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“What effect did tourist holidays undertaken between 1985 and 2003 have on people from Staffordshire’s view of Europe and their feelings of belonging to Europe?”

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Abstract

What effect did tourist holidays undertaken between 1985 and 2003 have on people from Staffordshire's view of Europe and their feelings of belonging to Europe?

This Master's thesis analyses the relations between England and Europe. The aim of the research is to find out whether taking holidays in Europe affects how English people feel towards Europe.

The analysis was carried out by interviewing a sample of 56 people living in north Staffordshire, England. These people were all involved in the holidays undertaken by the coach company Stoddards between 1985 and 2003. In this period, Stoddards undertook coach journeys to destinations in France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. From this sample of 56 people, 52 participants were passengers on the tours, whilst the remaining four people were either drivers and couriers, or the owner of the company. The passengers had an average age of 76.

The first part of the thesis deals with the historical context of England's relationship with the rest of Europe, explains how coach tours became a popular form of tourism in England and gives a brief overview of the sociological and cultural theories surrounding tourism and the effect tourism has on stereotypes and dealing with stereotypes. This analysis is necessary to put the answers given by the interviewees into context. The next part of the analysis shows how the interviewees felt in each separate country, before moving to the question of how they felt generally on holiday, whether they perceived themselves as European, whether they believed the holidays had changed their views and what they now associate with Europe. Historical research into the relations between England and each individual country, as well as commentary from the drivers, serves to explain the reasons for the perspectives and opinions given.

The conclusion then brings all the strands together, including the sociological theories regarding tourism. The results prove these theories, but also show that passengers are aware of the stereotypes they carry and can also actively dismantle or change them. The results also show that a majority of the passengers did not feel European, but that the majority also felt that the holidays had changed their views of Europe positively. At the same time, a majority also felt that the European Union had had a negative effect on their view of Europe. The conclusion is that a majority of the passengers embarking on the holidays were a little unsure about foreign countries and people before they went and that the holidays helped to open their eyes to how other people lived. Where no overly negative stereotypes existed, the participants were able to develop good relations with foreigners and even become friends with them. In a small minority this even led to them feeling European. However, the presence of the European Union is a major obstacle for many people in considering themselves European.

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Introduction

What effect did tourist holidays undertaken between 1980 and 2003 have on people from Staffordshire's view of Europe and their feelings of belonging to Europe?

"Fog on English channel, continent cut off". This is an alleged headline run by the *Daily Mail* in the 1930s and, true or not (no-one has found the original headline), it nicely reflects perceived English attitudes towards the continent, and vice versa. As Winston Churchill said, "we are with Europe, but we are not of it". The defining work on England's political relationship with the rest of Europe, Hugo Young's *This Blessed Plot*, deals with England's post-war relationship with Europe and concludes that the English political elite have never been able to see themselves as fully European, which is the reason for English difficulties in fully integrating into the EU. But up until now, most works have looked into the political relations between England and the European community, and not into the cultural aspects of this. The current state of research has established that the English political elite (as will be shown later) have had a great difficult in integrating England more closely into the European community. Usually, the reasons for this are shown to be the historical events of the 20th century, and their general effect on the political elite, but very little work has been looking into precisely what English people think of Europe. Do English people really not feel European, is it merely a rejection of the political dimension of Europe and has the ever increasing ease of movement meant that people now feel more closely integrated into Europe? This thesis will attempt to answer the question by taking a sample of around 50 people from North Staffordshire who travelled on coach journeys to the continent and asking them about their attitudes to Europe. This topic and method was chosen because I myself originally come from North Staffordshire but have lived in Vienna for ten years now. The topic of England and Europe is therefore one of particular importance to myself and, as someone who considers themselves a "European" first, I was interested in finding out if this could also be said for people from this area who took part in coach trips to the continent. I believe that analysing people's feelings towards Europe through the prism of tourism because not only will it show whether holidays and coach tours can be useful mechanism in breaking down barriers and helping people feel part of a larger group (in this case Europe), but also that interviewing people from this perspective will make it easier for them to discuss their (hopefully) pleasant experiences and be more open in giving their opinions.

The coach holidays were organised by the company Stoddards in north Staffordshire in the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s. By interviewing a selection of passengers and employees, it will be possible to find out how this particular form of tourism (coach holidays) affected the participants' perceptions of

the countries they were in, how they behaved as tourists, whether they were able to interact with people and if this changed their feelings of belonging to Europe. The results of these interviews will then show if this sample felt European, whether these feelings changed over time and, most importantly, whether the trips they undertook made them feel more European.

Before beginning to analyse the data from the interviews, it is first necessary to look into the reasons for England's ambivalent relation to continental Europe. It is important to note that the term England is used consistently throughout, except when referring to past events when the political entity in question was definitely Great Britain. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the project only focuses on a small area of England. Secondly, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish attitudes to Europe are often at variance to the English position and it would therefore be a mistake to speak of a British attitude towards Europe, even when Scotland or Wales were more closely embedded in the British political system. A section later on will deal with the problems involved in the issue of having an English or British identity.

The term "the continent" is used when referring to the rest of Europe outside the British Isles, unless discussing what the participants thought about "Europeans".

1 Historical context

1.1 A brief history of Euroscepticism

To look into the full history of England's relations with continental Europe would be beyond the scope of this thesis. This section will therefore only attempt to find the point in time at which England and the continent parted ways.

The Norman Conquest brought England more closely into the sphere of continental politics and culture as William the Conqueror held territories both in France and in England. The Norman and Plantagenet dynasties remained firmly European up until the 14th century. The territories they held were increased by Henry II (reigned 1154-1189) until he controlled a wide swathe of territory in England, Ireland and France.¹ This era can be considered the time when England was most European. That all changed during John Anjou's reign (1199 – 1216). This period from 1200 to 1400 is important as it is the point when an "English" character emerged, one that viewed France, and by definition Europe, differently. The reasons for this can be found in the issues of possessions and relations. King John lost Normandy, where many barons still held territory, in 1204. Following this, England only held small enclaves in France. After this, the French King presented the Norman barons in England with a choice. Either they returned to Normandy, or their property would be taken from them. This

¹ Dieter Berg. *Die Anjou-Plantagenets* (W. Kohlhammer, 2003). Pg. 63

had serious consequences. These noble families had previously been the political and social glue for the cohesion of the Angevin Empire.² This change created the conditions for the development of a new national consciousness on both sides of the channel.

Social changes also played their part. The longer they remained in England, the more often the Norman elite married with the English noblewomen, which led to increasing cohesion between the Normans and the English.³ The Norman elites also spoke a kind of French that was essentially different from the French spoken in Paris. This dialect was considered rural and backwoods in France, with the result that there were fewer and fewer reasons for the Normans in England to keep this language. The fact that many children were often raised bilingually only added to this. It is also evident that, by the end of the 14th century, aristocratic children had to learn French from grammar books; it was no longer their "mother tongue". Why should they keep a language that they only spoke badly and for which you were only laughed at?⁴

These two factors created a trend in which noble people spoke, and heard, more and more English, and also meant that they considered themselves more and more to be "English". The One Hundred Year's War between France and England helped a lot in this regard, as it cemented this growing patriotism and made the use of French even more unpopular. Henry IV gave his speeches in English (the first king to do so⁵), whilst animosity against France was exploited in the long wars of the 14th century and 15th century. Finally, at the end of the 15th century, a country came into being where the same language was spoken by a majority of the nation (noble families or peasants) and where we see a clear difference between "us and them", us being the English and them being the French.⁶ Stephen George, along with several other eminent historians, also traces English antipathy towards Europe from prejudices against France. As Linda Colley has shown, national identities are often formed through a process of Othering; identity is defined by not being the Other. This is of particular importance for England's relations with Europe. England's national identity emerged in part as a consequence of the conflict with France and France is often seen as a controlling factor in the EU. It is therefore not difficult to see why English people are not only often opponents of closer European integration, but also feel distant from Europe.⁷ The fact that English problems with "Europe" are often connected to problems with France will be explored further later on.

It is safe to say then that, after the 15th century, England was never completely reintegrated back into European politics and culture. True, there were periods when England moved closer to Europe and it

² Berg, *Die Anjou-Plantagenets*, Pg. 204

³ Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable. *A History of the English Language* (Routledge, 1994). Pg. 117

⁴ Ibid. Pg. 138

⁵ Ibid. Pg. 145

⁶ Ibid. Pg. 138

⁷ Stephen George. "Britain, Anatomy of a Eurosceptic state." *Journal of European Integration* (2000). Vol.22 Issue 1. Pg. 18

would certainly be a mistake to state that England was isolated from Europe, but it can be safely said that the English political elite and the general population were separate from Europe. To look for the reasons for the current English antipathy towards Europe, however, we must look to its recent history.

1.3 England and Europe after World War Two

The story of England's current attitude towards Europe can be traced back to the end of World War Two. At this time, England's self-esteem was higher than ever before. England emerged from the war in the best economic position of all European countries. No one could believe that England would lose its important position in the world, not even Winston Churchill (British prime minister 1940-1945, 1951-1955). So even though he worked hard to establish a European council in the post-war period, he never made clear what part England would play in it. As he said, "We are with Europe but not of Europe." He saw England as the mediator of Europe with America, but not as an equal partner.⁸ It is interesting to note that Churchill, despite his current image in England as a patriotic Briton, was actually a committed European: he deeply believed in a united Europe to avoid future wars and avert the threat of the Soviet Union. What he did not say was what England's place should be in Europe. Many Europeans believed that Churchill, and ergo England, would be a part of this process of European integration. This misconception would badly affect the relationship between Europe and England for a long time to come.⁹

The problem was that success in war had blinded many English people, even in government, to England's weaknesses. England had large commitments abroad and while its economy grew by 30% between 1947 and 1951, the German economy grew by 300%. England had to negotiate an American loan of 145 million pounds in 1945.¹⁰ Keynes, the negotiator, warned the government that the British economy had big problems. An adviser, Sir Henry Tizard summed up the problems of the immediate post-war period very succinctly when he said, "We are not a Great Power and never will be again." Unfortunately, this was not well received by the government and they continued to believe that England was a great power and looked with pity at the way in which Europe was rebuilding itself.¹¹ It is also important to note here that the English continuity of government was not broken by World War Two. This is in comparison to many other European countries, which suffered extremely traumatic periods of occupation or collaboration during this time. For them, the European community was a way to escape from the past and look to the future. England felt no need for this.¹²

⁸ Hugo Young. *This Blessed Plot* (Macmillan, 1999). Pg. 13

⁹ Ibid. Pg. 22

¹⁰ Ibid. Pg. 23

¹¹ Ibid. Pg. 25

¹² George. *Britain, Anatomy of a Eurosceptic state*. Pg. 20

Support for the Commonwealth also played its part in distancing England from Europe. A survey undertaken in 1974 showed that 59% of the respondents felt closer ties to the Commonwealth than they did to the EEC and, when pressed to define the Commonwealth, explained that they meant the English speaking countries of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. 17% also included America, even though this is not part of the Commonwealth!¹³ For people of the war-time generation, the shared war-time experience, as well as language and culture, meant English ties to America remained stronger than those to Europe.

The next 20 years from 1950 to 1970 saw a lot of negotiations over England's entry into the European community. England didn't sign the Treaty of Rome in 1956 and in the same year was involved in the Suez Canal crisis. Both events showed that England still felt itself to be a "great power". But the next few years would prove otherwise. England applied twice for membership in the EU but was rejected by France. De Gaulle rejected them on the grounds that the French were not sure of the extent to which England was really interested in Europe, and to block the influence of America.¹⁴ These two rejections are of vital importance to England's current relationship to France and will be explored in more detail later on. Initial conservative support for entry into the European community was based mainly on trade, but the Party also recognised the political consequences. Douglas Macmillan (Prime Minister 1957-1963), who made the first application to join, described it as "a political act with economic consequences". Macmillan was acutely aware of England's political decline (he had become prime minister after Eden's fall from power because of the Suez Canal crisis) and also saw that America's attention was now focussed on Europe; he drew the obvious conclusions and applied for membership in 1961. The Labour leader, Harold Wilson, also used arguments about England's relative decline to bring the Labour party around to accept that EEC membership was a necessity.¹⁵

England eventually entered the EEC in 1973 under Edward Heath (Prime Minister 1970-1974), a staunch supporter of European integration.¹⁶ He came from the South of England, and his family had many contacts "over the channel". He was also in Nuremberg before and after the war and saw both the National Socialist rally and the trials. The British economy was then in danger and most thought joining the EEC would boost the economy. Many people did not think about the political aspect and no-one could imagine that the EEC could be a threat to British sovereignty. It is also necessary to remember that, at the time, the EEC only had an economic function. Its political function was not yet clear. Today many people say that Heath kept some facts about EEC membership "secret" and that no-one clearly understood its political dimensions. As we have seen from Macmillan's comments,

¹³ George. *Britain, Anatomy of a Eurosceptic state*. Pg. 20

¹⁴ Young. *This Blessed Plot*, Pg. 133

¹⁵ Robert Cooper. "Britain and Europe." *International Affairs* (2012). Vol.88. Issue 6. Pg. 1193

¹⁶ Ibid.

The EEC's political goals were already clear at that time, but these goals were not seen as immediate issues, whereas England's economic position was.¹⁷ This is important to bear in mind; English attitudes towards Europe are not "set in stone" and can change considerably, depending on the prevailing political and economic circumstances.

The fact that England joined the EU mainly out of anxiety about its decline, rather than for optimistic reasons, has left a dark stain on England's relations with Europe. Most historians agree that English problems with this EU stem from their association of the EU with decline. Wellings (Author of *Losing the peace, Euroscepticism and the foundations of contemporary English nationalism*), makes an interesting point using the case of Malta; Malta was once part of the British Empire, but, as a member state of the EU, could now (theoretically) use its veto powers to block English wishes in the EU. Arguments against England becoming "an unimportant corner of Europe" and those claiming that England should return to exploiting its Commonwealth ties have been keystones of Eurosceptic arguments ever since 1973.

A referendum was held in 1975. At the time, a Labour government was in power (under Harold Wilson) and England was in serious economic times. There was a 3 day week, the oil crisis and inflation was at 25%. The yes vote won by 2-1, but a great deal of controversy surrounds it. Wilson himself spoke out for a Yes vote, but many on the Labour left campaigned for No.

Steven George traces Britain's current Euroscepticism back to this time and also sees the seeds for it in Harold Wilson's position on the EC. One of Wilson's close aides, Donnoghue, claimed that, although Wilson supported England's continued membership in Europe, he was "basically a north of England, non-conformist, puritan...the continental Europeans, especially from France and southern Europe were to him alien. He disliked their rich food, genuinely preferring meat and two veg with HP sauce."¹⁸ This is an interesting insight into Wilson's political philosophy, as it also provides an understanding of the difference between Southern and Northern England and the ways in which this informed feelings of Euroscepticism. Whilst Wilson did not make his feelings publicly known, we can see his antipathy as being representative of the attitudes of many people, especially in Northern England. We shall explore the issue of exotic food and the English later on.

One of the key issues in the referendum, however, was popular sovereignty. This has been a reference point in arguments about Europe which have persisted up until today. The Yes vote won in the referendum mostly, according to Ben Wellings, because the government campaigned for the Yes vote and argued that the community would guarantee economic stability and material concerns. For a population that still remembered the rationing of the Second World War and 1950s, these

¹⁷ Young, *This Blessed Plot*, Pg. 252

¹⁸ Ben Wellings. "Losing the peace: Euroscepticism and the foundations of contemporary English nationalism." *Nations and Nationalism* (2010), Vol.16. Issue 3. Pg. 491

arguments carried a lot of weight. The left were more anti-Europe during this period, partly because they feared that the community was pro-big business, but also because they promoted the case of sovereignty and the liberties that came with said sovereignty. Ron Leighton, a major anti-European figure in the Labour party, argued that liberties such as the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, and so on, would be surrendered if England joined the EEC.¹⁹ (The tract in which he laid down these arguments was written before England joined the EEC). This goes some way to explaining why opposition to Europe is not only a phenomenon of the right in England and why the issue of popular sovereignty receives so much attention across the political spectrum.

Real opposition to the European Economic Community came with Margaret Thatcher (Prime Minister 1978-1990). Young argued that her experience of World War Two played an important role in her attitude towards Europe. She lived through it as a child, but was not involved in the fighting, unlike Heath or Wilson. Thus, she did not see the necessity for the European community as a “project of peace”.²⁰

Wellings argues that Thatcher’s neo-liberalist outlook greatly coloured her views on Europe, and that these views have shaped Euroscepticism in England since the late 1970s. Thatcher argued strongly for deregulation in industry and a withdrawal of state control. These ideas clashed with the European program of the time, which was to impose regulation from above. Thatcher considered this to be “alien to the Anglo-Saxon tradition.”²¹

Thatcher’s aggressive stance towards the EC and Europe only increased as the 1980s drew on until, in her 1988 Bruges speech, Thatcher expressed her worry that English national and individual liberties were being encroached upon by an “alien, foreign power.”²² Xenophobia towards France, which has already been mentioned in the previous section as a defining characteristic of the English character since the 15th century, was added to in the 1980s by xenophobia towards Germany. This became more apparent after German reunification, which Thatcher strongly opposed. She feared that a reunified Germany would carry too much weight within the EEC. These opinions were couched with many references to Germany’s past.²³ Such opinions found a strong echo among the English public because of the important role which the Second World War plays in England’s understanding of itself. The presentation of Thatcher’s resistance to Europe as a repeat of that war resonated strongly among people and is another reason for past and present antipathy towards Europe. When talking about Thatcher’s contribution to the community though, it is also important to note that she pushed through the principle of the single market, an achievement quite at odds with her common image in

¹⁹ Wellings. *Losing the Peace*. Pg. 492

²⁰ Young, *This Blessed Plot*, Pg. 307

²¹ Wellings. *Losing the Peace*. Pg. 495

²² Ibid. Pg. 496

²³ Ibid.

the English media and public consciousness as a committed Eurosceptic. The single market, as Cooper points out, has become an important feature of Europe as a whole and made it into a formidable trading block. This would not have been possible without the Thatcher government's commitment to the principle of liberal markets and free trade across borders. Cooper sees the open market as being mainly responsible for England's closer integration into the EU in its current form.²⁴ At the same time though, the increasing regulations on social welfare and workers' right meant Labour and the trade unions moved towards a more pro-EU line, as an EU which wanted to protect worker's rights could not, in their eyes, be a bad thing.²⁵ The European Social Charter, adopted in 1961 and revised in 1996, convinced many on the left that the EC was not just a pro-business community, but could also provide social rights. This explains Labour's changed attitude towards European integration, especially when we compare it to the 1970s when Tony Benn, the darling of the Labour left, was a strong proponent of the No vote in the 1975 referendum.

Generally speaking though, arguments concerning national sovereignty and its loss were finding more and more traction as the 20th century wore on, resulting in a rise in anti-EU (the EC having changed to the European Union in 1993) in sentiments. The speech given by Nigel Farage at the debate "*Both Britain and the EU Would Be Happier if They Got Divorced*" (which took place in March 2013) encapsulates both of these arguments. He takes the bank bail-outs as proof of the EU's anti-democratic character and claims that this gives more credence to the argument that Britain (The UKIP is, after all, a United Kingdom Independence Party) needs to recover its "popular sovereignty". He also effectively dismisses the referendum of 1975 by claiming that people voted to remain "part of a common market... but the trouble is that the small print of this was never ever explained."²⁶ He thus argues, like many Eurosceptic, that the political ramifications of the referendum were "kept secret" from the general public.

Interestingly though, Mr Farage argues that he is not "anti-European"; he has a German wife and wants good relations with the rest of Europe, but believes that the EU, and the single currency in particular, are damaging these good relations and do Europe more harm than good. While this position seems at first unusual, it must be remembered that UKIP received a not insignificant share of the vote in the recent (May 2014) EU elections and so we may assume that many English people support this view.

²⁴ Cooper, *Britain and Europe*, Pg. 1021

²⁵ George. *Britain, Anatomy of a Eurosceptic state*. Pg. 28.

²⁶ *Both Britain and the EU Would Be Happier if They Got Divorced*

<http://www.intelligencesquared.com/events/britain-eu-divorce/> (Debate organised by debating society "Intelligence squared. The World of Debate. Debate took place on the 20th of March 2013. Retrieved 15/06/2014).

The 1990s and 2000s thus seem to present a picture of increasing English Eurosceptic feeling, related to a feeling of disenchantment with political elites and dislike of the EU's increasing interference in popular sovereignty. But, does this antipathy towards the EU reflect antipathy towards Europe? If we take Nigel Farage's position as being representative of popular and current Eurosceptic feeling, then the answer would have to be a qualified "no". The EU is seen as an overbearing monolith, but also as something separate from the actual European countries. England's "glorious and free past" and connections to the Commonwealth are promoted, but not in a way which shows antipathy towards other Europeans. But Farage then states that he would rather not have Romanians living next to him.²⁷ A process of Othering is still at work here, and always seems to have been at work. The way in which some European nations are concerned more "different" than others will be explored more closely in the interviews and will play an important role in understanding England's attitude towards Europe. Wellings believes this process of "Othering" has always been an important component in English discourse on Europe. Whether this is the case or not will be looked at more closely in the interviews. We have already briefly looked at how xenophobia towards France and Germany has informed English attitudes towards Europe in the past, but it is now necessary to look more deeply into how the process of Othering has affected English identity.

1.4 England and the Others

As has been already indicated, a large element in English national identity rests upon a definition of being different to continental Europeans. This process can be referred to as Othering; the process whereby an identity is defined by contrasting oneself to another group. Linda Colley has done a lot of work in the field of *Britishness* and Othering, but her work is still relevant to the question of whether Europe is *England's* Other.

It was Edward Said who propagated the idea of the Other, when he claimed that the East helped Europe to define itself as the West by providing a contrast to the modernity and superiority of the West. Colley takes this theory one step further by claiming that the British Empire allowed the British (whatever their nationality within the collective construct of Great Britain) to feel themselves superior to alien societies which they imperfectly understood but which they could perceive as being underdeveloped compared to their own society.²⁸ This image not only affected the colonial administrators, but was also disseminated through literature, music halls, schools and so on, so that it permeated British society and helped to hold this construct together.²⁹ This author would claim that this process has resulted in England viewing Europe as its Other. Firstly, as has already been

²⁷ *Both Britain and the EU Would Be Happier if They Got Divorced*

²⁸ Linda Colley. "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument." *Journal of British studies* (1992). Vol.31, issue 4. Pg. 324.

