the United Kingdom's membership in the integration association [20, p. 412].

Obviously, British Euroscepticism was based on a feeling of "awkwardness" or "dissimilarity" in relation to the continental European project of political and economic integration [12, p. 13]. At the same time the UK was not eager to be seen as just one of the ordinary European countries preferring instead to be associated with the EEC without losing its sovereignty [29, pp. 14, 32].

In many ways, the very inception of the British state left behind a heritage of Euroscepticism. English and then British nationalism like all other forms of nationalism was based on a sense of differentiation and alienation from the "other", from other neighboring and often competing nationalisms. For most of Anglo-British history it was continental Europe that played the role of this "other". This sense of dissimilarity was reinforced by Britain's long history of opposition to continental tyranny in the form of Philip II, Louis XIV, Napoleon, German Kaisers, etc.

The sense of distrust towards continental Europe for the generation of postwar British politicians was aggravated by the recent memories of the UK's resistance to the menaces of fascism and Nazism. Another aspect of Britain's apparent exclusivity that has often been pointed out is the British sense of pragmatism and empiricism and the contrast with the more ideologized and theorized approaches of many continental countries. The distinction between uncodified British common law with the unwritten UK constitution and the continental tradition of civil law has also been considered to be an explication for this principled divide [6, p. 3].

In 1951 the Labour Party brochure "European Unity" stated that "in all respects except for distance we in Britain are closer to our relatives in Australia and New Zealand who live at the opposite end of the world than to Europeans" [21, p. 179]. Later Harold Wilson argued: "If we have to make a choice, then we have no right to sell our friends and relatives in other parts of the world for the dubious advantage

of being able to sell washing machines in Dusseldorf" [28, p. 157].

Many Britons felt much more comfortable with the former dominions and the United States than they did with Europe. One opinion poll in 1966 found that when British residents were asked to name the countries they trusted most, Australia came out on top followed by Sweden, the United States and India with Germany and France placing the only slightly higher than the USSR [15, p. 259].

Certainly, much closer personal ties with the inhabitants of the Commonwealth countries in comparison with the Europeans played a role in the UK's reluctance to participate in European projects. However, it was the experience of World War II that had the greatest impact on British understanding of Europe after 1945. In many ways, it continued to have a significant influence on this debate in the early 21ˢᵗ century. For the British the history of the war preserved by the constant reminder through the media, television and film represents heroic resistance and an undeniable victory. While mainland Europe collapsed, Britain remained untouched. In this understanding Britain was innocent of fascism and Nazism, in the outbreak of war and the atrocities that accompanied it. Its war experience was entirely different from the practice of the continental allies which due to their weakness surrendered in the face of this test. The UK neither unleashed the war nor broke down under the onslaught of the Nazis. When the countries of the continent failed, Britain emerged victorious. That is why it was much easier for Europe to come to terms with the fact that the nation state as a model for organizing public life had failed, and a new system was needed. Britain which had not yet experienced such a shock to its political system was not willing to undertake such a fundamental rethinking. It remained committed to the existing political order and the idea which gradually became more and more illusory about its status of a world power [6, pp. 4-5].

Suspicions about Germany kept strong, and when by the end of the 1950s West Germany not only caught up with Britain but surpassed it in many areas, these sentiments only strengthened. In 1958 Prime Minister Harold Macmillan warned that "Western Europe is effectively dominated by Germany using the tools to restore its power by economic means. It is striving for that, for the

sake of preventing which we waged two wars" [21, p. 170]. Fears arose that the EEC would provide a means of re-establishing German hegemony [21, p. 181].

In the late 1960s Clement Attlee said in one of his interviews: "I don't really like the Common Market. In the end, we defeated Germany and Italy and saved France, Belgium and Holland. I sincerely do not understand why now we should strive for them" [13, p. 355]. A little later he repeated the same thought: "We are being asked to join the "Six". I seem to remember that we shed a lot of blood and spent a lot of resources during the war saving four of them from the other two" [6, p. 5].

Attlee explicated why his government rejected an invitation to take part in the ECSC project saying in a speech in the House of Commons that "we are not ready to accept the principle that the most important economic issues of the state should be transferred to the government that is undemocratic and not responsible to anyone" [3, p. 236].

In the 1950s the idea of Great Britain joining the "Six" within the framework of the ECSC or the EEC was inconceivable for the overwhelming majority of representatives of the country's political establishment. The quickly shifting international environment and growing uncertainty about the domestic situation in Great Britain forced a rethinking of this previously distanced attitude towards European integration which led in 1961 to the decision to start open negotiations with the EEC founding countries on the terms of the UK membership in the EEC [6, p. 6].

