

---

## BREXIT AND THE DIALECTIC OF THE EUROPEAN SPACE AND IDENTITY IN ANDREW MARR'S *HEAD OF STATE*

Dr Ténéna Mamadou SILUE  
Maître- Assistant  
British Literature and Civilisation  
English Department  
Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké (Côte d'Ivoire)  
Email: silue\_tenena@yahoo.com

### **Abstract:**

This paper examines the crisis of a common European identity in Andrew Marr's novel, *Head of State*. Drawing on Karl Marx's belief that life is materialistic; the article explores how Britain's socio-economic crisis triggers the Britons' animosity toward a common European socio-political identity. Brexit referendum emerged at a moment of economic recession leading to socio-political tensions between the Europhiles and the Eurosceptics in Britain and the European countries. In considering these, the article analyses Marr's fiction as it echoes British social and political struggles within the European Union project. Specifically, the paper explores how the socio-economic deterioration of the country perpetuates a rejection of a common European political space. This allows for a more materialistic reading of contradictions inside the British state-territory to sort out Brexit vote as dialectical struggles between opposing political economic forces in Marr's fiction.

**Keywords:** Brexit, Europhiles, Euroscepticism, Identity, Materialism, Space, Socio-economic, Superstructure, Working-class,

### **Résumé**

Cet article examine la crise d'une identité européenne commune dans le roman d'Andrew Marr, *Head of State*. S'inspirant de la croyance de Karl Marx selon laquelle la vie est matérialiste, l'article explore comment la crise socio-économique de la Grande-Bretagne déclenche l'animosité des Britanniques à l'égard d'une identité sociopolitique européenne commune. Le référendum sur le Brexit a eu lieu à un moment de récession économique qui a entraîné des tensions sociopolitiques entre les europhiles et les eurosceptiques en Grande-Bretagne et en Europe. En considérant ces éléments, l'article analyse la fiction de Marr comme elle fait écho des luttes sociales et politiques britanniques dans le cadre du projet de l'Union

---

européenne. Plus précisément, nous explorons comment la détérioration socio-économique du pays perpétue le rejet d'un espace politique européen commun. Cela permet une lecture plus matérialiste des contradictions à l'intérieur de l'État- britannique afin d'analyser le vote du Brexit comme des luttes dialectiques entre des forces politiques et économiques opposées dans la fiction de Marr.

**Mots-clés :** Brexit, Europhiles, Euroscepticisme, Identité, Martérialisme, Espace, Socio-économique, Superstructure, Classe ouvrière.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the post-war period, Britain's recurring economic crises have endlessly damaged her relationship with the rest of the European countries. In fact, several decades of economic turbulence has forced British people to demand a re-evaluation of their ties with the European space. As the country was marred by continued economic instability, many Eurosceptics urged the United Kingdom government to change its socio- economic policies with Europe. According to many Britons, they can achieve a prosperous economic growth and stability if the country imagines its future out of the European space through a no vote in Brexit referendum.

Countless scholars have investigated Brexit referendum from the standpoint of economic perspective. In an article entitled 'Calculation, Community and Cues: Public Opinion on European Integration', Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks discuss the economic argument of Brexiters<sup>1</sup> as follows:

Citizens take the economic consequences of market integration into account, both for themselves and their countries. They evaluate European integration in terms of their communal identities and their views towards foreigners and foreign cultures. Further, their attitudes are cued by their ideological placement and by elites and political parties' (L.Hooghe et al., 2005, P. 436–37).

According to Hooghe and Marks, what brings British people to oppose the European space is the issue of living costs calculation. British citizens reject the European space because they

---

<sup>1</sup> Brexiters in this paper stands for the British working population who want a no vote in the Brexit referendum. That is to ask for Britain's exit from the European space. Most Brexiters are Eurosceptics too in this article.