²⁹ Ibid. Pg. 325

stated in the previous section, Commonwealth connections are, for English people of a certain generation, much stronger than European connections, due to England's shared history with these countries, particularly the English speaking ones.

As has been stated, very few qualitative or quantitative surveys have focussed on English people's feelings towards Europe as a whole (and not just in a political sense), but Juan Diez Medrano's book *Framing Europe* does provide useful data to back up this author's claim. In this book, Medrano examined differences in attitudes towards European integration between Germans, Spanish and British people. Medrano did this by interviewing a broad cross section of people in two locations in each of the respective countries. As Medrano shows in his study, Germans or Spanish people lack this shared history with other countries. This difference is perceived by English people and gives them the feeling that they have a distinct, special status within Europe.

This feeling of a special status is accentuated by England's different experience of World War Two. This feeling is particularly well summed up by one of the respondents in Medrano's survey and deserves to be fully quoted:

"The fact that we had an Empire and were the strongest country in the world has also strengthened people's perception of being a nation, a very independent, very strong nation, which has a lot to offer to the rest of the world. We have, I mean, in many respects many of the older generation in the UK see themselves as having saved Europe from tyranny and disaster as a result of the war. The fact that we struggled in Europe against the Soviet threat, I mean, this is something that I think, I mean, Britain, the fact that it is an island race, really stands us totally apart, totally apart from the rest of Europe."³⁰

While it would of course be dangerous to take this one quote as being representative of English people's attitudes towards Europe, this author believes it can be taken as reflecting attitudes held by many English people. This feeling of being a special island race necessarily places Europe into the role of the Other, who by not sharing England's special history and institutions, are cut off from them and, by having had a less "glorious" history, are viewed as being less favoured by history than the English. In her study, Colley posited the theory that an intrinsic element to the British national identity formed in the eighteenth century was that the British could feel themselves "superior" to the continental Europeans;

"There existed, then, a vast superstructure of prejudice throughout eighteenth century Britain, a way of seeing (or rather miss-seeing) Catholics and Catholic states which had grown up since the Reformation if not before, which was fostered by successive wars with France and Spain, and which

³⁰ Juan D. Medrano. "Framing Europe: Attitudes to European Integration" *Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom* (Princeton University Press, 2003). Pg. 51

encouraged many Britons, irrespective of real income, to regard themselves as peculiarly fortunate.”³¹

Europeans are therefore viewed differently to English speakers, also including those from the Commonwealth, who are still considered to have a shared history and institutions. Thus, Europeans become the Other against which English people define themselves, but in a process much more subtle than that which took place in the British Empire.

A second aspect of the process of Othering is England’s attempts to then find a place in Europe. Colley relates England’s difficulties with the EU to the other aspect of England’s recent history; England’s place as defender of Protestantism against European Catholicism. Various factors including Henry VIII’s break with Rome, the colonisation of Ireland, the Civil War and the establishment of Church of England all meant that Catholicism was cast into the role of the Other against which the Protestant Ascendancy could be cast.³² These feelings, argues Colley, persisted into the nineteenth century. Hugo Young showed that these feelings had also not vanished in the 20th century. Young argued that England in the 1950s was still emphatically Protestant, and that Catholicism was still considered alien and suspect. Young presented an anecdote where Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Minister at the time, was on a train in England and became uneasy every time he saw a Catholic priest and started muttered about “black crows”.³³ We have also already seen the ways in which Harold Wilson’s puritan, non-conformist upbringing made him feel uncomfortable around Europeans.

The loss of religious feeling in England has been well-documented (as it has in the rest of Europe), so we may assume that most English people will not consciously define themselves as “superior” Protestants in comparison to Catholic European but, as Colley argues, this has not made the task of integration into Europe any easier. As Colley argues, the loss of Empire, coupled with the weakening of the threads which hold Great Britain together, mean that the English can no longer use the old stereotypes and paradigms when viewing the continent;

“Protestantism, that once vital cement, has now a limited influence on British culture... different kinds of Britons no longer feel the same compulsion as before to remain united in the face of the enemy from without... No more can Britons reassure themselves of their distinct and privileged identity by contrasting themselves with impoverished Europeans... God has ceased to be British, and Providence no longer smiles.”³⁴

Whether this loss of identity is related to issues with seeing oneself as a European will be explored in the main body of this paper.

³¹ Colley. *British and Otherness*. Pg. 36

³² Colley. *Britons- Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale University Press, 1992). Pg. 320

³³ Young. *This Blessed Plot*, Pg. 50

³⁴ Colley. *Britons- Forging the Nation*. Pg. 274

Colley claims that the trouble which English politicians and populace have in coming to terms with dictats from Europe is a sign that Europe is still perceived as the Other.³⁵ They are no longer the Catholic Other, but these old images still inform the attitude towards Europe today.

We may therefore conclude by saying that the research which has taken place into the question of England and Europe up until now has shown that English people do view Europeans as the Other, for historical and cultural reasons. The extent to which this is still true, and the question of whether the coach tours undertaken by Stoddards affected this view will be examined in the research itself, but it is first necessary to look at the history of the coach tours and the way in which they are organised.

1.5 Being Eurosceptic and a dislike of Europe; the same thing?

We shall conclude this section by discussing briefly whether Euroscepticism means the same thing as an enmity towards Europe as a whole. Section 1.3 ("England and Europe after World War Two") showed us that politicians such as Farage claim to be enemies of the EU, but have no dislike towards Europe as a whole. This can be linked to the fact that, in England, the concept of Euroscepticism is understood to mean a rejection of closer integration into the EU. Euroscepticism is therefore understood as a political position. However, it is also generally accepted (and will be shown in the survey), that most English people do not consider themselves European and feel distinctly different from "the Continentals".

Examinations of English feelings towards Europe are usually tied up with examinations of England's political relationship with the European project in all its different facets and often assume that hostility towards closer European integration (whether from the political elites or the general population) is indicative of hostility towards Europe. In *This Blessed Plot*, Hugo Young indicates that he considers Euroscepticism to be linked to xenophobia. In his closing section, he claimed that Conservative Euroscepticism is tied up with a strong anti-European sentiment which fears for the English way of life. He also claimed that national stereotypes against Germans, French and Spanish play an important role in justifying the party's Eurosceptic position.³⁶ Thus, in Young's opinion, a rejection of closer European integration indicates antipathy towards Europe.

This author does not wish to deny that the English see themselves as different from Europeans, or that there is a strong culture of Euroscepticism towards Europe. This does not, however, necessarily mean that English people are, in general, hostile towards Europe or Europeans in general. This thesis will go into more closely in the section on Othering, but, briefly put, it is this author's position that English people consider themselves distinct from Europe, but not in such a way that they are hostile towards Europeans. Returning to Medrano's book, his survey showed that, for various reasons, German and Spanish people were generally in favour of European integration, whereas English

³⁵ Colley. *Britishness and Otherness*. Pg. 328

³⁶ Young. *This Blessed Plot*. Pg. 500

people were generally against it. The conclusions which Mendaros drew from his surveys is that English and Scottish people feel distinct from Europe, thanks to a post-war history extremely different to that of Europe's. This different history results in "weak feelings of closeness to Europe."³⁷ Mendaros also shows that English and Scottish people were generally quite vague when pressed on the question of what precisely made their way of life distinct from the Europeans. Nowhere though does Mendaros find examples of outright hostility or xenophobia towards Europe, but rather feelings of distinctness or a lack of interest in Europe. Mendaros explains this in terms of the British Empire, which focused England's attention away from Europe and towards its colonial possessions.³⁸ However, this is not to say that it is possible simply to separate the phenomena of scepticism regarding European integration and scepticism towards Europe a whole. One of the questions that the analysis of the participants' answers will attempt to solve is whether a dislike for European integration means people are more likely to display anti-European feelings.

2 Methods and sources

2.1 The origins of the coach tour and Stoddards' role in the development of the continental coach tour

Stoddards is a small, family-run company based in Cheadle, North Staffordshire. It delivers fuel oil to the local area and also operates coach tours to locations within the United Kingdom. From 1985 to 2003 it operated coach tours to foreign locations as well.

Up until now, very little research has been done into coach tours and so the academic research for this section comes from John K. Walton's paper "The origins of the modern package tour? British motor-coach tours in Europe, 1930–70", as well as the information provided by the interviewees. Coach tours can be regarded as a special category of tourism. They have similar elements to a package tour, in that an advanced fee is paid for all or most of the service provided (accommodation, meals, etc.) but, in contrast to package tours, an emphasis is placed on sight-seeing and cultural tourism. The advent of cheap flights has made the coach tours obsolete (Stoddards ceased to operate its coach tours in 2003), but it played an important role in English tourism from 1945 to the new millennium.

Like Euroscepticism in its present form, the coach tour was essentially a post-war phenomenon. Peace and stability in Europe and the increasing prosperity of the average English employee meant

³⁷ Medrano. *Framing Europe*. Pg. 245

³⁸ Ibid. Pg. 259

that tours of this nature were possible. The “all-in” nature of the coach tours also meant that they remained within people’s budgets.³⁹ The important factor in allowing Stoddards to operate coach tours abroad was the deregulation of coach tours under Margaret Thatcher. In the post-war period, the government had issued licenses to coach companies allowing them to operate coach tours. Up until the deregulation act in 1980, only one or two companies held these licenses and other companies were not allowed to operate coach tours. It was possible to organise tours, but only through charters. This involved a group booking the coach and the driver for a holiday. There were two government acts related to deregulation. The first came in 1980, which allowed Stoddards to do coach tours abroad and in the UK. Some restrictions were still in place though (Stoddards were not allowed to advertise the holidays). The second Act, in 1985, completely deregulated the market and allowed Stoddards to operate as many tours as they wished. Stoddards saw the gap in the market and began to exploit it.⁴⁰ The first tours were to Paris and Amsterdam in 1984 and the portfolio of continental holidays continued to expand until 2000. Usually, different destinations would be advertised by the companies. Stoddards generally offered holidays to England, Wales, Scotland and destinations in continental Europe. These destinations were generally of a cultural nature and involved touring cities and other destinations of interest. A full coach would mean about 50-53 people were on the coach. The European destinations included Paris, the Rhine Valley, the Italian and French Riviera, Lake Garda, the Austrian Tyrol and Switzerland. There were occasional one off trips (such as to Berlin or Rome), but the destinations listed above could be considered the “regulars”. The customers tended to be locals and came from a twelve kilometre radius around Cheadle. There were occasional customers from further afield but these tended to be unusual. George Ellis, who was a regular customer with Stoddards and also takes a keen interest in the development of the coach tour, notes that, up until the advent of easy travel via coach, travel abroad was very much the preserve of the “professional classes”, i.e., doctors, architects, etc. He himself worked in the RAC (a company providing services for motorists) offices in Birmingham in the 1960s and helped drivers to organise their own holidays abroad. Back then, the paperwork involved just for bringing a car to another country was much more complicated, as were the duty-free regulations.⁴¹ Thus, deregulation of the licensing system and the UK’s closer integration into the EC (or EU) meant travel abroad came into the reach of ordinary working people. As Brian Stoddard states, the tours were successful at the time because they gave people a chance to experience foreign countries. Northern Staffordshire is a mainly rural-industrial area and flying was still very expensive. Coach tours were, at the time, very good value for money in terms of being able to travel to a foreign country and also

³⁹ John K. Walton. “The origins of the modern package tour? British motor-coach tours in Europe, 1930–70” *Journal of Transport History* (2011), Vol.32. Issue 2. Pg. 154

⁴⁰ Brian Stoddard. Interview. 26/08/14

⁴¹ George Ellis. Interview. 09/09/14

having the accommodation and food paid for at a reasonable rate.⁴² Another important factor was the courier, who was on hand to help with language problems and deal with the hotel staff, etc.

Brian Stoddard stated that people were a little unsure about how to deal with foreigners;

“A lot of people, especially in a rural area like this, are not very good at doing things on their own in a foreign country and I think it was quite different, how they’d act and interact on a holiday in this country and how they’d act abroad. Because they had the language barrier. They were afraid to open up with stranger... With a good driver it give them the confidence to do that. Even though, obviously most of the hoteliers spoke perfect English ... a good driver was absolutely essential. We always said, ‘the driving part of it is second to the PR relations with the group really.’”⁴³

Essentially then, Stoddards provided a service to people who previously could not afford to, or would not have the confidence, to go on a foreign holiday. Although, as we shall see later, many people had been abroad before going with Stoddards, but the context of these trip greatly affected how these trips were viewed. This assessment is important when considering the question (to be posed in the next section), of the degree to which coach holidays would be considered a “bubble” which separated the passengers from the locals.

Of particular importance to understanding coach tours is the question of how the passengers experienced the holiday and how it was marketed. Wallace Arnold, one of the main operators in England, marketed their tours in the 1970s with an emphasis on comfort and the fact that the courier (in this case not the driver) would be available to organise rest stops and deal with any language problems.⁴⁴ The role of the driver/courier (in the case of Stoddards, the driver would also often operate as the courier, or there would be two drivers, where one drove and the other provided information on the microphone, or vice versa) was to mediate between the passengers and the outside world. This assessment of the courier’s role is confirmed by Walton. The presence of the courier also then served to insulate the passengers from the outside world and to smooth the path for the passengers.

Coach tours are also, of their own nature, a regimented affair, a certain amount of time may be allowed for sight-seeing or day trips, but the driver is always operating according to a schedule which has a certain amount of leeway, but there was no chance, as with a private holiday, of staying at a popular destination longer and then getting the next train. The fact that most holidays were “all-in” also affected how passengers experienced the countries they were in, as the fact that most services were paid for in advance prevented them from having to negotiate prices with local agents. Extra day trips would be organised by the courier, but these were also usually negotiated between the courier

⁴² Brain Stoddard. Interview. 04/09/14

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Walton, *The origins of the modern package tour?* Pg. 155

and local organisers. For example, if there was a popular boat tour, then the courier would negotiate a price for the group with the boat tour operator and then collect the money from the passengers. Of particular importance is the way in which passenger's interpret their surroundings. Walton claims that viewing events through a coach window gave the surroundings an authenticity which would be missing from other types of tourism. Honey, a tour operator who Walton quotes extensively, complained in his books that the passengers were often less concerned about the spectacular scenery passing them by, and more concerned about where the next toilet stop or was, or had fallen asleep. Whether this is true will be dealt with in the section examining the courier's opinions. It is also important to remember that the coach tour functioned as a "sealed bubble", a second home in a way, where social interaction could take place within the group. Despite all of these limitations to the passenger's freedom of interaction, however, the continental coach tours must still, by necessity, be seen as a form of "cultural tourism". Their goal was to provide the passenger's with a "Grand Tour" of Europe, somewhat in the mould of Thomas Cook's ground-breaking expeditions, and to expose them to new sights and cultures, but in a regimented and controlled manner. These specific conditions will be of particular importance when analysing the experiences of the passengers, as we are approaching them from the assumption that the passengers wished to be exposed to a certain degree of foreign culture, but through the regimentation of the time table and through the intercession of the courier. The question of whether the passengers in the interviews view Europe as the Other will be answered in the research, but it is first necessary to examine the extent to which passengers seek the Other. The next section will examine the theories relating to tourism and the Other.

2.1.1 Tourism and Others

Generally speaking, most scholars of tourism are agreed that tourism is framed by the comparison between "self" and "other".⁴⁵ Tourists compare themselves to the "Other" whom they perceive on their travels.

Many papers also talk about a "need to escape".⁴⁶ Important researchers in the field, such as Cohen and Dann, have placed a great deal of emphasis on this desire, as they believe a major factor in taking holidays is the desire to escape from one's own life and routine and to "take a break from England".⁴⁷ Whether this shall prove to be the case with the passengers of Stoddards' tours remains to be seen, but it would make an important difference to how they are to be viewed. A desire to "take a break from England" and the routine would indicate that the passenger wished to experience

⁴⁵ Andrew Crane and Robert Caruana. "Getting Away from it all: Exploring Freedom in Tourism". *Annals of Tourism Research*, 2011, Vol.38. Issue 4. Pg. 1505

⁴⁶ Eugenia Wickens. "The sacred and the profane: A Tourist Typology." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 2002, Vol.29. Issue 3. Pg. 843

⁴⁷ Ibid, Pg. 843

something different. From this we may extrapolate that Europeans can be considered exotic, and therefore the Other.

On the other hand, Eugenia Wickens proposed the concept of “ontological security”. This reflects the desire to experience the “strangeness” of a foreign destination, but through the security of a package holiday, where the company take care of all accommodation and eating matters. A common sentence heard by Wickens was that a package holiday “makes you feel safe, if anything goes wrong.”⁴⁸ As was already established in the previous section, coach tours do share some aspects of package tours (although the degree of freedom available to coach tour passengers is arguably greater than package tour customers), but the desire to experience “strangeness” with some feelings of security appears, according to Wickens, to be a strong one. The research in the paper will show whether this view is correct or not.

Generally, the question revolves around the extent to which the tourists view Europeans as the Other. From a cultural tourism point of view, most papers related to this question investigate the extent to which European tourists view countries in different continents as the Other.

In their discussion of the desirability of difference, Andsager & Drzewiecka agree that the cultural differences which tourists experience are framed as “voluntary and recreational” and that said differences are contained within deliberately designed sites and attractions. Said frames and sites are specifically constructed to shield tourists from the “strange and unexpected” within the new environments whilst exposing them to the desired “authentic” differences.⁴⁹ In relation to coach tours, we may describe the frames as the couriers and coaches themselves, which shield the passengers from anything strange.

Urry discusses the tourist “gaze” which he claims is already organised and presupposed by the tourist’s “non-tourist experience”.⁵⁰ In other words, what the tourists experience in their own environment, particularly at work and at home, will greatly affect how they view their tourist destination. Furthermore, Urry argues that tourists anticipate “gazing” upon places which they expect will give them pleasure, because they will be experiencing something they do not normally experience. Tourists also expect to encounter “out-of-the ordinary” places.⁵¹ Drawing from this, we may conclude that tourists wish to experience the Other, when the assumption is that the other is somehow better than the tourist’s everyday experiences.

This is supported by Julie Andsager and Jolanta Drzewiecka, who argue in their study that tourists seek the unfamiliar, but that this is often influenced by the stereotypes they have picked up at home,

⁴⁸ Wickens. *The sacred and the profane: A Tourist Typology*. Pg.844

⁴⁹ Julie L. Andsager & Jolanta A. Drzewiecka. “Desirability of differences in destinations”. *Annals of Tourism Research* (2002). Pg. 403.

⁵⁰ John Urry. *The Tourist Gaze- Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (SAGE Publications, 1996). Pg. 2

⁵¹ Ibid, Pg. 3

with the result that the tourists in the studies carried out by the two scholars used their pre-conceived ideas to form images about possible destinations. They also showed that they keep to these ideas, even when shown pictures of possible destinations which challenge these ideas. The research itself will attempt to find out whether the passenger's views of Europe were changed by their holidays and whether they truly viewed people abroad as different.

The fact that national stereotypes play a large part in the participants' recollections of their holidays and also the way in which they relate to the different national groups means it is worth briefly outlining current scientific theories on the formation of stereotypes and clichés. This is also relevant to the question of whether the interviewees viewed the various people they met on holiday as the Other or not.

The field studying the stereotypes is a large one, and an overview of all the different theories attached to it would be beyond the scope of this Masters paper. For the purposes of this thesis, this author has relied on the information given by Katy Greenland in her paper *"Can't live with them, can't live without them': stereotypes in international relations"*, as this provided the most relevant information regarding national stereotypes. Research based on the *social cognition perspective* shows that we tend to group distinctive stimuli together, so that a majority group will be more likely to remember an act committed by a minority group member (for example, if a German national assaults somebody in the UK). This is referred to as a bias in cognition and can also lead individuals to exaggerate the difference in items between categories. These biases are used for the construction of a stereotype.⁵² These concepts are particularly useful, as they play a large part in how the interviewees judged particular events they saw taking place whilst on holiday.

Important for us in the question of whether the interviewees viewed the individuals they met on holiday as the Other or not is the question of whether stereotypes are necessarily a prejudice, or whether they can be useful. For example, it is possible to have positive stereotypes which may result in the participant having positive images of the country they are travelling to. These stereotypes, as we will see, mean the participant will be more inclined to interact positively with the local inhabitants. The ethnologist Helena Ruotsala also stated that stereotypes help people to orientate themselves in different social contexts.⁵³ On the other hand, stereotypes may also result in prejudice and Othering, as out-group members are viewed more negatively as in-group members (in-group refers to those within the group in question, whilst out-group refers to those outside the group).

⁵² Katy Greenland. *"Can't live with them, can't live without them': stereotypes in international relations"* *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations* (Macmillan Press 2000). Edited by Rainer Emig. Pg. 17

⁵³ Gisela Werner. *Über Stereotype von Deutschen und Finnen: Gespräch mit der Ethnologin Helena Ruotsala*. <http://www.uni-hamburg.de/newsletter/archiv/Juli-2012-Nr-40/Ueber-Stereotype-von-Deutschen-und-Finnen-Gespraech-mit-der-Ethnologin-Helena-Ruotsala.html>. (University of Hamburg. Newsletter no. 40, July 2012. Retrieved on 05/02/2015)

Several experiments have been carried out to discover whether prejudices can be broken down, experiments which are relevant to this paper. The first approach is known as decategorisation and involves bringing two different groups together and encouraging them to see similarities between outgroup members and participants and differences between participants themselves. Individuals will then cease to use stereotypes as they see they are no longer useful.⁵⁴

The second method is recategorisation and involves in-group and out-group members coming together and being encouraged to see themselves in terms of a larger, or subordinate group (e.g., English and German people seeing themselves as Europeans).