The clearest expression of the Labour opposition to EEC membership was Hugh Gaitskell's speech at the Labour Party conference in October 1962. Gaitskell made a number of different arguments against Britain's EEC membership in that speech, many of which have since become central to the debate over Europe.

His first points contained a specific assessment of merits and demerits of being inside and outside the EEC for Britain, and asserting that the Commonwealth remained important for British trade. In particular, he emphasized the danger of rising food prices in case of Britain joining the EEC. Much of this clause was used in campaigns against the EEC throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The crucial Eurosceptic arguments,

though, did not concern the realm of economics. Gaitskell actually admitted that the difference between losses and gains after the UK joining the EEC would be negligible. The primary incentive of his arguments was political, and it is in this part of his speech that the main Eurosceptic argument against the UK membership in the EEC can be found. He acknowledged that Europe had a great and glorious civilization and could be proud of Goethe and Leonardo, Voltaire and Picasso, while noting that along with this, there were extremely negative figures in European history, such as Hitler and Mussolini. Gaitskell also stressed that he could not say what new Europe would be like, since, in his opinion, it had two faces, and it was not yet known which of them would be dominant. Europe's future development was indefinite: Europe and the Europeans could still turn in one direction or the other.

Gaitskell also feared the EEC's political ambitions to move towards the political union that went beyond the customs union. He highlighted the problem of the loss of sovereignty in integrated Europe. He warned that a political federation had been the clear target of those who had created the EEC. In particular, his answer to the rhetorical question of what a federation is manifested the profoundness of his hostility to this notion.

"Federation means that powers are taken from national governments and transferred to federal governments and federal parliaments. This means that if we enter it, then we will be nothing more than a state in the United States of Europe, like Texas and California in the United States of America. This will mark the end of Britain as an independent nation-state with a thousand-year history. And that will be the end of the Commonwealth. How can you seriously assume that after the metropolis which is the centre of the Commonwealth becomes a province of Europe, it will be able to continue to exist as a political and economic center for a number of independent states? It is impossible" [14, p. 1].

Gaitskell probably did not completely renounce the idea of Britain joining the EEC but only if a number of fundamental conditions were met including maintaining the position and advantages of Great Britain in the Commonwealth, protecting the interests of the countries of the newly originated European Free Trade Association, the right of Great Britain to manage

its economy, preserving a support system for British farmers and an independent foreign policy, and the denial to join supranational systems or a closer alliance. However, few doubted the Eurosceptic nature of his message.

Gaitskell expressed apprehension about the negative influence of the EEC policy on the Commonwealth countries. Here he borrowed the concerns raised by the Conservative government about the possible interference of the EEC in relations between Britain and its allies in the Commonwealth, as well as doubts about the veracity of European assurances, promises and guarantees. The trend to employ the European question to score more points than its political opponents became a characteristic feature of the Labour Party over the next 15 years.

In addition, Gaitskell raised another problem that became central to Eurosceptics in the following decade: popular sovereignty and the supreme power of the people in the issue of making the final decision on Britain's accession to the EEC [6, p. 8].

Numerous leading Conservative Eurosceptics such as Richard Austin Butler, Max Aitken, Harry Legge-Bourke and Peter Walker continued to express restraint and sometimes outright opposition to the EEC. The most outspoken Conservative Eurosceptic was Enoch Powell who clashed with his party leader Edward Heath over Europe in the late 1960s. At the party conference in 1971 he ardently called for a vote against Britain's accession to the EEC because of the loss of sovereignty it would entail. Nevertheless, the conference members opted for British accession to the EEC by 2,474 votes to 324 [6, p. 9].

By the time the third application was filed in 1971 which was subsequently approved, opposition to British EEC membership had become much more organized in both the Labour and the Conservative Parties. The difficulty in getting the necessary legislation through parliament was a testament to the growing strength and influence of anti-EEC groups. Within the ranks of the Conservative Party this became apparent during the 1970 election campaign.

Most importantly, the number of Conservative "anti-marketers" was greater than the number that guaranteed a majority in government, which gave them the potential influence dictated by their numerical strength. Thus the final result depended on whether the government could receive the support of at least a minority of Members of Parliament from the opposition. The vote on Britain's EEC membership in the House of Commons in October 1971 was successful but 39 Conservatives voted against the government's line while two others abstained. But the positive outcome was provided by 69 Labor MPs who voted in favour. Nonetheless, later votes were much tenser, with sometimes the gap being less than 10 votes. This was the first symptom of what could later become an open gap in the Conservative Party. It is important to note that the Conservative "anti-marketers" were becoming an organized and clearly identifiable group that could and was ready to challenge Party unity on what they saw as a problem beyond Party discipline and solidarity. While the Eurosceptics failed to hinder the UK's entry into the EEC, they severely undermined the foundations on which British membership was held. Britain's accession to the EEC on its third attempt in 1973 by no means implied the completion of the Eurosceptic campaign.