---

evaluate the economic consequences of the European integration on their living condition. In the same vein, Demosthenes Ioannou, Jean-François Jamet and Johannes Kleib argue that:

The financial and economic crisis has led to a notable rise in euroscepticism in many European countries (..) trust in the EU declined to record low levels in member states as diverse as(..) the United Kingdom. Recent research shows that a large part of the variation and the decline in support for the EU can be explained by factors such as domestic economic developments, national identities or trust in national governments (D.Ioannou et al.,2015,P.1)

Actually, the economic phenomenon has pushed the Bretons to re-consider their identity in a common European space. Likewise the aforementioned scholars, Andrew Marr's *Head of State*, depicts Britain's continuous economic crises as the important factors determining the result of Brexit referendum. Marr's rendition differs from the above scholars', for it foregrounds the materialistic discourses interrelated to British people's Europsceticism and the ideological conflict underlying the referendum. *Head of State* uncovers the economic turbulences as the reordering phenomenon of British socio- political and cultural identity in a common European space.

Thus, drawing on the materialistic theory that emanates from Karl Marx, this paper analyses the link between British people's Euroscepticism and the country's economic turbulences since the post- war period. We first try to examine the relationship between individuals' Euroscepticism and economic problems, given that Brexit referendum is the result of long decades of socio-economic declines. Finally, the paper will also investigate the economic struggles between the economic base (working population: Euro-sceptics) and economic superstructure (Elites: Europhiles). We will demonstrate the ways in which the political economic crisis related to the European space results into political violence and antagonism in Marr's fiction.

## **1- The Economics of Brexit and the European Identity**

Brexit is a disruptive geopolitical event that tears up a long project of a common European identity. The Brexit vote is seen as the working-class populations' revolutionary response to Britain's ongoing domestic economic crisis. Thus, this part seeks to unpack the dialectical relations between British people's Euroscepticism and the discourse of economic suffering in the Euro-space. According to Karl Marx's hermeneutics the relationship that people have with

---

the economy shapes everything else; ideas, relationships, belief systems, culture. In that respect, the status of economic realities always determines Britain's socio and political relationships with Europe.

George Lukacs,( 1936, P.13) following the materialistic theory of Karl Marx, argued that "the forms of literature change as a result of political, social; and economic pressures". Broadly speaking, a Marxist position, like the one established by Karl Marx and Lukacs, ground that understanding the meanings of discourses in a literary work, is a question of recognising social, political and economic realities. Therefore, to underscore the British people's Euroscepticism in Andrew Marr's fiction we need to foreground the political economic discourses underlying its formal structures.

The discourse of a stable or decline economy within or outside Europe is overtly the determinant factor shaping British people's attitudes towards a common European identity or political space. In *Head of State*, the discourse of a vulnerable European economy is overtly discussed. Britain is constantly reminded of the low productivity of the Euro-zone economy. In fact, the poor performance of the Euro-zone economy makes the Britons reluctant to embrace the narrative of a common European identity. This dialectical relation between the increasing economic decline in Europe and the politics of Euroscepticism concurs in the following lines as the narrator says:

The European peoples were now frankly decadent, adrift in a time when better-organised powers were preparing to replace them, and the swarming millions of the Arab and African worlds were elbowing their way in. A Europe that fragmented now would soon become a mere vacuum, a playground for American technology, Chinese money and Russian political ambition( A. Marr, 2014, P.104)

This quotation relates the vulnerability of the European economic space. What is labored is the narrator's appeal for the rejection of Britain's belonging to a Europeanized identity in favour of other powers. It may well be that a liking for other countries like "China, America and Russia" (Marr, 2014, P. 104) is a merely economic matter. A thorough analysis of the narrator's predilection for other countries would probably reveal how deeply relevant the material factor is to his sense of belonging to Europe. This material aspect of identity and beliefs shaping is stressed when the narrator says "Europe that fragmented now would soon become a mere vacuum(..) for Chinese money"(A.Marr, 2014, P. 104)

---

Central to this quotation is the emptiness of the European space. In broader sense the phrase “vacuum” alludes to the European countries’ economic bareness. Europe is seen in the narrative as a space devoid of economic prosperity. By also qualifying Europe as a fragmented and vacuum space vis à vis Chinese economic power (Marr, 2014, P. 104), the narrator strategically separates his British identity from a collective European identity. As noted by Karl Marx, economic conditions shape our relations with others. We can say that the economic outcomes of the European space determine the narrator’s identity. He incorporates a Chinese identity owing to China’s economic performance over Europe.