A separate study also indicated that anxiety would lead to participants using increasing intergroup categorisation and stereotyping.⁵⁵

This brief overview shows us that there are different ways of dealing with stereotypes, and that none of them have so far produced absolutely conclusive results, however, they are all relevant to our study in the following sense; whether meeting foreigners in a different context helped the participants see positive connections between them, whether the lack of anxiety (from being on holiday) meant that there was less chance of stereotypes coming into play and whether having positive experiences of a member of one group meant that these positive impressions would then be applied to the national group as a whole.

Finally, it is worth saying something about stereotypes and real historical events. Many of the participants referenced past or current events when discussing their impressions of different countries. These events clearly helped to reinforce certain stereotypes, or these stereotypes caused events witnessed whilst on holiday to be viewed in a certain (often negative) light. We must therefore look at these stereotypes not only from a sociological viewpoint, but also from a political and cultural one too. Every section will therefore end with a brief overview of the historical relations between England and the country in question in order to understand the various statements given.

2.2.1 Explanation for the structure of the questionnaire

The research was divided into three parts. The initial phase of the research began with gaining access to the private archives of the coach company Stoddards'. Here, brochures and itineraries concerning the coach tours were collected, and access was also provided to the names of passengers who took part in the tours in the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s.

The brochures and itineraries describing the coach tours indicate what the customers could expect from the holidays. For example, the language used, and the descriptions of the destinations and sights indicate the extent to which these tours were providing something exotic, or whether they emphasised the familiarity of the destinations. This is particularly important as regards the thesis put

⁵⁴ Greenland. *Can't live with them, can't live without them*. Pg. 20.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Pg. 23

forwards by Andsager, Drzewiecka and Urry that tourists actively sought the Other, but did so in the form of coach tours because this provided security and familiarity. This would in turn confirm that European destinations were presented and sold to the passenger as the Other.

Stoddards undertook tours to a variety of countries, but only those to which a sufficient number of participants travelled are used in the analysis. Thus, for example, although Stoddards organised two tours to Spain, not enough people attended these for it to be worth creating a section for this. The tours which Stoddards did regularly, and which enough people attended, are as follows:

France: Paris and the French Riviera

Belgium: Bruges

Italy: Diano Marina and Lake Garda

Germany: Rhine Valley

Austria: The Tyrol

Switzerland: Les Diablerets and Sarnen

First hand testimony was also gained from the employees of the company, especially those who worked as coach drivers and tourist representatives during this period. This provided first-hand information about their experiences as “cultural facilitators” for the customers. Their testimony also serves as a counter-weight to the information given by the passengers. Of particular importance is the question of the extent to which they were required to shield the passengers from the “foreignness” of the destination and also what they felt the passengers’ reactions to the destinations were. This information will be compared to the passengers’ information. In the end, three drivers, the previous owner of the company and a man who was both passengers and courier were interviewed.

The third phase of the research (which took place concurrently with accessing the archives) was to interview 50 passengers and ask them about their experiences on the coach tours. In the end, 52 people were interviewed.

The interviewees’ age and previous profession was also noted. This data will be later compared to their answers to show whether there is any connection between these factors and the passenger’s desire to experience something different and whether they view Europe as the Other.

The interviews were, upon the assent of the interviewees. The notes taken by the interviewer (myself) and the transcripts provided the information required for this paper.

The questionnaire itself is divided into three parts. The first part provides quantitative data on which destination (or destinations) the interviewee visited and when.

The second part of the interview contains the questions regarding the interviewee’s experiences at their destinations. The interviewee is first asked why they chose this destination and why they chose to undertake the holiday in the form of a coach tour. This is important, as it will establish whether

the passenger was looking for a sense of security, or whether they wished to experience something “out of the ordinary” or “pleasurable” (see Urry). This part of the questionnaire also analyses whether the interviewee thinks their attitudes towards this country changed because of their holiday. The next questions deal with how the passenger felt whilst at the destination. These will be qualitative questions which analyse the degree to which the passenger felt “at home” (or not) at the destination. This section also contains a quantitative question asking how similar the interviewees (on a scale of 1-10) felt that the people at their destination were to English people. This is important, as this data can be used to show, in a very basic way, the degree to which the interviewees felt close to the people there, and whether this varied from country to country.

The final section will deal directly with the interviewee’s feelings towards Europe as a concept by asking them directly if they feel European and whether they believed these holidays changed their feelings. Questions are also asked to find out whether the holidays changed the participants’ view of Europe or whether their view of Europe has changed over time. These questions will provide conclusive proof of whether the passengers’ experiences changed their views about Europe or not. It is also here necessary to point out that I am related to many of the employees of Stoddards. This explains why one of the drivers is named Mr Hodgshon (my father) and other interviewees refer to “your cousin” or “your father”. Usually, the passengers are referred to in the analysis as “Mr” “Mrs” and “Miss”, except in the case of Peter and Paul Stoddard, so that confusion does not arise. In order to preserve the participants’ authentic voice, dialect phrase and local idioms have been kept in the quotes. Where necessary square brackets in italics ([.....]) have been used to explain what is meant. Finally, a related question shall provide data on what the interviewee associates with Europe.

The data from the questionnaire was compiled into a series of excel sheets for each answer, showing the response of each interviewee to each question. For the questions concerning the countries, the responses were limited to those who had visited the country in question. Comparisons were then made between the answers and quotes were taken which represented a common view point, which deviated from this, or where the interviewee gave opinions deserving of analysis and discussion. Finally, two appendices will contain a scan of an itinerary and a transcript from an interview.

3 Analysis of the interviews and brochures

3.1 Reasons for choosing Stoddards

Of the people interviewed, 16 people explained that they chose Stoddards because the company was local and 10 people said they had chosen Stoddards because they knew the company or they already knew some of the people going on the trips. Four other people chose the company because it had been recommended to them by friends. This confirms Giddens’ theory (explained in the first section) referring to the tourists desire for “ontological security”. Over half the passengers chose Stoddards to

go abroad because they felt they were part of a familiar network which would support them whilst in foreign countries. Stoddards were able to exploit their position as a well-known local firm to attract new customers. Eight people said that they had already used Stoddards services before going on the continental tours, either by going on holidays in Great Britain, or because Stoddards had delivered heating oil to them. Stoddards therefore benefitted from the fact that they not only provided day trips, but also delivered fuel. Thus, in an era when internet marketing was only just becoming popular, the power of word of mouth and the fact that Stoddards was rooted in the local community made them an extremely popular company. The fact that Stoddards were a local company was very important to the majority of passengers who had either not been abroad before, or had never travelled abroad independently. Fourteen people mentioned the desire for “a change”, “something different”, or “to see abroad.” This desire confirms Urry’s theory that tourists go abroad to see something “out-of-ordinary”.

Another important factor was the convenience of the trips. Three people commented on how convenient it was that passengers could leave their car at Stoddards’ garage, whilst two other commented on the fact that Stoddards would collect them from their homes and then take them to the garage before boarding the coach. Seven people commented on the ease of Stoddards trips, the fact that “the holiday started as soon as you got on the coach”, the fact that “everything was organised for you”, or the fact that there “was no meither” [*difficulties, problems*]. This highlights the hybrid nature of coach tours, being a half-way point between package tours and independent travel. The convenience of travelling by coach and having your needs taken care of was important to many of the passengers, but at the same time being on a coach tour gave the passengers a chance to see different scenery or experience authentic settings, rather than just going to a holiday resort for a week. On an extra note, something that attracted many people was the fact that, on the more long-distance trips, a stop-over was made, rather than travelling non-stop to the destination. For example, the coach would stop at Paris on the way down to Austria, Switzerland or Italy. This was much appreciated, as night travelling can be extremely uncomfortable and taxing, bearing in mind the average age of the passengers. Also, it meant “extra” sight-seeing, as Mr Ellis explained: “Say they were going Diano Marina.... they’d stop at Paris. They’d get to the hotel and say, “Now everybody off. Anybody who wants.... when you’ve sorted yourselves out, anyone who wants to go to bed... anybody who doesn’t, we’ll take you on a tour at night.’... And then the following night they’d go onto Grenobles.”⁵⁶

The fact that the company was local also meant that many people already knew friends or acquaintances when they got on the coach, or made friends whilst there. As Mrs Ellis said,

⁵⁶ Mr Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

“The people I mean, I meet someone nearly every week [I know from the tours].”⁵⁷

All in all then, we are looking at a well-known local company who provided a reliable, friendly service to people who wished to experience a change of scenery “abroad” with the maximum of convenience in a familiar and convenient setting.

3.2 Initial analysis of passengers

In all, 52 passengers were interviewed. The passengers had a variety of professions. Of the 52 people interviewed, 12 were farmers (either still working or retired) who farmed or had farmed as a couple. The other people had a variety of professions, including teachers, builders and administrative clerks. Three of the interviewees had worked at an Air Ministry listening station, located close to Cheadle. 44 of the interviewees were married couples who had gone on the holidays together. Of the 8 interviewees, two were widows whose husbands had passed away, in three cases the spouse was not available to be interviewed at that time, and the remaining two people had gone on holiday alone, or with friends or relatives who are no longer available for interviews.

Of these 52 people, only five were not born within a 20 km radius of Stoddards Garage (located in Cheadle, Staffordshire). From the 47 others, nobody had moved more than 10 km away from where they were born. This is of particular interest from a subjective point of view, as it indicates that we are dealing with a homogenous group who have all grown up in a similar environment. This fact is also of interest when we consider why the passengers chose Stoddards and why the holidays were so popular.

The age of the interviewees ranged from 53 to 88. However, the passenger aged 53 can be considered an exception to the rule, as he also acted as a courier on occasion. Excluding this exception, the average age of the participants was 76. This age may also be taken as the general average of the passengers. Most passengers were therefore in their 50s and 60s when they went on Stoddards’ tours. Many had either begun to go on holidays because they were retired and had time to go on holiday, or because their children had grown up and left home.

Additionally to this, three of the drivers were interviewed, as well as Brian Stoddard, the previous owner of the company and the person who began the continental tours in the 1980s.

3.2.2 Analysis of an itinerary

In order for the reader to get an idea of how a coach tour would have proceeded, and what the passenger could expect, an itinerary for the holiday to the Austrian Tyrol in 2000 has been included in the appendix (See appendix one). The destinations and activities can be taken as being an example of a typical Stoddards tour. The holiday lasted for seven days, with one over-night stop in Metz on

⁵⁷ Mrs Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

the way to Austria and on the way back. This should remind us that, before cheap air travel, a coach journey from northern Staffordshire to Austria was a two day affair and even getting to Calais would have taken eight hours.

A variety of excursion possibilities are given, depending on weather and other factors. As we can see, the hospitality of the hotel's proprietors is emphasised, as well as their "watchful eye", "cuisine" and "comfort". This emphasises the security which the passengers would enjoy on their visit.

Throughout the itinerary, the "breath-taking", "picturesque" and "awe inspiring" landscape are emphasised. It is interesting to note that, on the 2nd page, Kitzbühel is described as "one of the top winter resorts in Europe (also one of the most expensive!)". The passengers is thus informed that they are visiting an exclusive and glamorous location.

In conclusion, this itinerary emphasises the exoticness and glamorousness of the destination, whilst also making it clear that the passenger will be staying in a safe, familiar and comfortable environment.

3.2.3 Whether they had travelled abroad or not?

Of the interviewees, 32 people (61.5%) had actually been abroad before they went on their first trip with Stoddards. This number is rather interesting, as Brian Stoddard and the other drivers were of the opinion that very few of the passengers had been abroad before they went with Stoddards. However, of these 32 people who had been abroad previously, only 17 had travelled independently, meaning they had organised the holiday abroad on their own initiative, without a coach tour being involved. Of the others who had been abroad before going with Stoddards, this was mostly either package tours, or with other coach tours. As discussed in the introduction, package tours or even more shielded than coach tours and, when travelling to an "English" resort in Spain, etc., very little interaction with the locals is possible at all. Miss Taylor had herself visited some of these resorts and felt they compared badly to the more "cultured" Stoddards holidays, saying:

"I'd done the traditional places like Benidorm. I've been to Majorca, Minorca and Ibiza but to me that's... I don't want that sort of thing anymore... I know it's going to sounds awful but it's where the common people go."⁵⁸

The coach tours with Stoddards were therefore still considered a "big" adventure and something cultural (which was commented on by some participants who had been on package tours).

Of those who had been abroad before they went with Stoddards, nine of the interviewees had travelled abroad as a soldier or sailor with the British armed forces, or as the wife of said sailor or

⁵⁸ Miss Taylor. Interview. 10/09/2014

soldier. These people had particularly memorable experiences, which it is worth analysing individually.

3.2.4 Coach tours versus army

The general impression collected from the people who had served abroad with the armed forces is that there was a definite difference between going abroad as a member of the armed forces and going abroad on a coach tour. Mr Edwards, for example, who did his national service in Germany from 1951 to 1952, commented on the “novelty” of going abroad with Stoddards. He explained that, as a soldier in Germany, they didn’t have much of a chance to see the country, because they spent most of their time in barracks.⁵⁹ Mr Green, who had served in the Middle East, Cyprus and Malta, commented that “it’s all just a learning experience. An adventure in many ways.”⁶⁰ This is an impression shared by Mr and Mrs Turner, who were stationed in Fontainebleau as part of the British NATO contingent in the 1960s. Upon being asked if he had a chance to interact with the French there, Mr Turner responded:

“Close community, military community. You get to know all the different nationalities, all the other people from the Danes and the Dutch; all the people who are with NATO, but you don’t really get to meet many of the French people.”⁶¹

Upon being asked for the reasons why they chose Stoddards, Mr Turner also responded that they wanted to do holidays abroad. Clearly, military service was, in the cases of the people who served abroad, not considered a “proper” experience abroad.

Of the nine interviewees who had served abroad, seven of them had served in Malta and Cyprus. Their impressions of Cyprus and Malta were of particular interest. Firstly, there was more interaction between the personnel and the local inhabitants there than there was in France and Germany. Both Mr Button and Mr Green, who had served in both countries, considered the Turkish Cypriots to be closer to the English than the Greek Cypriots, justifying this by saying that the Turks were more “pro-British”. Mr Button also commented that he found the Maltese friendly and tended to trust them.⁶² In the case of the Turkish Cypriots, this was because both Mr Green and Mr Button felt that they were on “their side” in the fight against the Greek Cypriots and EOKA. We therefore have an interesting example where “friendliness” is conflated with “similarity”. This is a topic which we shall return to later on in the analysis of the interviewees’ feelings towards Europeans in general. Those who served in the Middle East also drew a stark distinction between the Asian and European culture and, when asked, confirmed that the English were closer to Europeans than they were to Asians,

⁵⁹ Mr Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

⁶⁰ Mr Green. Interview. 09/09/2014

⁶¹ Mr Edwards. Interview. 23/09/2014

⁶² Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

even if the interviewees themselves did not consider themselves to be Europeans. This indicates that, having been immersed in very different cultures, even people who hold strongly anti-European sentiments can see some similarities.

3.2.5 Whether they could live there

When discovering whether a closer feeling of connection to the continent has been engendered by travelling there it is, in this author's opinion, important to find out whether one could imagine living in a foreign location. This question was therefore posed to the participants. Of course, the average age of the participants meant that they were, at this stage in their lives, unlikely to be able to uproot and move to a different location (willingly), but the question was posed whether they hypothetically could imagine living in a different country, and if so, which one. Many people chose multiple countries, so it is not therefore possible to say precisely how many people chose which country, rather, the statistics will show how often each country was chosen.

Switzerland was chosen 17 times in all. Following this, Austria was chosen fourteen times. Italy was chosen ten times, France nine times and Malta and Cyprus four times. Two people said they could live in Canada or Australia, whilst thirteen people said they could imagine living in a foreign country. Germany was only chosen once. Fourteen people said they could not imagine living abroad.

We shall see in the later chapters why Switzerland and Austria were the most popular countries, so it is sufficient to say here that people were attracted to the cleanliness, orderliness and beautiful scenery of the two countries. Those who chose France were those who considered themselves "Francophiles", or those who had already lived there (Mr and Mrs Turner), whilst Malta and Cyprus were also chosen because they were the places where the interviewees served in the armed forces. Those fourteen people who said they could not live abroad indicated that this was for reasons such as age, or the fact that they would miss their family or get homesick. This shows that close family ties, whilst not indicating that someone is prejudiced, may result in people feeling less able to settle and integrate into unfamiliar environments. Finally, the one person who mentioned being able to live in Germany was the most self-professed "European" of the whole group, and was also significantly younger than the rest of the sample and mentioned Germany within a list of various other countries in which he could imagine living. Therefore, Germany only seems to be a credible choice as a place to live for people who could be termed "convinced Europeans". A cause of this may be that Germany is not considered a typical tourist destination in the same way that Austria or Italy is, and therefore was not considered to be preferential place to live by the interviewees. This had less to do with prejudice, and more to do with the "attractiveness" (nice scenery, countryside, etc.) of the location.

3.2.6 Feelings about country before going

Of the people questioned, more than half (29 out of 52) claimed to have had no feelings or pre-conceived ideas towards the countries they were visited before going. In many cases, this was proved to be not entirely true. Whilst 29 people said they had no feelings before going, it was later shown in the interview that they did indeed have some pre-conceived ideas related to the German or French national character (or what they perceived to be that national character). The reason for this discrepancy may be found in the formulation of the question. The question ran as follows, “How did you feel about the country before you visited? Do you think this changed after your visit?”

Most people answered this from a “touristic” point of view, in terms of what expectations they had regarding their tourist experience before going. For 29 people, Europe as a continent was indeed a “blank slate” and this word was often used by people when explaining why they had no particular feelings or impressions about certain countries before going. This confirms the hypothesis that, at least for many older people, Europe was and is a “foreign country”. Physical distances also have to be taken into consideration here; Staffordshire is more than 400 km from Calais and, before the age of cheap air travel, reaching Calais involved a five hour trip by coach or car, then a ferry crossing. The closest border to a foreign country is to Ireland, but the fact that most Irish people speak English as a first language, and Ireland’s closer political relation to England, means that most English people do not include Ireland in their mental map when considering the continent.⁶³ Distance and price therefore play their roles in defining the sample’s attitude to Europe. Whether the same would apply to Southern English people or people with more business or social connections to Europe would require more surveys to be carried out.

Analysis country by country

3.3.1 Austria- a lovely country

In regards to admitting to having some pre-conceived ideas about a country, the majority of people referred to Austria. Of the 52 people interviewed, 38 had been on one or more holidays with Stoddards to Austria, making it, along with the Switzerland tours (in which 39 people took part. The discrepancy is due to the fact that one couple were not able to go to Austria together) the most popular tour operated by Stoddards. The itinerary shown in the appendix indicates the length of the holiday and the excursions available.

Before looking into interviewees’ attitudes to Austria, it is important to remember that Stoddards operated tours exclusively to Tyrol (with some daytrips to Bavaria). The passengers’ impressions of

⁶³ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/14

Austria are therefore centred on the western, Alpine area of Austria. None of them had ever visited Vienna or the more easterly parts of Austria.

Those people who claimed to have some pre-knowledge of Europe generally referred to the scenery of Austria. Ten interviewees said that they said heard or seen positive things about Austria, particularly relating to the Alpine scenery, clean air, or cleanliness in general. Mrs Beardmore clarified this when she said,

“Expectations were good, I was expecting it to be like what we’d seen on the brochure and it is.

Austria: Heidi. You think about Heidi don’t you- when you were a kid. We’d seen picture of Austria, hadn’t we.”⁶⁴

As has been said, the great majority of people answering this question interpreted it in a non-political manner. It is interesting to note that everybody who spoke about their prior knowledge of Austria only referred to the landscape, or to a general expectation that it would be clean and tidy (and that these expectations were fulfilled). This leads us to the following conclusion; that Austria successfully marketed themselves via literature and television as an attractive holiday destination with high living standards and comfortable tourist locations (hence the remarks concerning “cleanliness and tidiness”). The itineraries and brochures relating to the holidays, which all the people would have received before the holiday began, certainly emphasise the attractiveness of these locations. The Stoddards Tours and Excursions brochure for the year 2000 describes Waidring in the Tyrol as a “charming village... with its enticing little shops, lively bars and cafes well known for their mouth-watering pastries” whilst the hotel “offers high standards of hospitality, comfort and cuisine.”⁶⁵ Compared to other destinations, the comfort of Austrian hotels are emphasised, as well as the “loveliness” of the scenery.

As Mr Booth (who was passenger and courier, and therefore has a perspective from both sides) noted, Austria had a reputation as a very exclusive location before Stoddards embarked on the tours, “Austria and Switzerland, people might have gone if it was a skiing holiday and weren’t as prominent in the holiday market at that time or if they were it was a very upmarket, high-class type of holiday. Skiing was something rich people did. Swiss Franc and Austrian Shilling were very expensive and the pound didn’t do much damage there. Back then it was the equivalent of paying 8-10 quid a pint...In my first visits the price factor was massive.”⁶⁶

As Mr Booth explained, Austria was, up to the point when Stoddards started doing regular tours there, a “rich person’s” skiing destination, and was regarded as such in the public conscious. This would explain the high level of positive expectations which people had about the tours.

⁶⁴ Mrs Beardmore. Interview. 04/09/14

⁶⁵ Stoddards Tours and Excursions brochure, 2000.

⁶⁶ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

On the other hand, the fact that people's expectations of Austria were focussed on "touristic" aspects (scenery, cleanliness, etc.), indicate that political or cultural images did not play a part in their pre-conceived ideas of their two countries. This is, as we shall see later on, in contrast to countries like Germany and France, where stereotypes were often present before going. We shall go into the reasons for this later in this section.

Of the 42 people who had been to Austria, all of them bar one person commented positively on their holidays. Two people referred to Austria as "amazing", whilst nine people used the words "beautiful", "brilliant", "fantastic" or "gorgeous" when describing the scenery. This confirms not only Urry's theory about the tourist gaze, but also Greenland's theories about cognitive bias; because they had positive expectations about the holiday and the country (and no negative stereotypes) people were more likely to be positively biased towards Austria and their holiday experience.