In 1975 after two years of the UK membership in the EEC it was too early to draw conclusions about the advantages and disadvantages of Britain's new position in Europe. Nevertheless, there were many antagonists of the EEC who claimed that since the UK had joined Europe, the country's economic problems had only worsened. The simplest decision under this logic was to place the blame on Europe. Adaptation to the EEC was tough, and economic rivalry, especially from West Germany, was, as expected, fierce. For many, this seemed depressing compared to Britain's economic relations with the Commonwealth. These arguments were supported by the fact that at the moment the UK joined the EEC, the world economy entered a phase of recession. The approaching culmination of the crisis of the post-war international financial and monetary order led to unprecedented inflation and a steep decline in economic growth.

The profound disagreements in the Labour Party over the European question during the consideration of the first British applications to join the EEC in the 1960s were nothing compared to those that appeared in the next decade. It was the problem of the UK's participation in European

integration processes that became a serious dividing line in the ranks of the Labour. The defeat in the 1970 elections resulted in revived plea by many Labour Party members for their entire approach to be reassessed.

The European question and the left's persistence against the EEC became the key problems in the Labour Party space. The Euroscepticism of the left targeted not only the EEC accession procedure carried out by the Conservative government in 1971–1973 but also against the views of members of their own party who endorsed this political line. Thus the European problem was not only a part of the political game between the two parties but, equally important, a key element in the ideological battle for dominance inside the Labour Party [6, p. 10].

After the return of the Labour to power in 1974, the government of Harold Wilson embarked on a course of reforming the conditions for Britain's participation in the EEC. The Labour manifesto of February 1974 outlined the following seven conditions that must be met in order for the United Kingdom to continue to participate in the European Communities:

1) the common agricultural policy should not impede the supply of agricultural products from non-European countries to the British market;

2) the necessity of a transparent mechanism for the formation of the EEC budget;

3) preventing an increase in the maximum permissible level of unemployment in Great Britain under the pretext of its unification with European indicators;

4) the leading role in the management of the British economy should be played by the Parliament of the United Kingdom;

5) free movement of capital should not be carried out to the detriment of maintaining the balance of payments of the UK and pursuing public policy of full employment;

6) prevention of infringement of the economic interests of the states of the Commonwealth and developing countries;

7) value added tax should not apply to essential goods in the United Kingdom [17, pp. 12–17].

The Labour Party's October 1974 manifesto contained an intention to hold a referendum which should lead to one of the two outcomes: either Great Britain remains a member of the EEC on the new terms, or the United Kingdom leaves the "common market".

The revision of the conditions for the participation of the United Kingdom in the EEC took place at the Paris summit in December 1974 and at the meeting of the European Council in March 1975. In April 1975, the "deal" on the new terms was approved by the British House of Commons. The referendum took place on the 5th of June 1975. With a turnout of 64%, by the majority of votes (67.2%) it was decided to continue Britain's participation in the Community on the basis of the updated conditions [17, p. 4].

The referendum revealed some regional differences in the European question. While at the beginning of the 21st century the EU was seen by the majority of the supporters of the National Party of Scotland and the Party of Wales as an opportunity to advance their interests, in the 1970s their attitude to Europe was far from the same. The EEC was perceived as a hostile force ominous to the special economic interests of Scotland and Wales in a number of spheres of economy such as agriculture and fisheries as well as an undemocratic and centralized association. Scotland was the most Eurosceptic part of Great Britain. According to the survey conducted in 1971 81% of Scots stood against the EEC membership. The Labour and the Conservative Parties were blamed by the National Party of Scotland for trying to force the Scots to join the European Community against their will. In the 1975 referendum the negative vote throughout the UK was 32.8%. In England the share of opponents was 31.3%, while in Scotland it was 41.6% [6, p. 11].

Thus, Euroscepticism of the Labour at the early stage of Great Britain's participation in the EEC manifested itself in reforming the conditions for the state's membership in the integration association previously adopted by the Conservatives, with the aim of changing them in favour of the interests of the United Kingdom.

The Conservative Position: From Europeanism to Euroscepticism. The Conservatives who since the late 1970s have become the principal representatives of Euroscepticism had been rightfully considered the most pro-European of Britain's among the two main political parties until the mid-1970s. While the EEC was viewed primarily from an economic

and commercial point of view as predominantly a trade zone, most Conservatives did not find anything reprehensible in this association. The Conservatives under Macmillan and Heath were the motive power behind the turn in British policy to a more loyal attitude towards Europe. Unlike the Labour, they did not aspire to earn political points by criticizing the approach of their opponents to the European question supporting Wilson's bid to join the EEC in 1967 [6, p. 11].