Characters’ sense of self or belonging to Europe is frequently affected by the economic performance of the continent. There are different instances of narration in which individuals disconfirm their attachment to this common European space. Characters’ disconfirmation with the European identity is reinforced by the narrative of a poor British sterling or monetary system in a single European economic zone. This disconfirmation with Europeanism on account of its downgrading effect on British financial system is blatantly exposed in the following sentences as Sir Solomon, a respected Brexiter says:

There will be a considerable shock in the city.’ Sir Solomon paused and performed some rapid mental calculations. ‘At a stroke, sterling would lose its reserve status, and as I mentioned during our previous chance encounter, I would expect the FTSE to drop by 20 per cent. So then. Equities. Simple and clear. You buy “put” options to short them, then they plummet, and three or four weeks later, at the bottom of the market, you clean up. Your targets are obvious. The big exporters and transporters, and the financials, who have to be inside the EU to trade in euros. They will all take a big hit. (A.Marr, 2014, P. 202)

In this quotation Sir Solomon laments a possible financial consequence of the euro on British sterling in case Britain remains in Europe. In his view, Britain’s economy is going to collapse in favour of a common European currency. By predicting the shock of British economy in a eurozone, Marr challenges European continent’s appropriation of Britain. Sir Solomon is probably denouncing this appropriation of Britain as a means of reproducing a desired, and profitable, type of European identity that excludes the vast majority of British people.

Written two years before the Brexit referendum, Andrew Marr’s novel *Head of State*, imagines an Anglo-centric future where representations of the English economic interest and European common identity issues are correlated in the narratives. A concern for a strong sterling in a eurozone leads Britain far away from spaces associated with Europeanization, as a common identification marker. Marr’s fiction turns to the European spaces as the disrupting locations

---

for the welfare of the British economy. Europe stands in Marr's narrative as the economic superstructure which is working to exploit British population and its economic welfare to serve the interest of its member states. This is what Sir Solomon is alluding to as he puts it: "The big exporters and transporters, and the financials, who have to be inside the EU to trade in euros. They will all take a big hit". (A.Marr, 2014, P. 202)

Actually, Sir Solomon sees the euro-zone economic space as the superstructure one, which will reap all the profit at the expense of the British pound. In Sir Solomon's estimation those who have wealth and access to the euro as currency can participate in Europeanization of Europe, and the British with a sterling that is losing a face value will remain on the margins of this common European identity. The narrator is probably drawing the reader's attention to this economic reason through the trip of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as he says: "the Chancellor of the Exchequer was safely away in Wales with most of his team for the last frantic days of the referendum campaign (A.Marr, 2014, P.137)

If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is visiting Wales before the last days of the referendum, it is because he has seen a possible consequence of the integration in European common space on British economy. As the tone of the passage might suggest, there is a feeling of distress over the economy inside Britain. Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer feels that this general anxiety about British economy justifies Welsh and English Euroscepticism. The Chancellor's trip to Wales is also marked by the fact that the area is seen as a fierce nationalistic zone rather than pro-European.

*Head of State* delivers a materialistic caricature of Europeanization, a quest for material profit which is actually responsible for Britain's exit or integration in the European common identity. Both the Eurosceptics and Europhiles attempt to champion either the economic benefit or loss for Britain in case of a yes or no vote in Europe. Kingy, a fervent Europhile is an illustration of this materialistic caricature of Britain's belonging to Europe as we read:

Kingy understands that if the UK were to leave the European Union many fine companies would quit his realm, and many peasants would lose their jobs and their pensions, and thus become quite seriously revolting. Once you begin a revolution- and believe this, boys, cutting fifty years of ties with continental Europe is a revolutionary step- history teaches us that you can't tell where it will end. Kingy is with us, in his head (A.Marr, 2014, P.87)

The novel portrays British people's sense of belonging to a single European identity as materially oriented. In doing so, it concurs with Karl Marx's materialistic view of the world.

---

Following Marx it is the economic forces that drive human action. Kingy is a perfect signpost for this, he opposes the discourse of Euroscepticism on account of its financial costs for him. There is always a conflict between opposing economic forces in Marr's fiction. His novel is fascinated by the workaday material world. In his writing there is a kind of pure material narrativity, in which the overriding question is always 'What can be the economic consequence for Britain if it remains or leaves Europe?' Events are important in so far as they lead to the economic concerns inside or outside the European space.