Only two people expressed any kind of negative feeling towards Austria. The first person was Mr Aspey, a retired teacher who, when commenting on his visit to the Kehlsteinhaus, said, "[It was] slightly disappointing. We expected to see Eva Braun's hairbrush and her bedroom... Just a fairly smelly restaurant. Nice view though. We could see the planes and everything."⁶⁷

He also made the following comments about Waidring:

"There's not a great deal to actually do there. Unless you go on the ski lift up the mountain. It's very clean. Everything's beautifully maintained."⁶⁸

Mr Aspey's first comments regarding the Kehlsteinhaus indicate that he was visiting Austria more for cultural purposes, rather than purely to see the scenery. It is also very revealing regarding English people's attitudes towards the National-Socialist period, as far fewer taboos exist regarding discussing it or handling it as a tourist destination than do in Austria or Germany. His second comment creates the impression that he found Waidring's rural location to be a little boring. This is interesting, as Mr Aspey and his wife are retired teachers who both expressed an interest in visiting sights of cultural importance. The other interviewees, who expressed more of an interest in seeing Alpine scenery, did not express any disappointment in it being in a very rural location.

The only other person who expressed any negative thoughts about Austria was Mr Turner, who served as a soldier in occupied Germany after the Second World War. He visited Innsbruck with Stoddards and commented that Austria was not as heavily occupied or punished by the Allies as Germany was, and that maybe it would "have done the Austrians good" if they had been given a similar treatment. This is interesting, as Mr Turner was the only person to directly link Austria to World War Two. Mr Turner's background has to be borne in mind here, as he not only carried out his mandatory military service, but also served professionally with the British Army and with the NATO

⁶⁷ Mr Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

⁶⁸ Mr Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

contingent in France and Belgium in the 1950s and 60s. He therefore would be expected to have more knowledge of military history than others. The fact that his comment was an exception to the rule shows that, for the majority of people, Austria is not associated with the events of World War Two.

A point which repeated itself throughout the interviews regarding Austria was how interested or curious many of the interviewees were in the Tyrolean farming style. Thirteen people commented on the more “traditional” or “primitive” style of farming in Austria, the fact that mowing was still done with a scythe or the fact that milk was still collected in small churns from each farm (as opposed to the large-scale and mechanised methods used in England). One famous anecdote, which many passengers remembered, concerned George Ditchfield, a dairy farmer himself who, despite not being able to speak German, struck up a friendship with a dairy farmer there and was given a piece of cheese by him. His wife remembers,

“Gordon used to go down every day to watch them milk. He couldn’t speak German. He [the Austrian farmer] couldn’t speak English and got on very well. He came back with a great big cheese... [They] used to go to sit together at night.”⁶⁹

This interest in Austrian farming styles was combined among the interviewees with commentary on an appreciation of the Austrian (in this case we should understand Tyrolean) way of life and attitude. Three people showed an appreciation for what they saw as the more “traditional” way of life in Austria and commented on the way in which people still wore national dress, or the fact that farming was still done in a more old-fashioned way. And, even taking into account the fact that many more people went on trips to Austria than on any other tour, the number of people who commented on the “friendliness” of the local inhabitants, or “how well they got on with them” was much higher than for any other of the countries visited. In fact, Mrs Ellis commented on the fact that she thought the Austrians were friendlier than the Germans, whilst both Mr and Mrs Lovatt thought the Austrians were friendlier than the Swiss.

Another thing to be borne in mind, and which was also commented on by the passengers as well as the drivers, is the fact that people felt “akin” to the Austrians because of the fact that most of the interviewees came from a rural background. We have already seen from Mrs Ditchfield’s anecdote that there was a great amount of interaction, even on a professional level, among the tourists and the locals than at other destinations. Paul Stoddard (one of the drivers) explained it in this way; “The people who hadn’t travelled abroad... it was quite a big shock for them... the guests used to get back on the coach and comment about the different costumes...Austria...cutting grass with scythes... raking fields... that really sank in... the inner city... I do feel that was never fully grasped ... the

⁶⁹ Mrs Ditchfield. Interview. 02/09/2014

working of the people in the countryside was a real eye opener. They were talking about it all day. A lot of people in the Benelux areas on cycles [*bicycles*] but that never sunk in... No-one came back and commented on the people on cycles. The city style wasn't totally sunk in."⁷⁰

This view, supported by the other drivers, indicates that the passengers were more able to perceive differences and similarities in the Austrian way of life because they were more able to compare it with their way of life and attitudes. It is therefore necessary to have benchmarks against which one can measure a place's "otherness" or similarity. Going on from this, although those who went to Austria were able to recognise the difference in Austrian farming methods, the rural nature of the Tyrol made many interviewees feel that the people there were similar to them. As Mr Scarratt commented:

"Austrians are just like us. You could say as we were brothers... Got on smashing...Wherever we went everybody was pleasant."⁷¹

The above comments indicate that people were more able to comprehend life in the Tyrol than they were in other places and thus felt a connection to the people there. Of the 38 people who had been to Austria, nine people commented on how friendly, chatty or sociable the inhabitants were.

Andsager & Drzewiecka put forward the theory that the extent to which a place and people are considered attractive is related to how similar the place is considered to be to the tourist's home.

This, as the study shows, is partly true, but does not show the whole truth. Mrs Burton, for example, considered the Austrians to be extremely friendly, but upon being asked how similar she thought Austrians were to English people, only gave them a score of 5 out of 10, as she said the Austrians are "careful about talking about other people."⁷² Mr Aspey commented that, although he found the Austrians he met in Tyrol friendly, he was too unsure about whether they were different in different parts of the country to be able to give a number.

A common comment which was made on the Austrian lifestyle was that they were "more relaxed" than English people. Six people made this comment, with two people saying that they seemed more "come day go day", meaning they seemed to take life as it came and not worry about the future. It must again be noted that the area the passengers visited is a very rural part of Austria, so life did of course seem less hectic than in a big city, but the passengers themselves come from a predominantly rural area. This comment about people seeming more relaxed appears concerning other countries too. We also cannot accept that Austrians are in fact more relaxed than English people, so how is this attitude to be explained? One explanation would be that Tyrolean farming methods are more traditional than English, with an emphasis on organic, traditional products which could make the

⁷⁰ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

⁷¹ Mr Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

⁷² Mrs Burton. Interview. 22/09/2014

method of farming seem slower. Another explanation, in combination with the previous one is that of Andsager and Drzewiecka, who (themselves quoting Hall), note that, “*stereotypes* get a hold of the few ‘simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped, and widely recognized’ characteristics about a person, *reduce* everything about the person to those traits, *exaggerate* and *simplify* them, and *fix* them without change or development to eternity.”⁷³

They also note that “interviews with tourists suggest that pre-existing stereotypes are not dismantled by actual experiences, but instead serve as standards against which the visited culture is evaluated.”⁷⁴

Whilst we have already established that most of the people were travelling to Austria with positive images, it is possible they carried some (unacknowledged) stereotypes with them that “Europeans” are more laid back than English people. They then felt these stereotypes to be fulfilled when they say the Tyroleans using their more traditional farming methods.

A third explanation relates to Andsager and Drzewiecka’s theories; because the tourists themselves were on holiday and more relaxed, they applied this feeling to their surroundings. Again, they were in an area geared towards tourism and so the general impression would have been of a more relaxed and easy going culture. This confirms the theory that tourists tend to apply their impressions of one area to a whole country.

Having only been exposed to a small part of Austria, and an extremely beautiful and tourist-orientated part at that, the interviewees did not have their impression affected by other factors by impressions of different aspects of the country. This suggestion confirms and expands upon the results of Andsager & Drzewiecka’s study; that the “tourist gaze” is conditioned by the information they receive before embarking upon, and whilst on the tour. As has been explained already, many passengers claimed not to have any foreknowledge of Austria beyond an impression of “beautiful scenery”. Unlike Germany and France, for example, they also travelled there with few pre-conceived ideas about Austria. England has not had as close a level of intercultural contact (peacefully or otherwise) with Austria as it has with other European countries and therefore, in this author’s opinion, tourists were coming to Austria with a cultural “blank slate”. To continue Andsager & Drzewiecka’s theory, the trips to Austria also confirm theories relating to the “packaged” nature of holidays. Travelling to Waidring, tourists were shielded from aspects of industrialisation or conflict which they may experience when visiting other, more cosmopolitan, destinations. We can say that this is doubly true of Waidring, as this area of Austria is heavily orientated towards tourism and very successful in marketing itself as an idyllic and picturesque tourist destination.

⁷³ Andsager and Drzewiecka. *Desirability of differences in destinations*. Pg. 403

⁷⁴ Ibid.

We have already seen that the itinerary and brochure emphasised the picturesque nature of Austria, so it is therefore to be expected that, if this was the passengers' first visit to Austria (as was the case with more than 80% of the passengers), then they would come away from the holiday with an idealised view of Austria.

However, we should not go so far as to consider the interviewees merely passive recipients of information. Four people commented (Mr Aspey included) on the fact that they had only seen the rural side of Austria and that they imagined it to be different in different areas. Some were able to recognise the difference between "tourist locations" and everyday life, as Mr Ellis showed; "Most of the Austrian places we visited are tourist places. They're geared to it. See... Go to Germany and a lot of Germany's like us. It's an industrial area."⁷⁵

Also, four people have returned to the village of Waidring since Stoddards ceased to operate continental tours and commented on the change to the village, that it has become less friendly and that the houses "no longer seemed to be in the Austrian style."⁷⁶ Clearly then, people do recognise changes and the extent to which the holidays are organised as "tourist friendly".

To briefly touch on the architecture, nine people commented on the architecture to say how different they found it from English architecture, particularly noting the "ornate churches" and "wooden chalets". As regards the food, opinions varied greatly, although most people agreed that the food in the Waidringerhof hotel was excellent. Some people commented that the food was very different, whilst some noted that it was very similar. Two people commented on the continental breakfasts and the fact that they were served yoghurt for breakfasts which they found different, but also enjoyed. In general then, we may say that the interviewees found the architecture and food in Austria very different, but also had a positive opinion about it, apart from Mr Beardmore, who was not overly impressed by how "smoky" the food was. One point that should be made was the indication that Stoddards chose the hotels according to how easy the food would be for the people to cope with,

"We had to pick the hotel really. We had to be very careful and it was something they [Stoddards] took into consideration. I think we went to a brilliant hotel in Austria but the woman was determined to push us. We had hare one night. It wasn't the greatest, you wouldn't kill but most people would have done. 'Horrendous. Diabolical'. That was the favourite, 'That was the worst meal I've ever had.'⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Mr Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

⁷⁶ Mrs Burton. Interview. 22/09/2014

⁷⁷ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

We therefore have to question whether, when passengers say they found the food not to be too different to English food, this was because the food they were being given was actually standard fare and efforts had been made to ensure they were not being exposed to too much “foreign” food. In conclusion, the passengers’ observations about Austria confirm some theories about travelling and the “tourist gaze”, but also refutes others. The passengers’ observations about how beautiful Austria was and how friendly the people were would seem to confirm theories that the tourist gaze is conditioned by the areas selected to visit and the impressions they are exposed to by the tour company, and also that feeling of similarity is conflated with a feeling of friendliness. However, many of the passengers possess enough self-awareness to realise that this is not the complete picture. Indeed, Mrs Lovatt’s comment about “chocolate box houses” in Austria may even have been ironically meant, to show that she knew the passengers were receiving a “chocolate box” view of the country.

On the question of how similar the interviewees thought the Austrians were to the English by number, 33 people gave an answer, five said they were not able to give a number. Three people gave Austrians a “ten”, one person gave them a “nine” and eight people gave them an “eight” or “between eight and nine”. The majority of the interviewees gave the Austrians a seven, six or nine and two people gave them a two (although these were people who did not believe that any foreigners could be similar to English people). Austria received the highest scores out of all the countries for “similarity to us”, confirming that people did feel a connection to the local inhabitants. As we can see from the graph (fig. 1), 60% (excluding those who were unable to give an answer) of those questioned gave a number of 6 or more when asked how similar they felt Austrians were to themselves. This is rather high compared to the other figures we shall see.

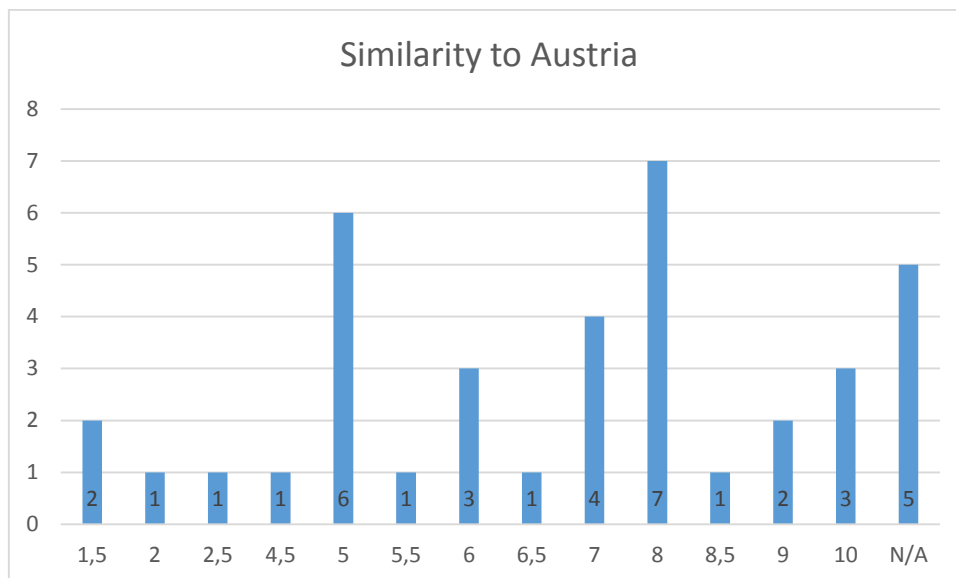


Fig. 1: Perceived similarity of English people to Austrians. The y axis indicates the number of people, the x axis indicates the degree to which people felt Austrians were similar to themselves. N/A is for those who felt unable to give a number. The same principle applies in the other graphs.

As we shall see in the following sections, an important component in how the interviewees viewed the country they visited was the nature of the previous foreign relations between the two countries. The Austrian Republic's predecessor, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was a major continental power, but, crucially, rarely involved itself in overseas or maritime empires. This is particularly relevant for recent history. In his personal, but informative history of the Habsburg dynasty, Simon Winder touches upon these issues, particularly as regards Anglo-Austrian relations. Regarding British-Habsburg relations he wrote;

"Britain was often a valued Habsburg ally and source of money, but it was also a mischievous outsider whose obsession with what it saw as the 'balance of power' tended to mean a manipulation of short-term allies to ensure a Europe mutually weakened in ways which allowed Britain to get on with its own imperial projects undisturbed by any would-be European hegemon."⁷⁸

This attitude was a mainstay of British policy throughout the Early Modern Period, for example during the Napoleonic wars when, "the British and the Russians always seemed to be enjoying themselves with issues irrelevant to Austria.... Britain kept refusing to commit its own troops to attacking Napoleon and yet always seemed to be able to scrape together the resources to... invade Buenos Aires.... or fight the United States."⁷⁹

From this brief overview, we gain an image of the Austro-British relations during the Early Modern Period as being one of exploitation by Britain in order to protect themselves from the main enemy;

⁷⁸ Simon Winder. *Danubia: A Personal History of the Habsburg Empire* (Kindle Edition. Picador, 2013). Pg. 201

⁷⁹ Ibid. Pg. 293

France. French-Habsburg relations were, for most of the Early Modern period, ones of conflict but, crucially, not in arena which had a direct effect on English affairs. The results of these battles were therefore important to British foreign policy, insofar as they maintained the aforesaid “balance of power” in Europe.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire’s role in the First World War also reinforced this image (or lack of one); “One oddity of the [First World] war was that the British and the Habsburgs only ever fought each other in glancing, minor ways. The British blockade was fundamental to the starvation of much of Central Europe, but this was a remote form of warfare... Because there was so little actual fighting... the Allies passions were barely engaged by the continuing existence of his Empire.”⁸⁰

There was also, at the outbreak of World War One, a distinct lack of knowledge concerning the Habsburg Empire. As Harry Hanak stated, “If during the First World War a ‘man in the street’ had been asked why Great Britain was at war with Germany he might have answered that, Germany had violated the neutrality of Belgium... but if the same ‘man in the street’ were asked why Great Britain was at war with the Austro-Hungarian Empire the confusion, vagueness and inaccuracy of his answers would be an indication that the Dual Monarchy was only an enemy as the result of her alliance with Germany, an alliance aimed principally at Russia.”⁸¹

Very little information existed about the Dual Monarchy. English newspapers did have correspondents in the Monarchy and “although there were plenty of news items concerning the Monarchy in English journals, there were few who had the ability to interpret the facts. The Monarchy imposed itself on their consciousness only sporadically... Austria Hungary was Europe’s watchdog in the east.”⁸²

Also, the fact that Austria is not associated with World War Two, in the same way that Germany is, can also be referred back to the official view on Austria after World War Two. Guilt about Britain’s role in the Anschluss played its part in framing Britain’s support for an independent Austria following the Second World War, as well as Britain’s main concern in 1943, which was to ensure that Austria never again supported German militarism.⁸³ Much ink has already been spilt on the Allies’ decision to see Austria as a victim of German aggression, so it is sufficient to say here that the official view, thanks to the necessities of war, was that Austria was waiting to be liberated from Germany.⁸⁴

All of the above hopefully goes some way to explaining why Austria remains such as a blank slate in the English political-national consciousness; it was rarely an opponent and more often an ally of

⁸⁰ Winder. *Danubia*. Pg. 500

⁸¹ Harry Hanak. *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary during the 1st World War* (Oxford University Press, 1962). Pg.1

⁸² Ibid. Pg. 10

⁸³ Alice Hill. *Britain and the Occupation of Austria, 1943-45* (Macmillan Press, 2000). Pg. 31

⁸⁴ Ibid. Pg. 40

England and when it was an opponent, very few troops were ever committed to battles between Great Britain and the Habsburg Empire. The Austria which we see today is also a very different entity to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This lack of continuity may also explain the lack of mental images associated with the country, as the upheavals of the 20th century mean the country nowadays bears little resemblance to the one which Great Britain exploited in the Early Modern Period.

Finally then, the question of whether the passengers viewed the Austrians as the Others has to be answered with a “no”. As has been said, the interviewees came to Austria with a lack of pre-conceived ideas about the local inhabitants (and when they did, these were only positive ones), due to a lack of recent interaction with England. The 38 people who visited the country all had a positive experience there and, as has already been stated, four of the passengers continued to visit Waidring privately after Stoddards had ceased operating tours and became friends with the family operating the Waidringerhof hotel. The Austrian Tyrol trip was one of Stoddard’s most popular holidays, due to a combination of excellent scenery and a good hotel. These conditions helped to relax people who may have felt a little nervous about going on holiday abroad and make them feel more at home in their surroundings. This fact, combined with the fact that the passengers came there with mainly positive images, meant the majority of the interviewees did not view Austrians as the Others and even felt, as Mr Scarratt said, that “you could say as we were brothers”. This, as we shall say, was not the case with the other countries people visited.

3.3.2 Switzerland: Austria’s poorer cousin?

Only a brief section shall be given over to Switzerland as, by and large, the comments made regarding their lifestyle were the same as those made about Austria. Although Calvin was a major influence on the English Reformation, the political interaction between England and Switzerland has been even less than that between England and Austria. The only difference was that some people commented that they found the Austrians to be friendlier than the Swiss. This, in this author’s opinion, was because the passengers were able to establish a more personal connection with the staff at the Waidringerhof hotel than with those at Switzerland, which increased the feeling that the Austrians were “in general” friendlier than the Swiss. This reinforces the suggestion that many tourists (although not all), regard their destination as a reflection of the whole country. This point was succinctly made by one of the drivers:

“I think the general attitude was. It’s like a show place.... It’s all set up for their holiday. The people looking after their holiday don’t live normal lives.”⁸⁵

However some passengers did recognise the disconnect between their holidays and “everyday life”:

“Because holidays is 4 weeks out of 52 and life isn’t just always holiday.”⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

⁸⁶ Mr Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

Although this comment was made in relation to a different matter, it does show that Mr Davies was aware that the impressions of a country made whilst on holiday cannot necessarily apply in everyday life.

Mrs Allen also noted that Austria wasn't as "pocket handkerchief as Switzerland,"⁸⁷ indicating that she felt that the Austrian resorts were not as completely tourist orientated as Switzerland.

However, Switzerland also provides evidence for the thesis that people from a rural background are more likely to feel at ease in a rural area. This idea is supported by several comments made throughout the interviewees. Mr Heath's comment can be taken to be representative for this attitude when he said:

"In Brienz [we] could talk farmer to farmer. Had quite a lot to do with the people... Townies wouldn't understand... Similar to country people, like in the olden days. Bit similar, more self-sufficient."⁸⁸

Mrs Allen also felt that she was more able to identify with the style of the farms in Switzerland, which she felt were similar to North Staffordshire farms. This would suggest that, for people such as Mr Heath and Mrs Allen (either farmers or ex-farmers), the Others are not the people from different countries, but rather people from a different background (specifically, an urban one- "townies"). This is supported by the question regarding similarity to the participants, which produced similar results to Austria.

3.3.3 Italy- For something different?

Stoddards mainly operated tours to Lake Garda, which was an 11 day tour with seven days spent in Lake Garda and its environs. Another tour was to the Italian and French Riviera. This tour also lasted for 11 days. The itinerary for 1998 lists visits to picturesque churches, Portofino ("the 'Pearl of the Ligurian Riviera'") and San Remo, which boasts luxury, impressive shoreline and modern futuristic buildings. The fact that the hotel has a private beach is also emphasised.⁸⁹ In other words, the glamour of the tour is emphasised, as well as the chance to relax on the beach in September! The itineraries for Lake Garda emphasise the history and culture of Northern Italy and include excursions to Venice and Verona (for the 2001 tour). Attention is drawn in this itinerary to the "magical water oasis" which is Lake Garda, as well as the fact that it is "less crowded" than Southern Italy. The romantic nature of Verona and Venice is also highlighted.⁹⁰

For the purposes of this survey, passengers' impressions of the Italian parts of the Diano Marina trip will be grouped here, and impressions of the French part will be grouped in the French section. Some

⁸⁷ Mrs Allen. Interview. 23/09/2014

⁸⁸ Mr Heath. Interview. 10/09/2014

⁸⁹ Stoddards Itinerary for 11 day coach tour to Diano Marina. Sept 12-22 1998.