The argument that Great Britain was eager to join the EEC in order to direct it along a completely different path from the one that had been originally laid by the "Six" gained great popularity. Claims that Britain sought to play the role of a Trojan horse trying to enter the EEC in order to demolish European construction from the inside, to undermine its foundations or to hamper its development sounded compelling. Thus Macmillan speaking to the Cabinet of Ministers in 1961 said that the creation of the EEC constituted "a threat to the political position of the United Kingdom as a world power" and that this "forces us to adhere to our traditional policy of preventing the concentration of excessive power in the hands of one political unit on the European continent" [11, p. 7].

What is clear is that the vision that the British aspired to join the EEC was often very different from the prevailing point of view among most of the continental elites.

One of the substantial achievements of those who had promoted Euroscepticism since the 1960s was their capacity to increasingly shape the content and course of European debates in the United Kingdom. This success was accompanied by a trend most notable in the approach of the leadership of the Labour Party from the 1950s to 1970s which was to use the European debate as a political instrument and a source of scoring short-term electoral support by criticizing their political rivals.

Incredulity towards Europe and the omnifarious organs that since the end of World War II had fostered the ever greater integration of Europe developed and assumed many different forms, and its influence on British politics changed over time. For a wide range of Eurosceptic adherents Europe was a challenge they had to face, not a chance to benefit from.

Britain approached European integration as a state that exercised a pragmatic and utilitarian foreign policy devoid of a prescriptive partisanship to the European ambition of a close union. James Callaghan who as Foreign Secretary was responsible for the revision of the UK's membership conditions in 1974–1975 eloquently appreciated the EEC as a "business deal" [27, p. 516].

On the eve of the 1975 referendum both statesmen and authoritative opposition leaders could be found on both sides of the political debate. However, the anti-European camp was basically presented by charismatic but scattered politicians such as Tony Benn and Enoch Powell. On the contrary, the pro-European movement was closely associated with the political and business establishment. As a result, the campaign called "Britain in Europe" collected 15 times more private donations than its competitor [10, p. 15].

In the UK in general and in the Conservative Party in particular the controversy over Europe in the 1970s can be characterized as interplay of four traditions. Firstly, the general discourse portrayed the British as a distinctly global, not European, community. This type of Britain's non-European identity was grounded in some traditional topics: several politicians emphasized the importance of either the Commonwealth or transatlantic ties with the United States addressing various themes of realistic or international thinking.

Secondly, the British traditionally viewed their government as built on the rule of parliamentary sovereignty which overrode federal or shared power. In the absence of a written constitution the principle of sovereignty enshrined in the parliament regarded as one of the most important rules of British politics. Due to the fact that parliamentary sovereignty ascribes legitimacy only to procedural decisions, solely what comes from parliament is considered lawful. Therefore, it was difficult for the supporters of integration to argue that the supranational European power was in line with British political traditions.

Thirdly, the British, and especially the Conservatives, traditionally portrayed themselves as pragmatic rather than utopian. In this sense, the stability and prosperity of the UK since the 17th century were founded on gradual reforms, not radical changes, based on experience and practical compromise.

Finally, the British have long considered their society to be liberal. Any educated Briton knew that the Magna Carta, the Civil War and the Glorious Revolution had reinforced in their society the value of the idea of defending personal rights against state domination which was absent in the states of continental Europe [8, p. 91].

There were two periods of manifestation of these traditions in relations with Europe between 1945 and 1975. In the 1950s all four traditions served as reasons for refusing to join the European Communities: 1) relations with the countries of the Commonwealth and the United States were of greater value than relations with the states of continental Europe; 2) Great Britain survived the war that began in Europe; 3) utopian projects were perceived as perilous; 4) liberal thinking fostered global trade not limited by the European framework.

However, by the early 1960s circumstances changed. First, decolonization, disagreements with the United States during the Suez crisis and the continental economic leap turned the pragmatic tradition into a strong foundation for reasons in favour of joining the EEC. The relative economic downturn in the UK made it evident to realize that it was highly impractical to insist on a dogmatic separation from continental Europe. The arguments in favour of abstaining from the EEC sounded more and more ideological, either as populist and nationalist, or as socialist. Second, the changing economic situation channeled the liberal arguments in favour of EEC membership. It was hard to deny that trade with the fast-growing continent would boost economic growth [8, p. 92].

During Margaret Thatcher's premiership, the Conservative Party played a significant part in the formulation of neoliberal doctrines of openness, flexibility and competition, and Thatcher herself once again highlighted the significance of national sovereignty and the inviolability of the nation state which were the oldest Conservative traditions [25, p. 53].