These restless economic narratives make the British belonging to a common European identity problematic. Kingy accumulates economic narrative for his own sake, as a capitalist accumulates profit for its own sake. It is as though the desire to belong to or reject Europe is materially insatiable. In a word, we stand with Europe when we are financially satisfied and we reject Europeanization if we are insatiable.

Furthermore, the deteriorating economic and working conditions in Britain also lead rural individuals to raise concerns about the ability of the European leaders to deliver positive economic outcomes for the country. Given that many Britons in rural constituencies were unemployed, they started hating Europe. As a result, many of them fail to believe local leaders' narratives of a positive economic outcome for Britain in a single European space. This distrust in pro-European leaders' projects is illustrated in the following lines as we read:

'Peter,' said Ronnie Ashe. 'You've always been a sound man, loyal nobody's fool. I can't believe you're even thinking of not voting for us in referendum. What are you playing at? Peter hurriedly washed out the paste of biscuits in his mouth with a swill of tea. 'Ronnie, my constituents hate Europe. They don't trust any of us. They can't understand why I would vote for more regulations, more red tape and more immigrants. (A.Marr, 2014, P. 160)

Actually, what shapes Peter's constituents consciousness about Europe is the material economic world the narrator mentions as follow: "they can't understand why I would vote for more regulations."(A.Marr, 2014, P. 160). On this account, we can postulate that the rural population's Euroscepticism or hatred for Europe has a materialist base. Given that, they live in a time of severe domestic economic reforms; Marr's characters are reluctant to embrace more financial restriction in the European space. This is why many of them show lower trust in the pro-European politicians' project of common identity.

By hating Europe on material basis, Peter's constituents reveal that economic interests shape public attitudes towards the EU. In particular, Peter's constituents show that higher

---

domestic unemployment rates and inflation rates are related to significantly lower levels of support for European integration or trust in British politicians as the narrator puts it: “criticism of the EU and its impact on your country, you have seen the wider picture, and indeed imparted to your government a sense of perspective which individual politicians have entirely failed...ah failed..”(A.Marr,2014,P.79). These above statements reveal British people’s Euroscepticism as connected to financial crisis. This idea concurs with what Demosthenes Ioannou, and Jean-François Janet , Johannes kleibl say:

The financial and economic crisis has led to a notable rise in euroscepticism in many European Union member states. Recent research shows that a large part of the variation and the decline in support for the EU can be explained by factors such as domestic economic developments, national identities or trust in national governments. (D. Ioannou,et al., 2015 P. 2)

Indeed, the domestic economic failure of British leaders has systematically led to the decline of support for the European integration. Individuals are more unlikely to express support for the EU if they evaluate the national economy and their personal economic situations more negatively. As the narrator correlates criticism on EU in terms of British politicians’ failure, he is probably showing that British people extrapolate their domestic economic contexts to the European space. Britain’s unemployment crisis plays an important role in the decline for support to Europe. The unemployment rate was high and many people become pessimistic about the United Kingdom’s European policy.

The above arguments indicate that in *Head of State* issues of Britain’s integration in the European common space rested mostly on arguments about economics. Both the Europhiles and the Eurosceptics put forward different materialistic narratives to champion their views on Britain’s relationship with the European space. This debate on Europe often triggers political economic tension among the economic forces.

## 2- Brexit, Europe: The Crisis of British Political Economy

In *The German Ideology* (1846) and *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), Karl Marx proposes a model of history in which economic and political conditions determine social conditions. In his view the underlying structure of all society is primarily an economic one. According to him, the material concern determines social reality, and that has to be grasped if social reality is to be understood. This section purports to demonstrate that Marr’s fictional text

---

sketches out Brexit discourses in terms of narration of the most serious economic and political crisis in the history of British political systems. The primary focus of the section is to discover instances of political class consciousness and examine the ways in which the ideology of political economy during the referendum causes political violence and entices political antagonism.