⁹⁰ Stoddards itinerary. Lake Garda, 31 August- September 10 2001.

tours to Tuscany and Lake Maggiore were also organised, but the tours to Diano Marina and Lake Garda were the regular trips which took place year after year.

From the 52 interviewees, 32 people went on one or more trips to Lake Garda, 25 people went on one or trips to Diano Marina, two people went on the Tuscany tour and three people had been to Italy with other companies or on their own. Of the 32 people who made one or more trips to Diano Marina, 18 of these also went on the trips to Lake Garda. These 18 people were the “Italian regulars”, as we may call them.

Generally speaking, people’s impressions of Italy were also positive. In the same way as in Austria, most people did not go there with any negative pre-conceived ideas about the Italian lifestyle or character.

Generally, Italy made a great impression on people. Mr Carnwell summed it up best:

“First time we went Diano Marina, we couldn’t believe it. We were that impressed with it. Weather was beautiful and it was such a lovely place.”⁹¹

As Brian Stoddard explained, the destinations were picked for different reasons; Austria for the scenery, Paris for the romance and other cities for the glamour. The trips to the Italian Riviera were chosen to give the passengers a taste of continental glamour and, as we see from Mr Carnwell’s comments, many people were clearly very impressed by this.

One thing people in particular commented on was how impressed they were by the Italian lifestyle. Mr Ellis was very struck by this:

“Italy’s where you begin to notice a big difference in the culture. There’s no hooliganism. We were in Italy and we were on our way back and it was getting dark. And there was a crowd of youths. There was a World Cup on. They were walking down the road... and they parted. Now in England you would have had to go round... It was an ice cream parlour and you’d go in there at 9pm and a crowd of Italians youths would walk in and they’d sit eating an ice cream. In England lads would be knocking them [*drinking heavily*] back!”⁹²

This is a trend which appears quite often in the surveys and was mentioned by Andsager and Drzewiecka, wherein cultural norms in the country being visited are compared to the norms back home, with the result that the norms at home are found to be lacking.

The main thing which impressed interviewees about Italy was the “Italian culture”. Of those who visited Italy, nine commented on how much they loved Italian culture, meaning the food, the architecture and the way of life. This supports the comments made by Brian Stoddard that the Italian destinations were chosen for their “glamour” and “out of the ordinariness”. Mr Hodgshon, who was mainly responsible for the trips to Lake Garda and Diano Marina, expressed it like this:

⁹¹ Mr Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

⁹² Mrs Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

“The people you take to Italy and them sort of places tend to be outgoing anyway. There was one couple. They’d never been abroad once and they went to Diano Marina and absolutely loved it. And Nick, because I showed him you could enjoy the company of foreigner...Lake Garda was very popular. Trip to Venice, Dolomites. Whatever their attitudes were, they did like the Italian way of life and the night life. The non-violence. Sitting outside the café and sitting outside at night. Diano Marina was pretty popular...Italy and Lake Garda was always a big hit.”⁹³

This touches on another area which should be highlighted; Passengers are likely to choose destinations which they believe will appeal to them. Although only two people noted that they had any foreknowledge of Italy, the images they had were definitely of something glamorous; sea, and hearing what a nice country it was (The two people who made these comments were also the two people who said how much they enjoyed Italy). From their responses, they were generally the people who travelled to Italy for the architecture, food and the lifestyle. While it is problematic to correlate an interest in culture with a tendency towards open-mindedness, it is interesting to note that, from the 18 people who took part in both holidays, eleven accepted that England was a part of Europe, whilst 90% of the people who went on the Lake Garda trips expressed positive sentiments towards Europe as a whole. This would confirm Mr Hodgshon’s claim that people who went on the Italian holidays tended to be “outgoing”. When we understand outgoing to mean “having an interest in different cultures”, then it therefore comes as no surprise that the “Italian regulars” were more positive about Europe.

Also, being a popular tour, information was spread by word of mouth and more people came on the trips based on the urging of their friends and colleagues. Their positive impressions were therefore based on real experiences they had had there and the images they had before going. Again, we must bear in mind that destinations were chosen for their attractiveness, and, as tourist operators, Stoddards would be unlikely to visit unattractive places, meaning the people were not exposed to, or unlikely to be exposed to, unpleasant impressions of Italy.

There is an interesting mismatch between how people viewed the Italian lifestyle. Six people commented (in a positive manner) that the Italian way of life seemed more laidback and relaxed, but two other interviewees commented that they thought the Italian way of life to be more hectic. (Mr Ellis noted, humorously, that “the Italians are all quite mad”). The reason for this difference in opinion is difficult to find, and may be based on different impressions of Italy gained whilst on holiday there, or from stereotypes acquired before travelling there. Generally though, we may say there are a combination of factors at work here. Stereotypes do exist in England of Italians being voluble and excitable and, as Andsager and Drzewiecka shows, stereotypes are applied and used to

⁹³ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

understand one's surroundings, even when one does not see anything that confirms this. Secondly, a café culture definitely exists in Italy that does not exist in England, where the idea of sitting on the pavement drinking a coffee is impractical because of the weather. The café culture is considered "continental" in England. Such behaviour is considered more relaxed and this was noted by those who thought the Italians more relaxed. Mr Carnwell, for example, said that:

"I thought they were more laid-back as you would call it. It seemed they'd got more time didn't they. Here everyone's rushing about. They'll sit an hour over coffee watching the world go by."⁹⁴

The question of whether having a coffee culture means that a country's inhabitants are "more laid-back" than another country's is open to debate and would be beyond the scope of this work, but it is enough to say that, for the English people visiting Italy, it did indicate that the culture was more relaxed, whereas for others, their own pre-conceived ideas and experiences (particularly of traffic) made them believe Italians have a more hectic lifestyle. Another claim made was that Italians have siestas. True or not, this relates to the closing times for shops, which are different to English ones and reinforce the idea that Italians are more laid-back than English people.

Negative attitudes towards the Italians were rare. Only three negative comments were made concerning Italians; Mr Ellis comment about Italians being quite mad (although this was made in a half-joking way), and Mrs Scarratt, who commented:

"The Italians, they didn't mix with you much. I've never known anyone go to a supermarket dripping in gold."⁹⁵

This could be taken as a negative view on the fact that, as we have seen from previous interviewees, Italy is viewed as more cultured than the UK. This is reinforced by the fact that Mrs Scarratt also mentioned the fact that the Italians seemed very fashionable. Mrs Scarratt also commented that the Italians seemed more aloof in comparison to the Austrians, which may mean that the Italian hotel staff were not as welcoming and friendly as those in Austria.

Mrs Edwards mentioned the fact that she thought the Italians didn't queue:

"From the Italians- they'll elbow you out of the way in the queue! They don't like queueing."⁹⁶

It is usually the Germans who are accused of not queueing (which will be discussed later on). The accusation of not being able to queue may be based on stereotypes regarding foreigners' inability to queue, as well as the fact that the English themselves believe they are "better at queueing" than other nations.

⁹⁴ Mr Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

⁹⁵ Mrs Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

⁹⁶ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

Mr Williamson also commented that Italian farming is “not quite up to it” (meaning it is not very productive). Mr Williamson, as a retired farmer, took a close interest in the farming methods in all the different countries he visited, but was more complementary about other farming methods. In terms of how similar people felt the Italians were to themselves, twenty five people (from the 32 who had visited Italy in total) were able to give an answer. Fifteen people gave the Italians a score of between 0 and 5, and considerably fewer people gave the Italians as high a score as they did the Austrians. This confirms that people felt that the Italians were more different to themselves than the Austrians or Swiss.

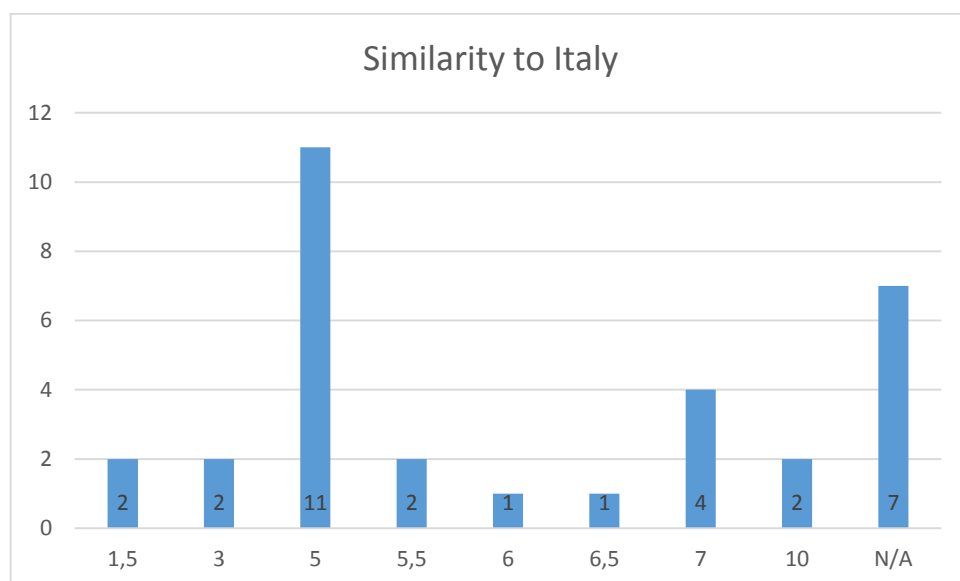


Fig. 2: Perceived similarity of English people to Italians.

Some of the differences included comments like “It’s more like *Dolce Vita*” or because the Italians were perceived as being more relaxed than English people. Some also compared Italians to Germans, noting that the “Latin” people (such as French and Italian) were less similar to English people than northern Europeans. In comparing Italy to other European countries, Miss Taylor’s comments on this subject sum up attitudes best:

“I like the weather. I like the people. I like the Germans too. I’m quite anti-French. I don’t like them, but I do like Paris. But I’ve not done much of France. Only driven through it. Belgium’s boring. But I do like Italy.”⁹⁷

Miss Taylor’s attitudes give us a clear window into the reason why Italy was a popular choice for passengers; the people’s way of life and the culture were very attractive, and of course, we should not forget the important part that weather plays in the “attractiveness” of destinations; with an average temperature of 29 C in September (when the trips to Diano Marina and Lake Garda usually took place), the climate in northern Italy is much more pleasant than that of Staffordshire at this time

⁹⁷ Miss Taylor. Interview. 10/09/2014

of year (average of 14 C in September). This thus increases the attractiveness of a location, because not only does it have a lot of “culture” in terms of architecture and history but this can also be visited without having to take a coat and umbrella!

In conclusion, we may say that Italians were considered more as “Others” than Austrians, but in a positive way. Only one person (Miss Taylor), developed meaningful friendships with Italians. Despite professing a love for Italian culture, she still maintained that the English and Italian way of life were too different to be considered similar. This attitude can be taken as a leitmotif for the general attitude towards Italy; that people appreciate the culture and way of life, but the culture is still considered very different to English culture.

A brief look at the history of the historical relations between England and Italy will give us a historical basis for this conclusion. Italy only became a nation state in the nineteenth century and thus lacks a long history of interaction with England as a coherent entity. Although England and Italy were briefly enemy combatants at the beginning of World War One, the country then became an ally in 1915. And, although Great Britain and Italy were enemy combatants in World War Two, the emphasis remained on Germany and Italy’s army was often viewed with derision by the British military and its historians.⁹⁸ Thus, Italy has, in the early modern period, not been associated with negative stereotypes in the English mind. Rather, as Claudio Visentin explains, the country has been associated with tourism and travel since the days of the Grand Tour. The result is that Italy is *primarily* viewed through a touristic lens by English people; “Italy is not an idea but first and foremost an experience; of art and history, of everyday life, of the mild climate, of the sunny landscape.”⁹⁹ Visentin posits that this can be ascribed to the fact that the English invented the modern concept of tourism with the Grand Tour and that Italy was, up until the nineteenth century, the English tourists’ favourite overseas destination (before it was replaced by the French Riviera and later Spain).¹⁰⁰ The comments made by the interviewees correspond closely to Visentin’s assessment of the Anglo-Italian relationship; Italy is our best example of “Europe as a tourist destination”, certainly, stereotypes exist (lazy/excitable), but these are not necessarily of a negative fashion and the relationship is not burdened by historical issues. Also, as Visentin states, those going to Italy to seek impressive architecture, good food and a rich history are liable to find it.¹⁰¹ Images of Italy are reinforced by the visits made, not altered. This is also supported by the comments made by the participants. As Mr

⁹⁸ James J. Sadkovich. “Of Myths and Men: Rommel and the Italians in North Africa, 1940- 1942.” *The International History Review*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (May, 1991). Pg. 285

⁹⁹ Claudio Visentin. “The Theatre of the World: British-Italian Identities on the Tourism Stage.” *Performing National Identities- Anglo-Italian Cultural Transactions* (University of Vienna, 2008). Edited by Manfred Pfister and Ralf Hertel. Pg. 218

¹⁰⁰ Visentin. *The Theatre of the World*. Pg. 218

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

Hodgshon states, the people going to Italy were those seeking something different from a standard “sand and sea” package holiday and Stoddards did their best to provide this.

Again, these positive comments all seem to be based on the fact that the passengers either came to Italy without any pre-conceived ideas, or with positive images in their minds related to Italian culture. These positive images of romance and glamour are reinforced by the information given in the itineraries. Again, coming to a country with positive expectations means the destination is more likely to be appreciated positively. Also bearing in mind the fact that Italy is primarily considered a tourist destination by English people, we should not be surprised that Italians are rated as being quite different to English people, because, as Urry shows, people go to tourist destinations with the expectation of experiencing something positively different. As we shall see for the next country, arriving at country with negative pre-conceived ideas has a very large effect on how it is perceived.

3.3.4 France- still the old enemy?

France was maybe the most divisive destination Stoddards operated tours to, even more so than Germany (which we shall come to later). Stoddards operated regular yearly tours to Paris, either three day tours, or as overnight stops on the way to Austria and Italy.

For the trip to Paris in 1993, the itinerary mainly lists the tourist locations available to see in Paris (Notre Dame, Palace of Versailles, etc.), as well as the fact that the passengers will “have the services of an experienced French-speaking courier”.¹⁰² Stoddards also visited locations in the south of France as part of the “Diano Marina” tour. The itinerary for Diano Marina was already discussed in the section concerning Italy, where the glamour and attractiveness of the French and Italian coasts were emphasised.

Stoddards also operated tours to northern France (in connection with the Second World War), Annecy and also visited the war graves of the First World War in eastern France, but these were not part of the regular itinerary.

Because France was a much visited destination, it is important to differentiate between people’s impressions of the different parts of the country. The impressions of Paris are, of course, extremely varied compared to people’s impressions of Nice and so on, which also affects their impression of the country as a whole.

Only two people noted that they had any previous images of France before going there. Mrs Godwin, who noted that the Eiffel Tower is a prominent image for her, and Mrs Button, who said:

“I thought it was going to be a little French village with a village square and French blokes [*men*] playing boules. There was nothing but vineyards. And a church.”¹⁰³

¹⁰² Stoddards itinerary for Paris and Euro Disney. August 9 – 12, 1993.

¹⁰³ Mrs Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

Of the 52 people interviewed, 29 went on one or more trips to Paris and 25 went on the Diano Marina tour. Of the 25 who went on the Diano Marina tour, 14 were also regulars on the Paris tours. Fifteen people visited France independently, with another coach company, or as part of their work. Two of these (the Turners) did so whilst being based in France as part of the British NATO contingent. This must be borne in mind when presenting the statistics, as these people had a chance to become more personally involved with the French and receive more impressions.

In total, 41 people had visited France in one capacity or another. The responses to France tend to be extremely divided; people either liked France, or they disliked it.

Fifteen people commented on how much they liked France, but of these, ten people had been visiting France independently, or had a personal connection because their son had taken part in an exchange program and was a “Francophile” (the Lovatts). These ten people had often developed friendly relations with French people. Seven people expressed hostile comments towards the French and eight people were more or less neutral, or had mixed impressions. We are therefore dealing with a much wider range of opinions than for the other countries. The remaining people who had visited France did not spend enough time there to form an impression.

Starting with the people who had a wholly positive view of France they had, like those who admired Italian culture, an appreciation for the French way of life. Mrs Randle commented that:

“I love the French way of life. Different parts. Some can be quite friendly, some not so much. But you’re talking to the wrong person about France; I’d go for a meal! ... More family-orientated I’d say. We’d stayed in quite a few places where you’d eat with the family and the whole family’s there. You all sit round a table; the whole lot... because their meal-times, it’s not a rushed thing. Because you sit. However long it takes you to have a meal.”¹⁰⁴

This sentiment was commonly expressed by those who liked French culture- an admiration for a slower and more family-orientated way of life. The Aspeys expressed similar sentiments but also made clear that they were not sure if this applied to all French people:

“We like the people in the countryside. They’ve got time for you whereas, in the cities they haven’t really got time for you. We just love sitting and chatting to people. Comparing notes in the garden and recipes. We’re talking about a certain type of person. We don’t meet... it sounds snobbish... a lot of working people who live in flats do we? All that we’ve met are in the countryside where we choose to stay.”¹⁰⁵

This expresses very nicely the reason why certain people are attracted to France and, as we have seen with Austria, the fact that people from rural backgrounds tended to feel more at home in similarly rural backgrounds. Both Mrs Randle and Mr Aspey also indicated that they were not sure if

¹⁰⁴ Mrs Randle. Interview. 05/09/2014

¹⁰⁵ Mr Aspey. Interview 02/09/2014

this sentiment could be applied to all of France, Mr Aspey in particular making it clear that they obviously felt at home and comfortable with the people with whom they shared the same interests and background, but weren't sure if they would feel the same way with all French people.

Others referred to the belief that enmity existed between the French and the English, but denied ever experiencing this. Mr Ellis in particular was aware of this;

"The French aren't as bad as they're painted. If you make an effort with the French they will respond."¹⁰⁶

Mr Ellis also touched on the subject of the war and noted his several encounters with French people who were grateful towards England for their assistance in World War Two:

"[I saw an old woman] walking across and I said, 'Pardon Madame.' And she must have detected a funny accent and she walks across looked at you, says, 'Anglais?' Puts her arms around you and says, 'Resistance.'¹⁰⁷

Mr Turner (part of the NATO contingent France) commented that he frequented a bar where the owner "was a great Anglophile and he hated the Germans, the Boche, and his wife worked in the post office across the road and they'd been there during the occupation, so he set up a British club, his pub was more or less a British pub. And all the British used to go in there drinking with the dart board up. Great place. British only. He had very little time for other nationalities. Sometimes a Dane would drop in you know and he would be off hand with them. No German would ever set foot in there. They knew that you don't go there."¹⁰⁸

Although Mr Turner expressed some negative attitudes towards Paris ("Not very friendly people"), his comments show that he considered a connection to exist between the French and the English thanks to their common war time experience.

Mrs Lovatt expressed something similar when she said:

"Parisians are Parisians... stuck up. But there's different sorts of people wherever you go. 'I don't like the French', but that's stupid that is, daft. There's a lot of English I don't like. We've known quite a few French people in our time. They're just an ordinary family. Just a family working. They're family orientated."¹⁰⁹

As was mentioned at the beginning of this section, it is important to differentiate between people's feelings about France in general, and to Paris. The stereotype that the Parisians are rude is extremely widespread in England and, even if none of the passengers could bring forth specific examples of this, it was clear that this idea was commonplace. But Mrs Lovatt herself had a personal connection to

¹⁰⁶ Mr Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

¹⁰⁷ Mr Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014.

¹⁰⁸ Mr Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹⁰⁹ Mrs Lovatt. Interview. 03/09/2014

France, as her son spent a long time on an exchange with a family there. They have since remained friends with the family.

Another interviewee, Mr Button was one of the people who had had more intimate relations with the France but remained rather sceptical. His sister owned a vineyard there and he went to visit her very often. He recollected that:

“French were friendly enough. Certainly different in the villages and that where we were....sit there and drink wine all the time. There are layabouts [*lazy people*] in England, but the men in France in the villages sit round and drink all afternoon don’t they? Some things they don’t like about the English but some things I don’t like about the French.... The clock strikes 2 o’clock and all the French workers down tools till two and you have red wine, cheese, fresh bread, ham and you just don’t want to go back at three.”¹¹⁰

Mr Button’s recollections are of particular interest, as he had genuine knowledge of business practices in France. His recollections are a mixture of positive (“friendly enough”) mixed with clichés that French people are lazy (layabouts), although he later admits that he can understand why people would not want to go back to work after a heavy meal. This indicates that his recollections of France are a mixture of stereotypes (the French are lazy) and with his actual experiences (the French he met were friendly). This confirms Andsager and & Drzewiecka’s theory (at least in this case) that stereotypes about a country remain in people’s minds even if they have seen things which contradict these stereotypes. This theory is shared by Mr Hodgshon, who noted that:

“I would say they had a general arrogant attitude to any foreigner. Spanish were thick [*stupid*] and lazy, Italians were dishonest, German were arrogant, French were arrogant.”¹¹¹

Mr Button’s comments, along with those of others, could be placed in the “neutral” category. Similar comments were made by Mrs Carnwell, who noted:

“I still do think the French don’t like us. But I never experienced any of that. And I never found anybody who wasn’t pleasant and nice. I know it’s their jobs. But I never found anybody who didn’t like us... you have things stored in you don’t you.”¹¹²

Her husband also noted that these images were informed by “how you’re brought up.”¹¹³

They therefore both recognise that negative images of the French exist, but are not necessarily based on reality and, whilst the holidays did not necessarily entirely disprove them, they still realised that such images were not entirely correct.