Thatcher came to power as an exponent of liberal values. The forces that brought Thatcher to power encouraged a new perspective on British traditions. In particular, the economic downturn in Britain gave Thatcher the opportunity to use the pragmatism of her predecessors to advance revolutionary liberalism. Many of her neoliberal accomplices, such as Jeffrey Howe, associated technocratic neoliberalism with a multinational pragmatism that played down the value of sovereignty and blended well with the EEC. They approved British membership in Europe on the condition that European institutions should prioritize market freedom and respect British economic interests. For Thatcher, on the contrary, the EEC ran counter to the liberal shift. She believed that free trade meant the absence of European institutional pressure and interference. She felt more and more clearly that British sovereignty needed to be defended against the European institutional authority, even, notably, when Europe promoted liberalization becoming increasingly neoliberal. Eventually her stance became an expression of non-pragmatic and populist nationalism that surpassed her neoliberalism [8, p. 93].

Thatcher spoke from populist nationalist positions considering power outside the national state to be preposterous and hazardous, and that contained an implicit call for pragmatism [8, p. 95]. Thatcher believed in a common market, but not in a common European state [16, p. 358]. Thatcher's position was that democratic traditions in Britain were deeper than those on the continent, which contributed to a certain rift between the United Kingdom and Europe.

Since the 1970s the scientific literature has increasingly dealt with the nature of the social and economic shift introduced by Thatcherism, with scholars generally recognizing the significance of the scale and depth of the transformations it has brought about. Since then two facets of Thatcher's legacy have most often been postulated: on the one hand, the extent to which Thatcher formed the neoliberal economic model that was retained and developed by her successors; on the other hand, the influence of her proposition of a liberal and intergovernmental European association of independent sovereign states on the British Eurosceptic debate.

Euroscepticism has become an explicit attitude to European integration, and Margaret Thatcher widely impersonates this ideology. It ceased to be a kind of an obscure sense of resistance to European integration and turned into a mature position that had enough resources to develop into an independent movement. It can even be argued that Euroscepticism being

institutionalized has become a constituent element of the pluralism within the Conservative Party.

The paradox in the political agenda of Margaret Thatcher was that, although her position towards Europe can hardly be judged as Eurosceptic as such, she initiated the further radicalization of Euroscepticism not only as a narrative, but also as a set of current political practices in relation to the EU, right up to the change in the dynamics of the structure of the Conservative Party.

In addition to institutional, constitutional and ideological reasons, usually presented as influencing the Conservative understanding of European integration, more reasonable explanations can be discovered in the organizational changes of the Party [1, p. 117].

The problem of Thatcher's European agenda is multifaceted, incorporating two levels of interpretation: the first one is a symbolic or rhetorical level that can be distinguished when her vision of Europe is mentioned in rather non-representational terms; the second one is the political level when her deeds and political actions are investigated. The intricacy of Thatcher's European politics can be interpreted by the profound divergence between the two levels, to the point that even there was an opinion about the "schizophrenic attitude towards the European project" [4, p. 217], or, in other words, the dichotomy between theory and practice because of which Thatcher's European vision is very complicated to analyze and understand.

It can be argued that her European project set out in the Bruges Speech in 1988 was a perfectly articulated vision of a liberal intergovernmental Europe where the UK could preserve its values and sovereignty. In addition, Chris Gifford clarified that this vision was built on a series of contrasts between Britain and Europe: "European bureaucracy and political formalism versus British pragmatism and democracy; British free trade liberalism versus European protectionism; British globalism against narrow Europeanism and British political stability against European instability" [9, p. 97].

It is worth mentioning that the more pronounced Eurosceptic sentiments among those who identified themselves as English compared to those who considered themselves British indicated that Thatcher's Eurosceptic version of

British-European history was an unconscious form of expression of English exceptionalism. The references in the Bruges Speech to 1688 (Glorious Revolution) and 1215 (Magna Carta) emphasized the priority of England rather than Britain or the history of the four parts of the United Kingdom drawing a parallel with a political agreement between crown and parliament which became a distinctive feature of the English and then the British system of government [5, p. 16].

Meanwhile, the essence of Thatcher's actions and policies was completely different as evidenced by a number of examples. In 1986 the signing of the Single European Act took place which had been prepared by the European Commissioner Lord Cockfield, a former Thatcher's minister. Thatcher later recorded in her memoirs that she had been satisfied with the achieved progress. "By 1992 we were on our way to the single market. I had to make relatively few compromises considering wording. I did not give up key interests. I had to correct only one aspect of social policy in the agreement" [22, p. 555]. Thatcher accused Cockfield of incoherence. She was unhappy with his neglect to important political issues such as constitutional sovereignty, national feelings and the desire for freedom. She described him as both a captive and a master of his craft who with no doubts could move from deregulation of the market to its overregulation under the pretext of harmonization [22, p. 547]. Thatcher sincerely believed, as suggested by Hugo Young, that the Single European Act was "Thatcherism on a European scale" [28, p. 333], and by concentrating on the economic side she ignored the institutional arrangements that would be needed to advance common policies across a wider range of areas.