Literature is very often considered as the product of social and political economic issues. The political economic reality of the literary texts is echoed by Birch (1989, P.23) in the following terms: “a Marxist position grounds social reality in a history, struggles centered upon class and systems of production, reflecting at any given moment a dialectical relationship between history and society.” According to him, the economy determines history and social class relations. In *Head of State*, the financial gains of Brexit referendum actually lead to a propagation of political violence in Britain. Owing to the economic benefit the referendum vote is likely to bring to different camps, the Europhiles and the Euroseptics use violence against their respective political opponents. In Marr’s fiction, Hayden Alois, the Europhile Oligarch is lurking the death of the Prime Minister in order to ensure the governing party’s financial interest in case of yes vote in the referendum. As a matter of fact, Hayden attempts to threaten to death all the Euroseptics as the narrator relates:

Haydn was delighted to note that Aleksander’s marksmanship was excellent. He presented him with an English shotgun, and bought him and his brothers leather jackets and a second-hand Land Rover, corrected their English and asked them to carry out personal errands for him. Finally he moved them to London so he could reach them more easily, setting them up in a modest but clean flat south of the river. Money had ceased to be a problem for the brothers, but they felt uneasy about the man Borys contemptuously referred to as ‘the English Oligarch’. Indeed, Mr Hayden seemed to them to behave more like a Russian than an Englishman. Recently he had taken to asking them to follow people, hammer on doors and issue threats of violence (A.Marr, 2014, P. 126)

Actually, Hayden Alois, the English Oligarch is the Marxist superstructure who believes that to achieve Britain’s integration in the European space; he has to intimidate the lives of Euroseptics. Considering the fundamental ideas of Marxian philosophy of history, every socio-economic formation is marked by its specific mode of production. The mode of production means here, the English Oligarch’s economic interest in the referendum. Hayden Alois’ relations of production with other characters are simply a social relationship formed in the actual process of production. There are both economic and power relationships that underlie the English Oligarch’s intimidation of Euroseptics. By funding the Polishmen to intimidate

---

individuals who oppose Britain's integration in the European economic space, the writer strategically indicates that political violence and economic concern are interrelated realities in the issue of Britain's belonging or unbelonging to the European space.

Eagleton (1976, P. 2) broadly following the materialistic theory of Karl Marx, argued that 'the forms of literature (for example, the novel) do not change as a result of some autonomous force solely within the genre, but as a result of political, social and economic pressures upon the genre (though the narrative itself)'. For Eagleton, understanding literary work requires a deciphering of the social, and political economic realities of narratives. In this sense, Marr's text can be grasped as a site where the Europhiles' political economic discourses and the Eurosceptics nationalistic economic narratives meet and contend. We might see Hayden Alois's funding of European immigrants to frighten the Brexiters as an attempt to impose the Brussels' model of economy on Britain through violence. The narratives reflect on this superstructure economic mode of production as emanating from widespread political machinations and violence. The lines below illustrate the narrator's account for political violence as we read:

Here is our cover story, straight from Mr hayden himself. 'A consortium of major British banks and finance houses have presented the government with an ultimatum should the country vote to leave the EU. Unless they are granted extremely generous tax breaks, every one of them will decamp for Paris, Frankfurt or Amsterdam. Between them they contribute something like 15 per cent of the UK's corporate taxation, so without them the country would go bust'. This is potentially a major national crisis, but it cannot be discussed publicly, because that could unfairly bias the referendum vote(A. Marr, 2014, P.138)

In this quotation a pro-Brussels' economic discourse is perceived through Hayden Alois' words. His vision of a Britain within European space is marred by political machination. As he overstates the decline of British economy in case of a vote to leave Europe, Hayden Alois implicitly champions Brussels' economic model for Britain. This support for Britain's integration in European economic zone is done in the midst of political machination: the intimidation of Brexiters and the camouflage of the Prime Minister's death. These political violence and machination are unknown to the public as Hayden Alois puts it: "it cannot be discussed publicly, because that could unfairly bias the referendum vote (A.Marr, 2014, P. 138)

In this wise, there is a secret complicity between Marr's narrative and its central English Oligarch. In fact, there are times when the story seems to think more highly of Hayden Alois' Europhile political economic discourses than we do. Since Britain and the European space are