Others, like Mr Prince, seemed more uncertain:

¹¹⁰ Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

¹¹¹ Mr Hodgshon. Interview 26/09/2014

¹¹² Mrs Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

¹¹³ Mr Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

“[The French are] More laidback... Steadier.... Very laidback- no urgency- the shut down.”¹¹⁴

This refers to another common sentiment expressed about the French, that they are “always going on strike” and that this is connected to their laidback attitude. This laid back attitude is taken as more negative than the attitude ascribed towards the Italians and the Austrians who were also often described as being more laid back, but this was meant in a more positive light for the Italians. This is due to the prevailing images of enmity which exists in many people’s minds when discussing France. Two of the couples who had travelled independently to France, the Buttons and the Turners, were more noncommittal as regards the French. Firstly, both maintained that the French were very different to the English (in the case of Mr Button, mixing stereotypes and both real experiences). Mrs Turner thought that the French families were more close-knit than English ones, whilst Mrs Button noted that they were served tea in “soup bowls” in France (This was also commented on by Mrs Burton in another interview). Mrs Button went on to note that: “on the way to Switzerland and for breakfast we had these great big soup bowls... for tea. And the tables were like dresser tables.”¹¹⁵ Mr Turner also stated: “You try to get on with the people and you try to understand them. Put it that way. I think we understand the French better than the Belgians.”¹¹⁶

This statement of “you try to understand them” indicates that Mr Turner still felt that there was gap to be bridged between themselves and the French. All of these comment indicate that, whilst none of this group felt overt hostility towards the French, they also felt they were very different.

Finally, there are the group of people who have very negative views of France. Five people from the sample expressed such views. Mr Davies, for example, was convinced of the French enmity towards England:

“You’ve only got to listen to the Germans talk and the French talk- They don’t want us! French mortally hate us.”¹¹⁷

In some cases, these negative comments were still combined with an appreciation for French culture, as in this case:

“I don’t like the French. I love Paris. I wasn’t that keen. We went and I loved it. Me [My] mum wanted to visit a war grave of someone she knew before she met me [my] dad. We went in a bar. As soon as they knew we were British they put 50p on the beer. I hate them I do. I don’t like that at all.”¹¹⁸

This comment is of great interest for two reasons. Firstly, it shows that it is possible for people to separate a general dislike for a country with an appreciation of its attractions (“I love Paris”).

Secondly, the anecdote concerning the French bar staff increasing the price of beer after they found

¹¹⁴ Mr Prince. Interview 28/08/2014

¹¹⁵ Mrs Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

¹¹⁶ Mr Turner. Interview. 08/09/2014

¹¹⁷ Mrs Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

¹¹⁸ Miss Taylor. Interview. 10/09/2014

out that the party were English contrasts strongly with Mr Ellis's and Mr Turner's recollections about being treated very well by people in France. Obviously, it is impossible to tell whether the staff really increased the price, or whether this was a misunderstanding, but we can see that, in Miss Taylor's case and also in the case of Mr Ellis and Mr Turner, single incidents can often be interpreted in such a way as to reinforce one's existing stereotypes concerning other groups or countries.

Mrs Green also brought up the topic of being served in bars, noting:

"The French were alright but they preferred the Germans. If there was a German there they'd serve the German before the English."¹¹⁹

Again, it is interesting to note that the sentence is qualified by saying that the French were alright before claiming, similarly to Miss Taylor, that the English were disadvantaged when being served in bars. This is even more interesting in the light of Mr Turner's comments concerning the French café owner who would not serve German people. Again, we cannot say how true these statements are, but the fact that Mrs Green uses the second conditional to talk about general past experiences (If... they *would* serve) indicates that she is not talking about one experience, but more generalised past experiences.

Mr Booth also remember being badly served in a bar (which shows it is a common experience for holiday makers), but gave his own explanation for it:

"With Paul one night in France [in a bar]. Clearly they weren't keen on serving us. You know, with our limitations in French we hadn't got much. They were very unwelcoming. It was an overnight stay and I can't remember where. Bit of a backwater town. Wasn't a major issue, but you had the feeling."¹²⁰

Mr Booth then went on to compare the experience to what would happen if two foreigners went into a pub in a very rural part of North Staffordshire, noting that the reaction (from the bar staff) would probably be similar. To conclude the question of service in bars, we can say the reactions are a combination of genuine experiences and stereotypes. Mr Booth's observation indicates that, sadly, it can be the case that certain bars will show poor service to people who do not belong to the local community, but this should be treated as an isolated incident, and cannot be applied to the whole country.

We have already seen that some interviewees referred back to the Second World War as a point of reference when discussing the reasons for the Anglo-French problems and this point was made more explicitly by others. Mrs Green even confirmed that she believed World War Two was the reason for differences between English and French people:

"You look at the French. What we did for the French and now they couldn't care less for us."¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Mrs Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

¹²⁰ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

¹²¹ Mrs Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

In this author's opinion, this statement comes to the one of the reasons for people's different attitudes towards France: World War Two. As we have seen in the introduction, World War Two forms the basis of England's post national identity with the myth of "England standing alone". This belief informs many people's dislike of France, because it is coupled with the feeling that England "won the war but lost the peace". Mrs Williamson also mentioned the fact that she found the French ungrateful. Those who had negative attitudes towards France also based it on the fact that "France run us now" and those who expressed strongly negative attitudes towards France also made strongly negative comments about the EU. Generally, negative attitudes towards France were informed by an awareness of past history between England and France, which was presented in a negative light. Some interviewees looked back in further than the Second World War. Mr Green, himself a local historian, noted that:

"Going round France and different places, Agincourt and the countryside and all of those areas. I can visualise, when I'm reading you've got a better idea."¹²²

Although he did not specifically go on to mention his attitude towards the French at this point, he later said:

"The ones in Normandy were... they did everything for you. But it depends on the areas. It's like here. The people in this area round Cheadle are far more friendly than the Londoners. I've got no great feeling. I'm not as strong as she is [his wife]. No, I could live and let live. But I do notice the arrogance of the French. It's the way in which you speak English and the other people could speak English but they'll be speaking in French. But other countries will help you out."¹²³

Once again we see the old attitude that the French are "arrogant". Mr Green was also of the belief that the English were intrinsically different from Europeans in general (which we shall deal with in a later section). It is also interesting to note that Mr Green indicates that people in Normandy were extremely friendly, but still went on to confirm that he believed that the French were arrogant. Other people also felt that they could communicate more easily in other countries than in France. Mrs Allen noted that she found it easier to communicate with the Austrians than the people in Paris and Mr Davies felt the Austrians "have more time for you than the French do."¹²⁴ Mr Aspey made clear one of the explanations for this when she said:

"Waidring [in Austria] was the hotel, it was absolutely superb. Paris, they were more commercial hotels. They weren't family run ones."¹²⁵

¹²² Mr Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

¹²³ Mr Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

¹²⁴ Mr Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

¹²⁵ Mr Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

Other explanations include the latent feelings of enmity towards the French (that do not exist towards Austria) and the fact that the participants felt closer to the “rural” Tyroleans than to the French, especially the Parisians.

Again, it seems that some stereotypes are so deeply rooted that, even being presented with, and acknowledging, evidence to the contrary, people cannot shake off these deeply held beliefs. This is confirmed by Mr Hodgshon:

“I thought it was a myth but I’ve seen it. Agincourt. ‘They’ve never forgiven us for Agincourt.’ That came up quite often. ‘We invented the steam engine.’ This myth that we stood alone against Hitler. I think it comes out... Everything’s gone against it because De Gaulle kept us out of Europe after we’d saved him”¹²⁶

This would suggest that actually going on holiday reactivates these myths and reminds people of myths and, whether or not they see or experience anything that confirms these stereotypes and the myths people carry about their own country, they are reminded of them. It is also a question of whether these comments were particularly strong among this age group, who were either children during the Second World War or were born shortly after the end of the war. The myth of a “strong Britain standing alone” was particularly strong during this period, but it would require a further study to find out whether these feelings have been reinforced among the younger generation, or whether they are slowly disappearing. There was a belief that the French dislike the English too. Mr Davies commented that the French “mortally hate us”, whilst Mrs Williamson thought the “French don’t think much of us”. These are interesting attitudes when contrasted with those of Mrs Carnwell, who also noted that she thought the French didn’t like the English, but admitted to not having seen any evidence of this.

On a final note concerning French stereotypes, two other people mentioned they did not like France for reasons of hygiene; Mrs Ditchfield noted that, “Paris was dirty. Too much dog muck. Wasn’t what they expected. Disgusting.”¹²⁷

Mr Button also said:

“I’m not too keen because I see them going to restaurants with their dogs under their arms, and you have to keep your eyes on the floor when you’re walking around, because of the dog muck on the floor, that’s my impression of France.”¹²⁸

The stereotype of the “dirty French” is a strongly held one, which we shall examine later on.

French architecture was also something that people commented on, finding it quite different to English architecture, with the words “shabby” appearing quite often. Three people mentioned the

¹²⁶ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

¹²⁷ Mrs Ditchfield. Interview. 02/09/2014

¹²⁸ Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

fact that they found the apartments in Paris to be not well-kept, or “dingy”, or commented on the fact that the French did not seem to look after their gardens in the same way that English people do, whereas three people commented that they found Paris “dirty”. Mr Williamson in particular mentioned:

“French houses are different- dingy and dark houses. Public buildings are fantastic... I didn’t like city houses- look dark and dingy.”¹²⁹

The general consensus was that the public buildings, such as the museums or galleries were very beautiful, but that the apartments that could be seen in Paris were rather dirty. This was seen as being a major difference to English architecture and reflects the fact that city houses, as in buildings built to accommodate 10-20 apartments, are not generally found in England, where residential houses tend to be split into flats. Even for those who appreciated French architecture, there was a definite feeling that it was different (and better) than English architecture:

“And in France the Gothic architecture is always more ornate than it is in England. Yes, it’s got a feel about it hasn’t it. You feel... in Paris you don’t get anything quite like that, the boulevards. Nothing quite like that in England.”¹³⁰

This can be taken as a concrete example of a difference between France and England, particular for Northern Staffordshire, where people generally own their houses in the countryside or live in small towns.

The stereotype of the fashionableness of the “stylish French” also appeared. Mr and Mrs Godwin and Mrs Ellis both noted the way the French dress, Mrs Ellis said:

“They dress well, dress better than us. But I find, even the younger people in their casual dress dress better than us.”¹³¹

The answers regarding how similar the French were to the English also varied according to people’s attitudes towards them. Of the 41 people who had visited France, 31 were able to give an answer. Interestingly, the majority of people (ten) gave a 7 as a score for how similar they felt the French were to the English, saying they thought the French were reasonably similar. Two people (the Lovatts) said the French were exactly the same as us. They gave everyone in Europe a ten, meaning they found the people who live on the continent to be exactly the same as us, but used an example from France where they visited a family and found the people very welcoming. Although the majority of people (seventeen) gave the French a score of 6 or higher, fewer people gave the French an eight or a nine compared to the Austrians, suggesting that differences between French and English are still more strongly appreciated than between Austria and England. These figures also have to be assessed

¹²⁹ Mrs Williamson. Interview. 15/09/2014

¹³⁰ Mrs Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

¹³¹ Mrs Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

carefully, as some who said they strongly disliked the French also gave them a score of 6 or 7 in terms of how similar they felt they were to the English. There is therefore not always a definite correlation between like and dislike and giving a low score in terms of similarity.

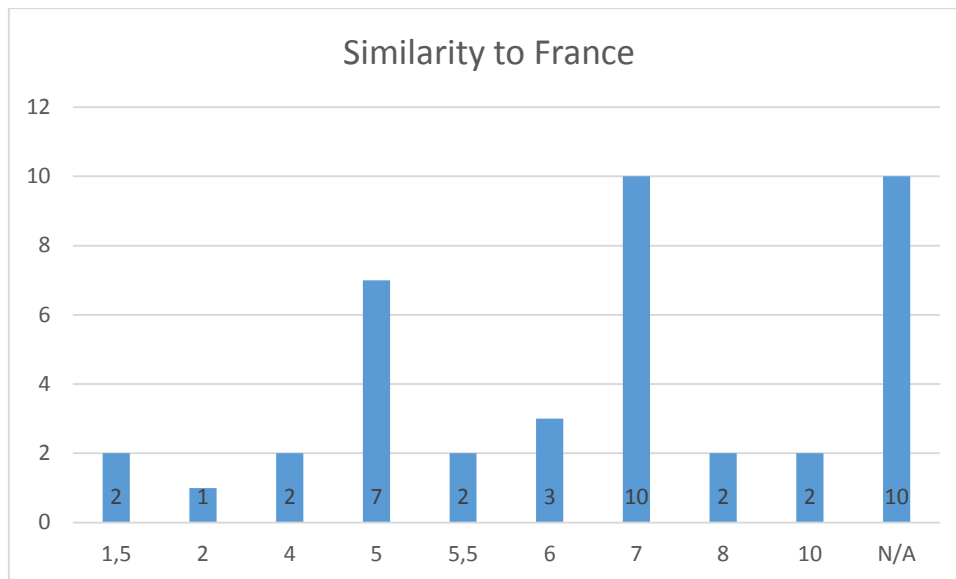


Fig. 3: Perceived similarity of English people to French

As we can see from the above graph, and the comments made regarding the French, there was a wide mix of feelings regarding France. Some felt the French were similar to us, but disliked them, whilst some liked the French, but still felt they were quite different to the English. What can explain this difference in opinion?

Colley's theory on the formation of a "British" national identity (see section "England and the Others") in the 18th century was done so partly by contrasting themselves with a Catholic Other on the continent, often embodied by the French.¹³² Because the French were often taken as representative of the European Other, it has become difficult to separate the two, and this will be discussed in a later topic, as will the question of British and English identity. Here it is sufficient to say that both the English and British senses of identity have contrasted themselves *against* France. In her discussion of English attitudes towards the French, Federica Lucrezia Visentin provides support for this theory, stating that Catholicism was seen to be the reason for Frenchmen's "lack of manliness" and was viewed in opposition to John Bull liberalism.¹³³ The fight against Napoleon not only then helped to strengthen the image of the French as the "natural" enemy of the English, but also the English John Bull national character in comparison to the upper classes, as Robert Eagles showed; "the Napoleonic wars ... forced Englishmen to look to their Arbuthnot -inspired John Bull persona over that of the cosmopolitan aristocracy, whose very national character was held in great

¹³² Colley. *Forging the Nation*. Pg. 33

¹³³ Federica L. Visentin. *Describing the French in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century British Fiction* (Masters Paper, University of Vienna, 2013). Pg. 16

suspicion.”¹³⁴ The upper classes were under suspicion because of their Francophilia and so, for those who had no “foreign acquaintance, or social standing [and were] unable to enjoy the delights of continental living”, John Bull, with its emphasis on commerce and nationalness was contrasted with the aristocracy, who were considered to lack a national identity.¹³⁵

Two people in the interviews referred explicitly to the wars against France, but for different reasons. Mr Turner noted: “We’re a separate island and we never have been connected. Until we had the tunnel. Going way back, Napoleon wanted to have a tunnel. He didn’t win the war so we didn’t get one! (*Laughs*) We can always flood it if we want to.”¹³⁶

This comment, although made a joking way, shows the way in which England’s physical connection to Europe is still viewed with suspicion and that it is associated with French attempts to ‘dominate’ England. Mr Ellis, on the other hand, noted that previous generations were more anti-French, saying “That’s come down generations hasn’t it. The Napoleonic wars.”¹³⁷

Mr Ellis confirmed that, in his opinion, English people’s feelings of difference to Europe *was* connected to 18th and 19th century battles with France, which left a deep imprint on the national psyche.

Thus, stereotypes related to the French have been present for a long period of time and, also importantly, have helped the English to define themselves (and vice versa). In their book *That Sweet Enemy*, Robert and Isabelle Tombs argue that the Anglo-French relationship is unique in its length and consistency, and that this relationship is even more important than the Anglo-German, or Anglo-American relationship.¹³⁸

We have also seen several comments stating that people believed that the French hated the English. There is historical support for this, not in the fact that the French hate the English, but that the French also defined themselves as being not as the English. The Tombses argue that, in the nineteenth century, the wars between Great Britain and France were also a conflict between two different sets of values which left its mark as much on the French sense of identity as the English.¹³⁹ This is not to say that England and France’s relationship was only based on conflict; interaction has been taking place at a constant level for as long as the two countries have existed. Rather, the argument goes that France and England’s geo-political orientations and values in regards to each other have remained remarkably constant; after 1945, France’s attention was focussed on the continent and worked to build supranational structures in order to ensure that Germany never again

¹³⁴ Robin Eagles. *Francophilia in English Society 1748 - 1815*. (Macmillan Publishing, 2000). Pg. 11.

¹³⁵ Ibid. Pg. 153

¹³⁶ Mr Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹³⁷ Mr Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

¹³⁸ Robert and Isabelle Tombs. *That Sweet Enemy- The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (Heinemann, 2006). Pg. 699

¹³⁹ Ibid. Pg. 700

became a threat and, as in the nineteenth century, the state took an active hand in directing the country's economic and social structures.¹⁴⁰ England, on the other hand, looked to the USA and its Empire as its trading partners and allies and maintained (and maintains) an attitude of non-state intervention and free trade. One need only look to the City of London to see the way in which the British government favours financial deregulation. The two scholars make a convincing argument that, in terms of legal and political history and values, France and England have always had, and continue to have extremely different values.¹⁴¹ It is, in this author's opinion, particularly France's values as regards Europe that have meant the two nations still view each other in very different terms. France viewed (and views) the European project as a 'historical destiny' (with France in the driving seat). England, in comparison to France has never viewed a central role in Europe as being its 'destiny', rather as an abandonment of its traditional role. This explains why the French rejected the EU constitution in 2005, as there was a general feeling that the project "might not after all be their offspring".¹⁴² Various French governments have also often rejected liberalisation of the European Union's employment laws as an imposition of the "Anglo-Saxon" model.¹⁴³

This clash over Europe can therefore be seen as a clash over the aforesaid set of values; the Anglo-Saxon value of free trade and liberalisation versus the French version of state intervention and protection.¹⁴⁴ Mr Button's response to the question "what makes us different to Europeans?" supports this theory:

"Attitude. I always think. Or I used to think that in England, you stood on your feet. Whereas in Italy, and France they expect hand-outs. Nowadays that's English."¹⁴⁵

Mr Button also went on to list the French employment and inheritance laws as examples where, in his opinion, the French state was more stringent than the English state.

As we have seen, the French attracted the largest number of negative comments, and those who were attracted to France often commented on the differences between England and France. The definition of the French way of life as being "better" points to a difference in French and English values which indicates that visiting another country sometimes helps to emphasise the contrasts between them. The 1990s did indeed see a vast increase in the number of English people coming to France for pleasure (official French figures from 1988 show that 600,000 French houses were owned by English people and, in 2000, 11.9 million Britons spent on average a week in France.¹⁴⁶). However, the fact remains that the English were coming to France for pleasure. English people (mainly retired

¹⁴⁰ Tombs. *That Sweet Enemy*. Pg. 701

¹⁴¹ Ibid. Pg. 703

¹⁴² Ibid. Pg. 704

¹⁴³ Ibid. Pg. 695

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Pg. 693

¹⁴⁵ Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

¹⁴⁶ Tombs. *That Sweet Enemy*. Pg. 654

civil servants) brought or rented houses in picturesque areas (some of the participants had friends or relatives who had done so) and enjoyed the French lifestyle of long lunches and relaxed surroundings. Thus, English people who like France were attracted to the different set of values people possess as compared to England, where state spending cuts and an ever more deregulated economy have changed people's lifestyles. For those who support such measures (for example, Mr Button), the French model seems deeply un-English.

The stereotypes and differences which I have briefly mapped above are supported by the opinions offered by the interviewees. Their references to French food, culture and fashion indicates that these stereotypes are still very much alive, whereas Mr Button's comments about "Englishmen standing on their own two feet" shows that the independent John Bull stereotype is still very much alive. The drivers' analysis of the passengers' feelings towards the French also chime with the academic view, as Paul Stoddard said;

"I think most people were more hostile regarding the French. The French were labelled, not the Swiss, not the Austrians, not the Italians, not the Benelux people. It was really quite evident from early on, 'I wonder what the French are going to do with us this time Paul.'"¹⁴⁷

This supports the theory that there is a special relationship between France and England, a relationship which produces over riding stereotypes stronger than for any other country. Paul Stoddard goes on to explain that specific incidents only reinforced these stereotypes;

"When the French have these shut-downs, when it's the ports, it's the roads. No other country would shut down the motorway system and unfortunately I came back from Austria all on A and B roads to Calais, all through the French state, because the French farmers had barricaded. So when you have an 11 hour journey put up to an 18 hour journey, all because, that's like a long day and that's a lasting memory. That was a fantastic holiday and the people when they get back to Cheadle, 'Did you hear what went on? We had so many hours on this coach because all the motorways....' I think the French didn't just embrace the English tourists. If they ever spotted English tourist, they wouldn't go over to an English person or an English coach and say, you know, to help them out... Whereas the Austrians and the Swiss and the Italians would be more gregarious, more interactive straight away. 'You're lost, can I help out.' But not the French, if they sort of could pick two coaches to fine on the road, one would be a German, one would be an English coach, it'd be an English coach. There was definitely hostility all through the passengers. Whereas with other countries it would be on an individual basis."¹⁴⁸

Firstly, this statement shows that, as the Tombeses stated in their book, the different values of the French and the English can lead to clashes, as the strikes showed. One gets the impression that

¹⁴⁷ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

¹⁴⁸ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

English people felt that the strikes were personally directed towards them, in order to slow down their journey home. Paul Stoddard's discussion of French people's unwillingness to help English tourists, as well as the French police's discrimination towards English coaches, supports the theory of cognitive bias, in that negative events are more likely to be ascribed to French people's dislike of the English, rather than other circumstances. Paul Stoddard's comment that the long journey caused by the strike was more likely to stay in people's memories, rather than the pleasant holidays, is also supported by sociological evidence, in that people are more likely to turn to stereotypes and make snap judgements in negative stress situations (which an 18 hour journey would be).

Paul Stoddard also mentioned the fact that several people visited Paris as part of the overnight stop (mentioned by Mr Ellis), and that this also may have influenced feelings towards France:

"Obviously France is a transit state, we've all got to travel through France."¹⁴⁹

Very often then, people were only stopping briefly in France and may not have enjoyed the high levels of comfort that they did in hotels at the destination. This is supported by two comments made by the interviewees who, when asked about bad experiences with food, remembered getting food poisoning from food they ate in commercial hotels in France. Thus, as Greenland showed, negative, stressful situations mean that people are more likely to form negative stereotypes.