In retrospect, it is clear that Thatcher's Eurosceptic heritage manifested itself in ideas rather than politics, and that her views of Europe gradually took shape from the moment of her resignation right up to the making of the political myth that she herself became. If Euroscepticism is defined not only as an unwillingness to keep up with European integration but also as a way of objection to the continental project, starting with temperate disagreement with some sides of European integration (a soft form) and ending with open animosity to the UK membership in the EEC (a hard form), this path can hardly be attributed

to Margaret Thatcher. If Euroscepticism is described as a euphemism for the opposition to the EU, which is by far the most approximate thing to what it really started to signify at the beginning of the 21st century, it turns out that it was only after Thatcher ceased to be Prime Minister that she became a Eurosceptic in the full sense, and Thatcherism started to be used as a synonym for Euroscepticism, the active development of which took place after her retirement. Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992–1993 became a turning point when Euroscepticism gradually transformed into an organized movement both in parliament and outside it as evidenced, for example, by the formation of the "Bruges Group" characterized as "one of the most important associations of custodians of Thatcher's heritage" [1, p. 121]. Both during Thatcher's premiership and later the term "Eurosceptic" began to denote not only a position but also a form of parliamentary behavior and, moreover, a movement itself.

The Conservative Party which dismissed Thatcher could well reorient towards technocratic liberalism and a somewhat more pragmatic European position but this did not occur. On the contrary, Thatcher's defeat made her, or rather her ideas, stronger than her rivals could have imagined. In the early 1990s populist "Thatcher's children" came into politics [8, p. 97].

The influence of right-wing populists on British Eurosceptic discourse. Euroscepticism became an important issue on the EU agenda in the 1990s. The event that was taken as the starting point was the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. The ratification of this treaty provoked objections because of its threat to national sovereignty. Its economic prescriptions and fear of erosion of national identity were compounded by the project of European citizenship. The ratification of the treaty shook the positive conviction of the "permissive consensus" in public opinion [26, p. 1].

The proliferation of the Eurosceptic ideas in the 1990s may be accounted for a number of structural modifications in Great Britain which should be characterized as constitutional, institutional and party-system. Constitutional and institutional transformations were embodied in the intense impact of European integration and devolution which should be seen as interconnected

processes on the principle of parliamentary sovereignty. This led to a broad debate about the integrity of Britain as a sovereign state. Furthermore, the multilevel governance resulting from European integration and devolution had a great influence on the subsequent weakening of Westminster in terms of decision-making and the necessity first asserted by the New Labour government to empower people and bring them closer to democratic power [1, p. 127].

From the mid-1990s to the end of the 2000s during the period when the New Labourists were in power who were generally more loyal to the European Union than the Conservatives, the ultra-right political forces became the main engine of Euroscepticism in Great Britain. In particular, the British National Party which emerged in 1982 and the United Kingdom Independence Party founded in 1993 began to shape the British Eurosceptic agenda at the turn of the century.

Thus, in 2005 Britain's withdrawal from the European Union was the first topic in the election manifesto of the British National Party. Membership in the EU was recognized as meeting neither British democratic principles nor the national interests of the state, since the freedom of action of the United Kingdom government was severely limited by the "dictates of Brussels" [18, p. 5]. The manifesto also noted the opacity, corruption and non-accountability of European institutions in the use of funds from contributions from the member states. At the same time, it was pointed out that, despite the serious contributions of the United Kingdom to the EU, many member states had a more advanced transport system compared to the UK, and the provision of British pensioners remained one of the worst in Europe [18, p. 6]. Finally, the manifesto reflected fears that continued EU membership would lead to even greater migration flows that would have disastrous consequences for British identity and statehood.

The United Kingdom Independence Party made a big splash when it won the national elections to the European Parliament in 2014. Its representatives won 24 of the 73 seats allocated for the UK [19].

The 2015 manifesto argued that the United Kingdom Independence Party was not Euro-phobic, but it decisively opposed to the political integration with Europe. It was noted that in the

early 1970s instead of the promised "common market" Great Britain entered into a supranational political association that possessed all the attributes of state power and tightly controlled the policies of the member states in many areas including finance, agriculture, energy, trade, business, labour market and migration. In addition, the manifesto highlighted the inability of the British authorities to act in the interests of the United Kingdom in the context of the EU membership, as well as the incapability to resist the adoption of unpopular decisions at the Union level. The manifesto rejected the opportunity of solving the problem by simply reforming the relationship between the UK and the EU insisting on the need for Brexit to ensure the sustainable development of the United Kingdom [2, p. 70].