---

largely defined from Alois's economic perspective, the use of political violence against the Eurosceptic is common. The death of Lucien McBryde, a Eurosceptics journalist is also an expression of this political violence as Jenefier, an opposition leader of the Labour party puts it:

She had simply run to him, in a mixture of blind panic and blind faith, to take her away from London and the threat of Alois Hayden—whom she had no doubt would have her killed if he thought it necessary, just as she had no doubt that he had somehow had Lucien McBryde killed.(A. Marr, 2014, P. 286)

Actually, Lucien's killing is to be interpreted as an act of political violence from a Marxist perspective. Given that Lucien is a moneyless working class journalist and a fervent Brexiter, his execution by Alois is seen as the economic superstructure's attempt to subvert working class geopolitical and economic revolution. According to Marx violence or Lucien's execution is the culminating point of class struggle. What is at stake in this class struggle is that the moneyless working journalist wants a Brexit vote to accomplish poor population's economic revolution. The class struggle is therefore engaged between Lucien and the pro-European elites who want the Brussels' economic models to prevail in British society. By killing Lucien and threatening Jenefier's quietness, Hayden Alois also shows us that the smashing of Eurosceptics machinery is a prerequisite of a pro- European economic revolution in Britain.

Lucien Mcybride's death enables us understand that it is the political economic superstructure that defines the forms of social consciousness and identity. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their spatial existence, but the superstructure socio-economic norms that determines their consciousness. In Marr's fiction, the material productive forces of society come into conflict. The political economic superstructure dominates and defines the existing relations of production in accordance with the European norms. As a matter of fact, the economic superstructure threatens the life of the poor Brexiters .Mcybride's death may suggest that the quest for a common European in Britain is constantly constructed by the economic superstructure of the British elites.

*Head of State*, often treats Brexit subject- matter with notable bias. Hayden Alois, for example, paints a partisan view of the referendum. His discourse reflects the viewpoint of the middle and rich class population on the referendum vote. The novel's hero is Lord Bristol, Thatcher Biographer and Brexit historian, a deferential, morally conscientious middle man. We are invited to admire the way he refuses to cave into politicians' pressure and intimidation

---

during the referendum campaign, but the truth is that Lord Bristol has very little economic consciousness at all. He is remote from his fellow middle class for economic and political reasons. His presence in the fiction actually has political and economic significance. In fact, Lord Bristol refuses the material compromise of the elites and to embark on the political antagonism. This is illustrated in the following as the narrator says: "Brickett flinched. He had an appetite for a story, but none for violence. Weakly, he pointed out that he had no car" (A.Marr, 2014, P. 280)

It is clear enough that Brickett, who is not necessarily to be identified with the Europhiles and Eurosceptics, has some inside knowledge of the European space. The narrator has seen Brickett's story telling too much important for the redefinition of Britain's relationship with Europe. As the Brexit historian and Thatcher's biographer, the narrator distances him from the political violence to deflate the economic superstructure's view of Britain as exotic and enigmatic. Brickett's moneyless position is seen in his inability to afford a car. By also describing him as a non-violent individual, the novel portrays Brexiters' economic movement as quiet mouthed, sectarian and potentially nonviolent. In this sense, it is written off or intimidated by the Brussels' economic discourses of the economic superstructure.

Another important thing is that the Euro-zone economic issues have turned Britain's political climate into a conflicting scene. There is a fraught ideological tension between the ruling economic superstructure and the opposition leader in Marr's fictional space. The narrator points out this political antagonism in these terms:

The full implication of what they were attempting were beginning to sink in. They planned to deceive the British people at the very time that they were taking a vitally important decision which would affect the future of the nation, and possibly that of the entire European continent. They were doing this, they all understood, because they had loved the former prime minister, and because they thought that a victory for Olivia Kite, and Britain's exit from the European Union would be a national catastrophe (A.Marr, 2014, P.116)

Actually, in this quotation, the tone is that of blame on the ruling economic superstructure. The political antagonism between the economic superstructure and the opposition leader, Olivia Kite, echoes what post- Marxists, like Laclau and Mouffe ( 2000, P.89) labelled as "class struggle is just one species of identity politic" ,what they see is the contradictory plurality in the construction of a European identity in Britain. The Europeanized Britain through the lens

---

of Europhiles is deemed as corrupt and deceptive. The tone of the narrator in this sense is ideologically inclined to Olivia kite's Euro-sceptic and nationalistic project.