On balance then, we can say that strongly held prejudices exist regarding France. Even those who professed a strong liking for France explained that, in the end, there were unbridgeable differences between English and French. Mrs Randle, who had previously expressed a strong liking for French and had French friends, commented:

"We've got French friends now but no. They belong to France, I belong to England. We go and eat with a couple with French people when we go to France."¹⁵⁰

From the other couples who had travelled extensively to France, the Turners and the Buttons also felt the French were very different to themselves. It was only the Aspeys, the Ellises and the Lovatts who felt that the French were similar to us. Not only had all of these participants travelled there independently, but they also showed they were *aware* of the stereotypes existing regarding French people. Mrs Ellis even noted, in response to the question of whether her parents were anti-French, "I mean, yeah really, people, our parents. They thought anyone not from this country, any European was suspect."¹⁵¹

Mrs Aspey also noted that they tended to mix with like-minded people, so she found the French people they met similar to themselves. Mrs Lovatt's comment that it is "daft" to say "I don't like the French" also confirms this theory.

¹⁴⁹ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

¹⁵⁰ Mrs Randle. Interview. 05/09/2014

¹⁵¹ Mrs Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

In conclusion, it is this author's opinion that it requires a certain amount of reflection on a person's part to recognise the existence of stereotypes regarding the French and to overcome these.

Otherwise, whilst some of the participants did not actively articulate the stereotypes regarding the French, their attitudes were still influenced enough by old images and assumptions to insist that the French and English were intrinsically different. Even in Mrs Lovatt's case though, she still maintained that the Parisians were "stuck-up". She therefore still upheld stereotypes of the "arrogant" French, but centred this on one city, making it clear that it could not be applied to the whole country.

3.3.5 Germany- forgive but not forget?

Stoddards operated one regular tour to Germany, to the Rhine Valley. The tour typically lasted for nine days, with one overnight stop at Lille and seven days spent on excursions including a boat tour on the Rhine Valley, wine-tasting and visits to museums and towns.¹⁵² Unfortunately, many of the people who were regulars on this tour have by now passed away. Therefore only 11 people were able to comment on these holidays. Three other people had also been to Germany on holiday and two had served there with the army. The main reason for the lack of visitors is that Germany is not viewed as a popular tourist destination among tour operators. It does not have the scenery of Austria, or the reputation for culture or glamour that Italy or France has. Including everyone who had visited Germany in different capacities, 20 people in total had been to Germany.

Only one person said that they had any images in their mind of Germany before going there, Mrs Godwin, who said she had thought of castles before leaving. This indicates that the castles of Bavaria are a popular image in English people's minds.

Five people were, however, able to comment on their experience with German holiday makers in other countries, particularly Majorca or in Spain. They commented on the fact that Germans do not queue, either in the country itself, or whilst on holiday. Mr Scarratt noted:

"We were waiting go up the mountain on a buggy, and a gang of Germans come to the front and I said, 'Ay, get to the back.' But they never punched me so I was alright. They got the message, you've got play fair ain't you? [*Haven't you*]"¹⁵³

The image of the German holiday maker "pushing in" or not queueing properly is wide spread in England, so we cannot say for sure how many of these impressions are based on real events, or upon stereotypes which lead to certain situations being interpreted in a negative light. However, two people from the five people who mentioned the issue with queueing were able to cite real events, whilst three people referred to general impressions or again used the words "would push in", indicating that they may not be based on actual events.

¹⁵² Stoddards Itinerary. 9 Day Coach Tour to the Rhine Valley. 1995.

¹⁵³ Mr Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

The Second World War played a big part in people's minds when visiting Germany but, in comparison to France, the leitmotif here seems to be to "forgive", as Miss Taylor explained:

"Well, me mum (*sic*) was in the war. Me dad fought the Germans and I don't think me dad was too keen [on Germans]. He'd shot one or two. When I joined this pen friend scheme that I'm in now and me mum suggested I had a German penfriend because she said, 'you can forgive, but you can't forget.' ... I loved it. I loved Boppard. The hotel we stopped in. The guy who was in the lodge said to me mum, 'I am German. People don't always speak to me.' She said to him, 'I don't mind, it's in the past.'" ¹⁵⁴

This attitude was shared by a number of people who felt that, before they went to Germany, the war was in their minds, but that this was dispelled when they went there and spoke to people. Mr and Mrs Ellis explained that they went to Germany bearing the impressions from the war, but once there they got to know a lot of people and became quite friendly with them. They recounted one interesting anecdote:

Mr Ellis: "[We went to] 'Annie's bar'. Brilliant place, a few people.... We went in there every night and she got to know us, very nice lady. And one night this man walked in. Homburg hat, very broad brimmed. A cape over his shoulder. Silver topped cane. Very aquiline nose. And he walked in as we were sat there talking to Annie and he looked at us and said, 'English?' And she said, 'Yes'. And he walked out. She said, 'I apologise for that, but some can't forget the war.'" Mrs Ellis: "And he looked a Nazi. Really blue eyes." Mr Ellis: "A typical Prussian." ¹⁵⁵

This anecdote is especially interesting as it establishes that the Ellises went to Germany with images from the war in their minds but got to know people there and became friendly with them, thus breaking down any barriers that may have existed. The appearance of the "Prussian" looking man (and Prussian looking here being similar to the English stereotype of a National-Socialist supporter), and his reaction indicate that problems relating to the war had not entirely been laid to rest at this point, but that, for both the Ellises and Annie, people who continued to express hatred or dislike because of the war were considered a minority.

Mr Turner's recollections are also of interest as he explained how he felt the German contingent were treated at the NATO base in the 1960's:

"There may have been a sort of a "keeping them at arm's length" type of thing as far as the German contingent went. You know. I got on with quite a few of them, but I never got close to them. Quite a lot of people, particularly the ones who had been occupied by the Germans wouldn't get friendly with the Germans. Never really friendly." ¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Miss Taylor. Interview. 10/09/2014

¹⁵⁵ Mr and Mrs Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

¹⁵⁶ Mr Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

As a man with extensive (and personal) knowledge of post-war Europe, Mr Turner would be expected to have intimate knowledge of relations with the Germans, so it is interesting to note that he did not feel able to get too close to them because the war still played too heavily on his mind. As we shall see, this also had an effect on his outlook as regards Europe as a whole.

The graph below shows us the level to which people thought Germans were similar to English people.

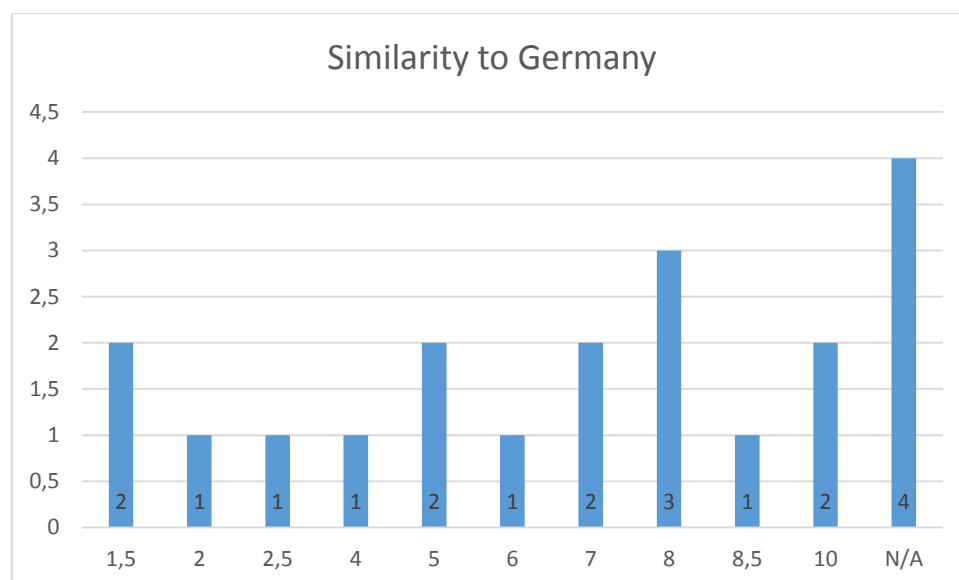


Fig. 4: Perceived similarity of English people to Germans

As we can from the graph, a similar percentage of people felt that Germans were similar to English (by giving a score of 6 or more) as they did for Austria. Three people also mentioned the fact that they found the Germans to be similar to English people because they were northern Europeans, or Anglo-Saxons.

How though, are we to explain the fact that the negative comments directed towards the German are far fewer than those directed towards the French, and also that, in relation to World War Two, a “forgive but not forget” attitude was taken, whereas more people made negative comments regarding the French and World War Two? Firstly, there is the “special relationship” that exists between England and France. As we have seen in the previous section, Anglo-French animosity goes back for centuries and was described as exceptional by Roberta and Isabelle Tombs. The Anglo-German relation is much more mutable and has undergone many changes throughout the centuries, whereas the Anglo-French relation is more a constant. From 1870 up until the present day, England was confronted with a Germany that drastically changed its shape and government five times; from the end of dualism and territorial fragmentation in 1871, the defeat of, and revolution in, Imperial Germany in 1918, the National Socialist take over in 1933, the defeat and division of Germany in 1945 and finally the reunification of Germany in 1990. Whilst we know that France did undergo a

revolution in 1789, this did not affect England's basic enmity towards the country, or essentially change France's geo-political role. The various changes which swept "the German lands" meant that its role in Europe and relation to England changed dramatically over time. This also meant a change in stereotypes. From the image of romantic provincialism in the nineteenth century to the image of militaristic Prussia which emerged after 1871.¹⁵⁷ This in turn led to the image of "the two Germanys"; the peace-loving, intellectual German romantics and the militaristic Prussian Junkers. This image was propagated during World War One but continued to have currency during World War Two and afterwards.¹⁵⁸

Whether these contrasting images affected the interviewees' impressions of Germany is difficult to say, but it would explain why impressions of Germany were tinged more by understanding than towards France.

Recent, post-war events have also played their part. The importance of West Germany in the NATO defence of Western Europe meant that the country was quickly seen as an important ally of America. As we have seen from those who served in the Armed Forces, one result of this was that British people served in Germany, first as occupiers, then as Allies in NATO. Although, as we have seen from Mr Turner's comments, this was not always positive, it did mean that England and Germany were forced to work together at a political level, with both sharing a common ally in the United States.¹⁵⁹ This stands in contrast to France and General De Gaulle's withdrawal from the NATO military command in 1966.

Germany's relations to England as regards the European Community can also explain the differences in attitudes. England looked to Germany as an ally in assisting them in joining the EEC in 1966, to the point where the Foreign Secretary, George Brown, remarked to Willy Brandt (then also Foreign Secretary), "Willy, you must get us in, so we can take the lead."¹⁶⁰ This comment was made shortly after De Gaulle's rejection of Great Britain's application. Brandt, for his part, supported Britain's application, but was frustrated by British intransigence over various points.¹⁶¹ The fact that Brown maintained that England needed to "take the lead" reflects the fact that the political elite at this time believed that England should naturally take a leading role in Europe. The Bonn government, for its part, favoured Great Britain's entry into the EEC to function as a counter-balance to France, which was behaving increasingly erratically, with the above mentioned withdrawal from NATO High

¹⁵⁷ Magnus Brechtken. "Personality, Images and Perception: Patterns and Problems of Anglo-German Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries". *An Anglo-German Dialogue*. Edited by Adolf M. Birke, Magnus Brechtken and Alaric Searle (Saur Verlag, 2000). Pg. 19

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. Pg. 28

¹⁵⁹ Sabine Lee. *Victory in Europe? Britain and Germany since 1945* (Pearson Education, 2001). Pg. 116

¹⁶⁰ Anthony J. Nicholls. *Always Good Neighbours- Never Good Friends? Anglo-German Relations 1949-2001*. (The German Historical Institute London, 2005). Pg. 18

¹⁶¹ Hartmut Phillipe. *"The Germans Hold the Key" Anglo-German Relations and the Second British Approach to Europe* (Wißner Verlag 2007). Pg. 93

Command, the Empty Seat Crisis of 1966/67 (when De Gaulle withdrew from EEC business and thus obstructed decision making) and his overtures to Moscow. France was therefore, at this time, not a reliable ally for Germany in EEC or NATO affairs, and greater co-operation with England was therefore looked upon favourably.¹⁶²

It is important to note the average age of the participants (76), which means most of them would have been in their twenties when these events were taking place. We have seen that studies have shown that stereotypes tend to be formed at an early age, so the argument could be made that the events which take place during a person's formative years would leave a lasting impression on their opinions and images as regards other countries.

The upsurge in anti-German sentiments in the 1980s and 1990s was linked to Thatcher's fear of a resurgent Germany (see section "England and Europe after World War Two"), which became more apparent after reunification took place. Mr Ridley, a Cabinet member, even went as far as to compare Helmut Kohl to Hitler, in reference to the apparent danger of Germany coming to "dominate" Europe again.¹⁶³ These sentiments were reflected in the tabloid press, which made a point of printing a variety of headlines referring back to the Second World War at this time. This anti-German sentiment may be said to have come to a head during the football tournament EURO 96 where a variety of headlines were printed referring back to World War Two ('*Achtung, Surrender*' from The Daily Mirror, 24th of June, 1996 and '*Watch out Krauts. England are gonna bomb you to bits*' from the Daily Star, 25th of June, 1996).

However, this anti-German sentiment may have been said to have reached its high point by this time as there was a distinctive backlash against the more extreme aspects of the tabloid press's anti-German xenophobia. Indeed, David Head makes the argument that this backlash, coupled with a recognition of the German team's professionalism and success, has led to a respect for Germany and its football team which is overcoming the stereotypes of "football as proxy war".¹⁶⁴ This was also mentioned by one of the participants, who noted:

"Germans and that are set in their ways. Very disciplined. I always find it when they play football. More disciplined see, less flamboyant. Even though they're good footballers they stick rigidly to the plan."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Lee, S. *Victory in Europe?* Pg. 121.

¹⁶³ Lachlan, R. Moyle. "The Ridley-Chequers affair and German character. A journalistic main event". *As Others See Us, Anglo-German Perceptions* (Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1994). Published by Harald Husemann. Pg. 109

¹⁶⁴ David Head. "Jürgen Klinsmann, Euro 96 and their impact on British perceptions". *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations* (Macmillan Press 2000). Edited by Rainer Emig. Pg. 114.

¹⁶⁵ Mr Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

This shows that images of Germany as the Nazi aggressor are in no way permanent in the English mind-set and are mutable to change, and images of ruthlessness or efficiency do not necessarily have to be negative ones.

The drivers' appreciation of the passengers' feelings towards Germany also chime with the academic research. Paul Stoddard stated that: "I think people that were travelling on the 1st tours were going to see what it was like, the adventure, and probably went with a muted, under the cap, thinking, 'Johnny Foreigner, I wonder what he's got for me now.' But as the tours went by, they were quite happy tours and as you have happy memories and you go back for more, you go somewhere that you like doing, so initially I think they went there with trepidation and think, 'Hang on, what's going on here, are they going to come out with the Messerschmitts,' you know whatever, but I think as the tours went on, it became more agreeable."¹⁶⁶

The fact that Paul Stoddard mentioned Messerschmitts indicates that, in his opinion, the passengers' distrust of "Johnny Foreigner" was mainly a distrust of the Germans. Paul Stoddard also mentioned that a few passengers made jokes regarding the Second World War, but in contrast to the relationship with the French, this was not meant in a completely hostile manner. Peter Stoddard's (another driver) comments chime with this: "I remember me and Paul got stopped on the border. Go through all the paperwork and 'ah, the Germans!' It was a bit of minor inconvenience but there were a few jokes, "Your papers please! (*Using a German accent*)" But it's what you have to go through."¹⁶⁷ As both Paul and Peter Stoddard show the attitude towards the Germans was one of "forgive, but not forget". Peter Stoddard also mentioned that Germany's *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* also played a part in this:

"I think, say with Germany, they came back from Germany with a bit more respect for the Germans. I'd say so, I felt that myself [*myself*]. There's more memories and memorials to the war in Germany than there is in England, you know, you drive past a cemetery, great big war cemetery, and the memorials are more evident in Germany than they are in England."¹⁶⁸

This also played a part in the difference in views regarding the Germans and the French; people saw that Germany, through its commemorative symbols, was coming to terms with its past, which also led to people analysing their own feelings towards Germany.

Finally, we must deal with the comments made by a number of people regarding not queueing and stealing sunbeds. Harald Husemann deals with this topic in his essay "*We will fight them on the beaches*" and highlights evidence that there may be a real explanation for this behaviour. The English and the German tourists, when on holiday, were essentially two groups in an unfamiliar environment

¹⁶⁶ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

¹⁶⁷ Peter Stoddard. Interview. 08/09/2014

¹⁶⁸ Peter Stoddard. Interview. 08/09/2014

who found it necessary to draw boundaries and protect themselves.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, in resorts like Majorca, where space on the beach really was at a premium, such tribal instincts are even more likely to come out.¹⁷⁰ As the two most prominent groups on holiday within Europe, one may take it as natural that English and German tourists end up clashing. Also, bear in mind that an English person would be unable to distinguish between an Austrian, German or Swiss accent; for an English person, anyone on holiday behaving badly and speaking German would be a rude German.

Whilst Husemann's explanation is interesting from a social point of view, it does not alter the fact that many interviewees had clear memories of bad behaviour by (assumedly) German tourists on holiday. There are two explanations for this. One is the sociological explanation given in the first section; because English people already have a stereotype of German people pushing in, they are more likely to interpret any behaviour by German people as rude and pushy. Secondly, referring back to Husemann's theory, all tourists in a foreign country, feeling under stress and in an alien environment, may be more likely to behave in a tribal and "pushy" manner, it is simply that the Germans were the largest group of tourists in Europe at that time and therefore more likely to clash with the English (the second largest group).

Finally, we also have to look at the attitude of the people within Germany and France to enquire into the reasons for the different appreciations of the two countries. Philip Oltermann, a German journalist settled in England, argues that there exists in northern European a certain type "Anglophilia", particularly in Germany.¹⁷¹ Oltermann argues that this trend can be traced back to the nineteenth century, when German liberals looked to Great Britain as a political guide for the manner in which the country should be united.¹⁷² Not only this, but British Enlightenment philosophers (such as Hume), were also greatly respected in Germany. The fact that Great Britain was Prussia's ally against Napoleon also helped matters. On the other hand we have France, which as the Tombses showed in the previous section, has generally reciprocated the feelings of antipathy shown by English people.

In conclusion then, the consensus of "forgive and forget" shown by those who visited Germany, plus the fact that many felt the Germans to be similar to us, indicates that the relationship between England and Germany is, for the people in the sample, not as historically burdened as that of England and France, and that, where references are made to the war, it is usually in a joking fashion, and not in a serious a way as the anger directed towards France.

¹⁶⁹ Harald Husemann. "We will fight them on the beaches". *Stereotypes in Contemporary Anglo-German Relations* (Macmillan Press 2000). Edited by Rainer Emig. Pg. 71

¹⁷⁰ Husemann. *We will fight them on the beaches*. pg. 74

¹⁷¹ Phillip Oltermann. *Keeping up with the Germans: A History of Anglo-German Encounters*. (Kindle Edition. Bloomsbury House, 2012). Pg. 8

¹⁷² Ibid. Pg. 12

3.3.6 Belgium- A blank spot?

The tour to Belgium was typically a three or four day affair, centred around Bruges. 18 people went on Stoddards tours to Belgium, mainly to Bruges. The itinerary for the year 2000 lists the various tourist attractions of Bruges, including the cathedral, museums and Belgium traditions such as chocolate and lace making.¹⁷³ Seven other people had visited Belgium independently, or through a different coach company.

However, of these 25 people, only twelve people made comments of any kind regarding Belgium. This may be put down to a variety of reasons. The first being that Belgium was not one of the most popular tours. It only took place in three years (1998, 2000 and 2001) and was also only a three or four day tour. The tours therefore did not take place in sufficient quantity, or for a sufficient length, for passengers to gain sufficient impressions of the country. Also, as Paul Stoddard stated in a previous section, people from rural areas tended to be more interested in aspect of foreign life which they could associate with. Bruges, as a small city, may not have offered the kind of points of reference which stuck in interviewees' memory. The lack of national stereotypes attached to Belgium may also be telling.

The twelve interviewees who made comments regarding Bruges used the phrases "lovely", "unique", "quaint" and "picturesque". Attention was paid to the architecture, particularly by Mr and Mrs Aspey who mentioned the Flemish gables. The only national stereotypes referred to were that the Belgians eat a lot of chips ("frites") and to architecture:

"They value land for agriculture more than they value land for building on, so all the blummin (*sic*) houses are stacked on top of one another, they're slim, there's nothing massive like these things we have."¹⁷⁴

These comment indicate that, architecturally speaking, Belgian architecture was considered by Mr Godwin to be very different to that of England.

Mr and Mrs Aspey made some comments which rather encapsulate interviewees' response to Belgium:

"Pretty flat isn't it." (From Mr Aspey), and "Belgium's a very busy place and I don't remember any scenery there at all." (From Mrs Aspey).

The lack of spectacular scenery, or strong national stereotypes associated with Belgium, can be given as the reason for the fact that nothing in particular was attached to Belgium. Even more extreme were the comments made by Mr and Mrs Turner,

¹⁷³ Stoddards itinerary. Bruges Delight, August 26 – 29 2000.

¹⁷⁴ Mr Godwin. Interview. 26/09/2014

“And there was nothing really about Belgium that you could say I’d like to visit this or live there.”¹⁷⁵

“Belgium though; I think it’s quite a depressing country.”¹⁷⁶

In a way then, we could say that a stereotype exists regarding Belgium that *there is* nothing of interest in Belgium.

When discussing English similarity to Europeans, Belgium was mentioned indirectly when discussing the perception the northern European tend to be more similar to southern Europeans, as posited by Mr Aspey:

“...comparing Italians to Belgians and Dutch. Northern Europeans, we made some friends while we were on holiday once in Holland and we stayed with them last year, and they stayed here and we get on very well with them. Very similar. We find them similar but the only difference is the lifestyle.”¹⁷⁷

For Mr Aspey then, Belgians (as included within the category of northern Europeans) were similar to us, except in lifestyle. Mr Booth agreed with this statement, as he said:

“Northern Europeans are closer to us in their daily life- work hard and go for a beer. Mediterraneans (*sic*) are more family orientated.”¹⁷⁸

In both cases, Belgian tends to be subsumed into a general label of Northern European.