Thus, the main message of the right-wing populist parties regarding the European Union was the following: the EU is an alien political organization, often acting against the interests of Great Britain and forcing it to follow its rules and directives, therefore, in order to ensure the prosperity of the United Kingdom, it is necessary to leave this hostile integration association as soon as possible. By using a clear and simple language, the ultra-right parties were able to attract many supporters that allowed them to set the tone for the British Eurosceptic discourse.

As for the Conservative Party, anti-European sentiments in it were strengthened on the basis of Thatcherism in the early 1990s. They spread among most Conservative MPs in the late 1990s when public support for the EU plummeted. By the time the Party returned to power in 2010, the bulk of its electorate widely shared these views [8, pp. 99–100]. At that time there was a low level of trust in Europe and a rather negative attitude towards it among the citizens of the United Kingdom. So, in 2012 there were almost 80% of Britons who did not trust the EU [24, p. 5].

Euroscepticism fueled in British society by the influence of ultra-right forces influenced the results of the referendum on the 23ʳᵈ of June 2016, when, with a turnout of 72.2%, the majority of votes (51.9% versus 48.1%) decided to leave the European Union [23, p. 17].

At the regional level, votes were distributed differently than in the 1975 referendum. In 2016 England (53.4%) and Wales (52.5%) voted to leave the EU, while 62% of Scots and 55.8% of Northern Irish people voted to stay in the European Union [7].

Results. Making a conclusion, it is necessary to emphasize that British Euroscepticism in the second half of the 20ᵗʰ century went through three stages in its development.

The stage preceding the accession of the United Kingdom to the European integration processes ("Labour") covers the time period from the beginning of the 1950s until the mid-1970s. At this stage both the Labour and the Conservatives acted as carriers of Eurosceptic ideas but it was the Labour Party that used Euroscepticism as a political tool in the fight against competitors and as a means of intraparty rivalry within the Party itself. Euroscepticism was associated with individuals; there were no organized movements of Eurosceptics. The ideological basis of Euroscepticism was multifactorial including distrust of Europe after World War II, the intention of the United Kingdom to retain its world power status and the pursuit to maintain strong ties with the countries of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States. Almost throughout this period Great Britain remained a Eurosceptic "from the outside" not joining the processes of European integration at its initial stages. Consequently, British Euroscepticism during this period should be understood as the unwillingness of the United Kingdom to join European integration associations, primarily the EEC.

The stage of Great Britain's participation in the "common market" ("Conservative") lasted from the end of the 1970s until the beginning of the 1990s. This stage is characterized by the dominance of the Conservative Party in Eurosceptic discourse. The central figure was Margaret Thatcher who was not a consistent Eurosceptic in the full sense of the word but who was an ideological inspirer of British Euroscepticism in the form in which it became inherent in the Conservative Party at the end of the 20ᵗʰ century and at the beginning of the 21ˢᵗ century. During this period Euroscepticism acquired an organizational form, Eurosceptic associations arose. The ideological basis of Euroscepticism was Thatcher's neoliberalism which determined her vision of Europe and the attitude of Great Britain to European integration. At this stage Britain's Euroscepticism manifested itself "from within" since in 1973 the UK entered the EEC. British Euroscepticism came to be

understood as the opposition of the United Kingdom to the projects of deepening European integration, primarily to plans to create a monetary, economic and political union.

Finally, the stage of Britain's participation in the European Union ("Right-wing populist") lasted from the mid-1990s until the mid-2010s. It is important to note that until the 1990s, when united Europe existed in the form of a "common market", Euroscepticism mainly served as a field of confrontation between the Conservative and Labour parties. However, after the signing and ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, which directed the European Union along the path of monetary and political integration, leadership in promoting Eurosceptic ideas began to be challenged by far-right political forces. After the return of the Conservatives to power in the second decade of the 21st century, they had to win the competition from the right-wing radical parties in such a fundamental issue for British politics as Euroscepticism. Therefore, they had to take the initiative into their own hands, holding a national referendum on the EU membership, which led to the UK's withdrawal from the integration association. In fact, Brexit implemented the plans of the far-right British parties by the hands of the Conservatives, since the former, unlike the latter, had requirements for the termination of the United Kingdom's membership enshrined in manifestos and party programs.

Thus, since the creation of the ECSC and the EEC, Euroscepticism has been an important subject, first in the intra-party and then inter-party games in the United Kingdom. At the same time, British Euroscepticism should be understood as a negative attitude towards deepening integration in the European Union which goes beyond the free trade zone, and an unwillingness to be a part of the single European economic and political space.