By juxtaposing these two contradictory class discourses on the European space, Marr's text concurs with what the Marxist, Raymond Williams (1982, P.121) has pointed out, "Literature is never an ideologically neutral zone by any means, and cannot be so, despite how we may wish to see it." In this sense, Marr's text also manages the working-class desire for radical cultural transformation of Britain. The Eurocentric ideology of the economic superstructure is shown to be futile and pointless. Having shown that the subjects can no longer turn to any economic grand narratives of the Europhiles for comfort of poor individuals' economic revolutionary, Olivia kite sets the tone for ideological conflict between the elites and the mass.

On the whole this part focused on Andrew Marr's representation of the nexus of Britain's political antagonism, violence and conflict as deeply connected to issues of political economy and the question of European identity. Actually, the rhetoric of Marr's novel posits a conflicting relationship between the Eurosceptic and Europhiles over Britain's economic ties with Europe.

## Conclusion

This article has highlighted the social and political economic issues motivating Britain's belonging or unbelonging to the common European space in Andrew Marr's *Head State*. Drawing on the economic base/superstructure paradigms of Karl Marx it has reached the conclusion that materialistic discourse is a determining factor of the British working population's vote for Brexit and rejection of European space .

With particular regard to Karl Marx's hermeneutics, the paper first posits that the skepticism about European space is financially impelled. Marr's working class characters oppose the European common space integration, for they deem the continent as the economic superstructure that possesses all the production forces at the expense of Britain. In this sense, individual characters view the European identity as the neoliberal competitive capitalistic posture which is likely to exacerbate economic inequalities within Britain.

Second, it is noticeable that through intimidation and political antagonism, the Europhiles and Eurosceptics have negotiated Britain's belonging or unbelonging to the European space.

---

As individuals draw on respective economic arguments, *Head of State* proposes a problematic kind of multidimensional European identity that embraces a hybrid British identity based on both the Europhiles and Eurosceptics' ideology.

In a nutshell, the materialistic position of Marr's Europhiles and Eurosceptics characters locates Brexit referendum in a history of struggles centred upon class and systems of production, reflecting at any given moment a dialectical relationship between history and society.

## WORKS CITED

- BIRCH David, 1989, *Language, literature and critical practice: ways of analysing text*, New York, Routledge.
- CLARKE Harold et Al, 2017, *Brexit: Why Britain voted to leave the European Union*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.
- EAGLETON Terry, 1976, *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory*, London, Verso.
- ERNESTO Laclau & Mouffe, 1994, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, in Glyn Daly, "Post-Metaphysical Culture and Politics: Richard Rorty and Laclau and Mouffe," London, Verso, vol. 23 no. 2, pp. 173-200
- ERNESTO Laclau, 2004, *Glimpsing the future*. In: Simon Critchley; Oliver Marchant. "Laclau: a critical reader", New York, Routledge.
- LUKACS Georg, 1983, *The Historical Novel*, Boston, UK, Beacon Press
- HOOGHE Leisbet & Marks Gary, 2005. *'Calculation, Community and Cues: Public Opinion on European Integration*, Cambridge, UK, Sage Journal Press.
- IOANNOU Demosthenes et Al, 2015, *Spillovers and Euroscepticism*, Brussels, European Economics Daily.
- MARX Karl & Engel, 1978, *The German Ideology*, Chicago, Illinois, Charles Kerr.
- MARX Karl & Engel, 2014, *The Communist Manifesto*, United Kingdom, paperback edition.

---

- MARR Andrew, 2014, *Head of State*, Great Britain, Harper Collins Publishers.
- MATTHEW Goodwin & Oliver Heath, 2016, “Brexit vote explained poverty, low skills and lack of opportunities” Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.
- WILLIAMS Raymond, 1982, *Problems in materialism and culture*, London, Verso.
- WILLIAMS Raymond, 1963, *Culture and Society*, New York, Penguin.

Inter-textual