REFERENCES

1. Alexandre-Collier A. Euroscepticism Under Margaret Thatcher and David Cameron: From Theory to Practice. *Observatoire de la société britannique*, 2015, no. 17, pp. 115-133. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4000/osb.1778

2. Believe in Britain. *UKIP Manifesto 2015*. Newton Abbot, UK Independence Party, 2015. 76 p.

3. Black J. *Convergence or Divergence? Britain and the Continent*. London, Palgrave Macmillan Publ., 1994. 316 p.

4. Daddow O. Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair and the Eurosceptic Tradition in Britain. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2013, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 210-227. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2012.00534.x

5. Daddow O., Gifford C., Wellings B. The Battle of Bruges: Margaret Thatcher, the Foreign Office and the Unravelling of British European Policy. *Political Research Exchange*, 2019, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-24. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2019.1643681

6. Davis R. Euroscepticism and Opposition to British Entry into the EEC, 1955-75. *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique*, 2017, vol. 22, no. 2. 15 p. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4000/rfcb.1364.

7. EU Referendum Results. *BBC News*. 2016. URL: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu_referendum/results

8. Fontana C., Parsons C. 'One Woman's Prejudice': Did Margaret Thatcher Cause Britain's Anti-Europeanism? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2015, vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 89-105. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12205

9. Gifford C. *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain*. Farnham, Ashgate, 2014. 208 p.

10. Glencross A. British Euroscepticism as British Exceptionalism: The Forty-Year "Neverendum" on the Relationship with Europe. *Studia Diplomatica*, 2014, vol. 67, no. 4, pp. 7-20.

11. Griffiths R.T., Ward S. Courting the Common Market. *The First Attempt to Enlarge the European Community 1961–1963*. London, Lothian Foundation Press, 1996. 327 p.

12. Harmsen R., Spiering M. *Euroscepticism: Party Politics, National Identity and European Integration*. Amsterdam, New York, Editions Rodopi, 2005. 290 p.

13. Heath E. *The Course of My Life*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1998. 782 p.

14. Holmes M. *The Eurosceptical Reader*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 1996. 410 p.

15. Lieber R. *British Politics and European Union: Parties, Elites and Pressure Groups*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970. 317 p.

16. Millar R. *A View from the Wings: West End, West Coast, Westminster*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993. 386 p.

17. Miller V. *The 1974–1975 Renegotiation of EEC Membership and Referendum*. London, House of Commons Library, 2015. 28 p.

18. Rebuilding British Democracy. *General Election Manifesto 2005*. Welshpool, British National Party, 2005. 54 p.

19. Results of the 2014 European Parliament Elections in the UK. *European Parliament*. 2014. URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/en/eucitizenscorner/european_elections/results.html

20. Riihimäki J. At the Heart and in the Margins: Discursive Construction of British National Identity in Relation to the EU in British Parliamentary Debates from 1973 to 2015. *Discourse and Society*, 2019, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 412-431. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926519837394

21. Simms B. *Britain's Europe*. London, Penguin Books, 2016. 352 p.

22. Thatcher M. *The Downing Street Years*. London, HarperCollins Publishers, 1993. 914 p.

23. The 2016 UK Referendum. *Report on the 23 June 2016 Referendum on the UK's Membership of the European Union*. London, The Electoral Commission, 2016. 131 p.

24. Torreblanca J.I., Leonard M. The Continentwide Rise of Euroscepticism. *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 2013, no. 79, pp. 1-10.

25. Ultan M.O., Ornek S. Euroscepticism in the European Union. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 2015, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 49-57. DOI: https://doi.org/10.20472/SS2015.4.2.006

26. Verney S. Euroscepticism in Southern Europe: A Diachronic Perspective. *South European Society and Politics*, 2011, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 1-29. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2010.570124

27. Wall S. *The Official History of Britain and the European Community, Volume II: From Rejection to Referendum, 1963–1975*. Routledge, Abingdon Press, 2013. 688 p.

28. Young H. *This Blessed Plot*. New York, Overlook Press, 1998. 543 p.

29. Young J.W. *Britain and European Unity, 1945–1992*. Hampshire, London, The Macmillan Press, 1993. 217 p.

Information About the Author

Evgenii A. Atapin, Postgraduate Student, Department of History of Foreign Countries and Oriental Studies, Voronezh State University, Universitetskaya Sq., 1, 394018 Voronezh, Russian Federation, atapinvrn@mail.ru, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1818-7235

Информация об авторе

Евгений Александрович Атапин, аспирант кафедры истории зарубежных стран и востоковедения, Воронежский государственный университет, пл. Университетская, 1, 394018 г. Воронеж, Российская Федерация, atapinvrn@mail.ru, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1818-7235