As is the case of Austria, Belgium’s small geographical size means that it has not registered very highly on English national consciousness. Belgium gained independence in the 1830s. Until then it was part of a larger empire or territory and this lack of historical continuity means that it did not become the focus for particular labels (as is the case with France). Another important factor is that Belgium was never a belligerent power against England. Rather, it formed part of England’s strategy of maintaining a “balance of power” on the continent, as it was always in England’s interests for the countries closest to its coast line to be small ones lacking overt geo-political power. This, after all, was one of the reasons why England went to war with Germany in World War One.¹⁷⁹ It seems that negative stereotypes therefore trump positive stereotypes in terms of what becomes more closely associated with a country, because, as an ally, Belgium had no negative stereotypes attached to it. Rather, as a northern European country, its inhabitants are considered to be similar to the English. A final note on Belgium must be made to the fact that, despite a great deal of anti-EU sentiments being expressed, these were only once associated with Belgium the country. Brussels was mentioned very often as the city from which EU regulations were issued, but this was only once associated with its physical location in Belgium by Mrs Meakin:

¹⁷⁵ Mr Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹⁷⁶ Mrs Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹⁷⁷ Mr Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

¹⁷⁸ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

¹⁷⁹ Christopher Clark. *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe went to war in 1914* (Harper Collins, 2013). Pg. 544

"I went to Belgium and Holland with Young Farmers... Saw a funny shaped building in Belgium had just been built. Now you've got Strasburg, all these other different places that are blowing up in all the other countries for running it more."¹⁸⁰

Mrs Meakin was the only person to explicitly relate Belgium the country to the EU as an institution. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that there is a significant disconnect between the EU as an institution and the country in which its institutions are physically. We shall discuss this disconnect between politics and actual location later. We have now dealt with all the countries Stoddards regularly organised tours to. The following two sections will deal with two questions people were asked about the countries in general.

3.3.7 Ability to interact with people

The interviewees were asked whether they felt they could interact easily with the locals on their various holidays. The answers they provided varied greatly. 44 people provided an answer to this question. Nineteen people stated that they were able to have contact with the locals, the majority of them stating that they always found the people friendly and had never had any problems, whether they went. However, out of these nineteen people, seven stated that their main contact was with hotel staff.

Eighteen other people stated that they tended not to mix with the locals and preferred the company of other people on the coach. Mr Button put this very well when he said (in response to the question of whether there was a great deal of interaction between them and the locals):

"Not a lot, no. Because I think, when you go into a hotel as a coach party, you tend to stay together don't you. You know. If you go on your own, it is very different. This is what I like about coach parties really. When you're with a coach party you tend to stay in your own little group."¹⁸¹

This would support the hypothesis that, when travelling only on coach tours, it is difficult to have any contact with local inhabitants beyond hotel and bar staff and that this is especially true for people who went on Stoddards' tours. As was stated in the section "Reasons for choosing Stoddards", the majority of the passengers came from the local area and often already knew people before they went on the trip, or they came from a similar background, as Mr Davies said:

"That was another point of going with Stoddards see, your local coach company. You were with local people weren't you? There were no barriers to break down."¹⁸²

As Mr Davies said, even if interviewees did not already know people before they got on the coach, it was very easy to make friends on the trip, due to the fact that the people came from a similar background and probably already "knew of" the other people. This author can attest that most

¹⁸⁰ Mrs Meakin. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹⁸¹ Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

¹⁸² Mr Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

people in North Staffordshire are never many degrees of separation from each other, be that familial, professional, or through acquaintances. The closed nature of the coach tour, where people are more or less forced to spend days in close contact with their fellow passengers, without being able to speak the language of the country they are visiting, meant people formed very close bonds in some cases. We have already seen Mrs Ellis's comment in the section "Reasons for choosing Stoddards", which showed that close bonds were formed by the passengers.

Only three people explicitly stated though, that the presence of the coach driver as the intermediary meant that there was less *necessity* to speak to local people, as Mrs Aspey explained:

"No, not much language exchange was there. You're a bit spoilt with coaches because they do the communicating.... Made all the arrangements.... You just sit back and enjoy."¹⁸³

Mrs Aspey made it clear that the nature of coach tours, and the fact that all their needs were taken care of, meant that interaction with local was not necessary and also meant that less interaction took place than would happen if one travelled independently.

Mr Booth who, as has already been mentioned, went on holiday both as a courier and as a passenger, provided a useful perspective on this when he stated:

"You are engaging with locals part of the time. More than when you are doing things off your own back... You're networking."¹⁸⁴

Mr Booth meant that he was working in a professional capacity, looking for different hotels or attractions for the passengers to visit. This is very interesting, especially as he says that he had *more* interaction with locals when working with Stoddards than when he visited countries independently. This shows that visiting countries in a professional capacity, rather than as a tourists, results in a greater level of interaction. Mr Gilbert, the only other passengers who worked extensively on the continent, also felt that there was more interaction with people when there is a professional context.

3.3.8 Whether they could live there

When discovering whether a closer feeling of connection to continental Europe had been engendered by travelling there it is, in this author's opinion, important to find out whether one could imagine living in a foreign location. This question was therefore posed to the participants. Of course, the average age of the participants meant that they were, at this stage in their lives, unlikely to be able to uproot and move to a different location (willingly), but the question was posed whether they hypothetically could imagine living in a different country, and if so, which one. Many people chose multiple countries, so it is not therefore possible to say precisely how many people chose which country, rather, the statistics will show how often each country was chosen.

¹⁸³ Mrs Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

¹⁸⁴ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

Switzerland was chosen 17 times in all, with most people choosing it for its cleanliness, clean air and scenery. Following this, Austria was chosen fourteen times, for similar reasons. Italy was chosen ten times, France nine times and Malta and Cyprus four times. Two people said they could live in Canada or Australia, whilst thirteen people said they could imagine living in a foreign country. Germany was only chosen once. Fourteen people said they could not imagine living abroad.

The fact that Switzerland and Austria were the most popular countries is unsurprising, and confirm what was shown in the sections dealing with Austria and Switzerland; a lack of historical enmity and a rural setting similar to that of the participant's local area make these two countries particularly attractive. Those who chose France were those who considered themselves "Francophiles", or those who had already lived there (Mr and Mrs Turner), whilst Malta and Cyprus were also chosen because they were the places where the interviewees served in the armed forces. Those fourteen people who said they could not live abroad indicated that this was for reasons such as age, or the fact that they would miss their family or get homesick. This shows that close family ties, whilst not indicating that someone is prejudiced, may result in people feeling less able to settle and integrate into unfamiliar environments. Finally, the one person who mentioned being able to live in Germany was the most self-professed "European" of the whole group, and was also significantly younger than the rest of the sample and mentioned Germany within a list of various other countries in which he could imagine living. Therefore, Germany only seems to be a credible choice as a place to live for people who could be termed "convinced Europeans". A cause of this may be that Germany is not considered a typical tourist destination in the same way that Austria or Italy is, and therefore was not considered to be preferential place to live by the interviewees. This had less to do with prejudice, and more to do with the "attractiveness" (nice scenery, countryside, etc.) of the location.

3.4 Perspectives on Europe

3.4.1 Feeling European

Ultimately though, the question remains of whether the holidays affected the interviewees' feelings of belonging to Europe or not. As we have seen, the majority of the people interviewed felt that they were visiting very foreign countries when travelling there. But did the holidays make the interviewees feel closer to Europe, or did they still consider England separate to Europe? The first requirement was to find out if the participants felt European at all. This question was posed to the interviewees in two different ways, first by asking if they themselves felt European and also whether they consider England to be a part of Europe. The results were most interesting.

Both questions were posed with the caveat that they were not being asked if England should be part of the EU as a political institution, but whether they considered England (or themselves) to be a part of Europe in a political or geographical context. Despite this, many people quickly came to discuss

whether England should remain part of the EU. Clearly, the EU has come to dominate the discourse surrounding England and Europe to such an extent that it is impossible to separate the two. For many people, the EU equals Europe. This can be blamed on the fact that discussions about Europe in the English media invariably involve EU “interference” in English affairs and rarely deal with the cultural or historical exchange which has been taking place (and still takes place) for centuries. A European Commission website has compiled a long list of the stories which circulate in English media regarding “crazy EU regulations”.¹⁸⁵ The length of the list shows the degree to which English media focusses on the perceived attempts by the EU to impose rules on England.

The question of feeling European or being part of Europe was clearly very emotive, as everyone had a clear opinion on it (compared to other questions). Seventeen people said that they felt European, whilst 35 said they did not. This means 65% of those questioned did not feel European, whilst 35% did feel European. We should not, however, believe that this immediately leads to the conclusion that personally feeling European means that they thought England belongs to Europe.

Of the seventeen people who said they felt European, 14 also said that they believed England to be a part of Europe, whilst three people said they did not think England was part of Europe. Of the 35 people who did not feel European, 26 said they did not see England as being part of Europe, eight said they *did* see England as being part of Europe and one person was not sure. These discrepancies are quite interesting, as one would expect people who did not feel European themselves to also not believe that England is part of Europe. The reasons for these differences are therefore worth looking into.

Mrs Booth (no relation to the aforementioned Mr Booth), for example, said that she herself felt British, not European, but believed there were enough connections between England and Europe to justify saying that England was part of Europe. Mr Burton said that living on an island meant that English people were different to Europeans, but that England *had to* be part of Europe as “[we] can’t afford not to be, militarily or economically.”¹⁸⁶

Mrs Ditchfield said that being English means not being European, but argued that: “England are and aren’t part of Europe. We are on an island but we have the tunnel and that makes us into Europe. We are an island though. Now you can come across underneath.”¹⁸⁷ The physical presence of the Channel Tunnel has therefore, in her view, removed the physical separation that previously existed and made England into part of Europe. Mrs Evans expressed it as saying that she was brought up to feel herself as British, and not European, but believed that England is part of Europe nowadays. Mr Godwin felt English not European, but “wouldn’t be bothered” about being part of Europe. Mr Prince

¹⁸⁵ *Euro-myths A-Z index*. <http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/ECintheUK/euomyths-a-z-index/> (Retrieved on the 25th of February 2015. Website created and run by the European Commission)

¹⁸⁶ Mr Burton. Interview. 22/09/2014

¹⁸⁷ Mrs Ditchfield. Interview. 02/09/2014

and Mr Randle both said that they felt British, but believed that, geographically at least, England was part of Europe (Mr Randle with the caveat that England was not culturally or politically part of Europe). Mr Williamson said that he wouldn't call himself an "out and out European", although he "wouldn't exclude them altogether" (meant jokingly), but "[there's] nothing worse than not being able (*sic*) understand what people say. Why can't we have one international language? [I] feel part of Europe but don't want to be ruled by Europe."¹⁸⁸ We can therefore say that Mr Williamson is in favour of more understanding and cultural exchange between countries, but feels that the problem for English people is the language barrier, whereas people on the continent tend to be able to speak more than one language. From those who did not feel European but accepted that England is part of Europe, we may say that the majority of them recognise that England has to be part of Europe (either geographically, culturally or economically) but they do not want to be "ruled by Europe" (in the form of the EU). The relationship can therefore be seen as being one of necessity, but not mutual understanding.

The three people who said they felt themselves to be European but did not believe England was part of Europe did so for similar reasons. Both Mr and Mrs Ellis said that they felt European, but expressed that view that the Channel and the effect of the media on people's views meant that England as a whole was not part of Europe. They therefore saw themselves as exceptions to the rule. Mrs Allen said that "we want to be Europeans but it is just that it isn't working quite."¹⁸⁹ She (like the other two people in this group) believes that English people want to be part of Europe, but the current (political) situation means that this is not possible.

The question of what causes people to feel (or not feel) part of Europe and/or European and whether their coach tours affected this is, of course, the central question of this thesis. However, the people's responses and a statistical analysis of the evidence indicates that the coach tours the interviewees undertook were only one factor in a large number of factors which affect people's outlooks and identity.

For example. A first glance at the evidence would result in the following claim; "a cultural exchange at the professional and personal level between English people and people on the continent will lead to English people feeling more European." This conclusion could be reached by initial analysis of the statistics which shows that, of the seventeen people who felt European, ten people had travelled independently in Europe and thus been forced to interact more closely with the local inhabitants, two had worked on the continent, two had a son who was a "strong Francophile" (the Lovatts) and three had no strong opinions towards Europe.

¹⁸⁸ Mr Williamson. Interview. 15/09/2014

¹⁸⁹ Mrs Allen. Interview. 23/09/2014

However, such statistics can be deceptive. For example, the Randles also travelled extensively in France and made friends with French people, but Mrs Randle was vehement in not feeling European: “No way! I’m British. I’m proud of it. I’m not European, I’m British. Our green and pleasant land. Don’t want to be part of tacked on to somebody else. Well it is, isn’t it? ... No. We’ve got French friends now but no. They belong to France, I belong to England.”¹⁹⁰

More independent foreign travel can therefore not be said to lead automatically to feeling more European then. Let us therefore take the group of people who said they did not feel European and analyse their reasons for saying so. Of the 35 people who said they did not feel European, eleven also had strong (as in the case of Mrs Randle) to moderate anti-EU feelings. They felt the EU was trying to force England to become more closely integrated into Europe and that this was detrimental to English national interests. They therefore could not feel European. This was expressed in words such as “not wanting to be tacked on” or, as Mrs Edwards puts it:

“Because I’m irritated by our government keep telling us we should be multi-cultural whereas I’m thinking, ‘I would just like to be allowed to be English please.’ I love Europe, I love going to all the different countries, but the EU is a different kettle of fish altogether.”¹⁹¹

As this comment shows, a desire not to want to be a part of Europe does not necessarily mean a dislike for Europe as a whole, but rather a dissatisfaction with the current political arrangements. Similar opinions were also expressed by Mr Davies:

“When Cameron can turn round and tell you he can live on 53 pound a week... And that’s why I think we’ve got to get away from Europe... I think UK politics would like us to become more European, but I don’t think they want us. Because, if ever there’s a referendum, the hierarchy of this country will get shown what the British man wants and it’ll be stopped the side of this 23 mile over water.”¹⁹²

For Mr Davies, there is clearly a close link between the current British political elite and a drive towards closer European integration, and that this integration is being done over the heads of the common British man.

Returning to the question of travel besides coach journeys, the nature of this travel had a definite effect on the person’s answers. For example, out of the nine interviewees who had served abroad with the British Armed Forces, seven responded negatively to the question of whether they felt European. The ideology of the British Armed Forces is one of respect for the Queen, the nation and (in the days when these interviewees carried out their national service) the British Empire. Such values are difficult to reconcile with a view to seeing England as a part of Europe (for reasons which were explained in this first section). This view is best expressed by Mr Turner:

¹⁹⁰ Mrs Randle. Interview. 05/09/2014

¹⁹¹ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

¹⁹² Mrs Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

"We've fought every country in Europe. Every one. Apart from the Portuguese I think. French, the Dutch, the Dane- The Danegeld. I've always thought the underline is in our culture and you can't get away from it. Consciously, no one thinks about it. But it's there. Politicians talk about putting Britain at the centre of Europe, well, that's a load of baloney. It's just political talk. We can't be at the centre of Europe. We never have been. The only time we've been at the centre of Europe is when we've been occupying France, going way back, before Elisabeth's time. And when we occupied Germany and what have you. That's the only time we've been at the centre of Europe."¹⁹³

This view best expresses the traditional view that England has "no business" with Europe, except to keep the balance of power if one country should appear to become too threatening. It is interesting that Mr Turner even reaches as far back in history as the Danes and the Danegeld (referring to the Viking invasions of England in the ninth century) as justification for the claim that England has always been at war with the continent. Mr Turner's view also coincides with the theories put forwards by Linda Colley (in the section "England and the Others"), that part of the British ideology is that the British are naturally different to other European countries. This view is also shared by Mr Green, who also comes from a military background and served abroad:

"No. The way we have developed is different from the way the Europeans have. If you take... well... just from the Norman Conquest. When all the Brits were pushed out of England and everything, and the Norman culture was imposed...Somewhere within us are the old feelings and I can't express it really. But the laws which then became French style of law, based on the Roman laws whereas ours are still based on old Celtic law. Well, folks say there's no such thing as common law but it is practical and understanding whereas the other comes from committees and of course that expanded and we chose people who are not Catholics, but the rule of the Pope had that effect on everything, within law and all customs. It's all a big weave. One of the thing that when the Normans came, he was in cahoots with the Pope, it was agreed that any of the Saxon churches if they weren't destroyed, the Saxon names would be taken away. It's somewhere inside us."¹⁹⁴

Mr Green effectively expands on the comments made by Mr Turner by painting an image of English-European relations defined by invasions and an attempt to impose foreign rule and concepts on the English nation, with examples such as the common law and Catholicism being taken to show that the "continental" system of government and law is alien and in conflict with the English system. Again, these views are very similar to the theories put forward by Colley regarding British identity.

Connected to this is the view, expressed by Mr Davies, of the EU as impinging on traditional English "common law" practices. Mr Green maybe best expressed this reading of history, but it is one probably shared by 90% of the people who indicated that they did not feel European.

¹⁹³ Mr Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹⁹⁴ Mr Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

Of those people who answered negatively to the question of feeling European, twelve had been on holidays to English speaking countries (such as Canada, USA, New Zealand, etc.), or had interacted with Australians or Americans on a regular basis. Whilst not all of these people believed that England had ties with the Commonwealth, those that had been to English speaking countries felt that England was closer to the English speaking Commonwealth countries than to the continent. This opinion was best expressed by Miss Taylor, who has travelled extensively across the world, but still maintained: “They’re all together and we’ve got a water between us haven’t we. For one thing. I think it’s always going to be us and them. I don’t think we should be in Europe. I’m very anti. I think we should never have come out of the Commonwealth... And in Australia they drive on the same side of the road... Go towards America. I love Americans. I know they’re brash and loud. Very well mannered. We’re very much akin with America aren’t we? Ally. When it comes to politics”¹⁹⁵

Mrs Carnwell, who had not travelled to America, also agreed that England was closer to America than it was to Europe (although she did not necessarily think that this was a positive thing).

Other people also agreed that England was much closer to Australia or Canada, citing language, the law system or the monarchy as examples. The issue of languages is an interesting one, as, from a continental perspective, it is considered natural that different countries have a different language, but, from the perspective of someone who grew up when Great Britain still possessed an empire, it would be considered natural that people in foreign countries (or at least those belonging to the Empire) spoke English. This was even explicitly noted by Mrs Turner:

“I suppose the other thing is the Canadians, the Americans and that all have the same language. The Europeans have all got their own language.”¹⁹⁶

Other participants (some of whom considered themselves European) also noted that one difference between English people and “Europeans” was the fact that English *did not* learn another language. Eight people noted that English people didn’t learn foreign languages, whilst everyone communicated with them in English whilst on holiday. Mr Carnwell stated:

“They are different. Well, I don’t say they are different, it’s probably us who are different. They go out of their way, learn a foreign language, we dunna. [*Don’t*] I think we should do.”¹⁹⁷

Taking Mr Carnwell’s statement as being representative of this group, they believed that a problem that set English people aside from other European countries was English people’s *inability* to learn another language.

In other cases, England’s island status was not only taken as an example of the country’s separateness from the continent geographically, but also in terms of its historical development.

¹⁹⁵ Miss Taylor. Interview. 10/09/2014

¹⁹⁶ Mrs Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

¹⁹⁷ Mr Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

Those seventeen people who said they felt European gave a variety of reasons. Although it has been stated earlier on the section that independent travel does not necessarily mean that people automatically feel European, all of the people in the sample who said they felt part of Europe either worked in, or travelled independently to Europe. It is particularly noticeable that the two couples (the Burtons and the Beardmores) who undertook holidays to Waidring after Stoddards had ceased operating both felt European, despite reservations about the EU institutions.

Also, of those who said they felt part of Europe, four people (the Goulds and the Burtons) mentioned how impressed they were by the kind treatment they received. Particularly Mr Gould, who noted, "They couldn't do enough for you. They'd always stop and talk to you. They'd always try and explain to you what it was. Some of them could speak brilliant English, odd ones not so well. But they would go to some trouble to make you understand what they was (*sic*) doing." ¹⁹⁸

The Goulds had travelled extensively in Europe, but never independently (the Burtons we have discussed above), so it could be argued that purely positive experiences (although the Goulds are also dairy farmers, which we shall discuss later) can lead to people feeling closer to Europe. In the case of the Goulds, it was also noticeable that they did not express any strong anti-EU sentiments, or negative sentiments towards different countries in general, so this certainly also plays a part.

3.4.2 Whether the holidays changed people's view of Europe

The question was posed to the passengers of whether they believed the holidays had changed their view of Europe. The answers to this question has to be taken with a certain number of reservations, these being;

- Interviewees who said that it had made them realise that Europeans are more human also expressed negative opinions about various countries
- Interviewees who expressed a strong liking for certain European countries also had strongly negative feelings towards other countries, or towards Europe as a whole
- It is sometimes impossible to tell if these changes came from coach tours, or from holidays undertaken afterwards

Taking all of these things into consideration, we have to be very careful when assessing the degree to which the passengers self-reflection can be taken as objective, but the answers do provide some interesting pointers when compared to other statistics.

Before showing the information collected, it is useful to consider how often people had travelled to the continent before they began to use Stoddards' tours and after Stoddards ceased to operate tours

¹⁹⁸ Mr Gould. Interview. 01/09/2014

to the continent. We have already seen (in the section “Initial analysis of passengers”) that many of the people had actually been abroad before travelling with Stoddards. It is interesting to note that, of the 37 people who did not feel European, 18 had never been abroad before they travelled with Stoddards and four had only been abroad as part of the British Armed Forces. Furthermore, of the seventeen people who said they did feel European, 12 had already been abroad before travelling with Stoddards. This suggests that a familiarity with the continent before embarking on the coach tours increase the chances of someone having a pro-European outlook.

Of particular interest is also the question of whether the interviewees travelled abroad after Stoddards ceased to operate their tours, and whether these tours were of an independent nature, or a “packaged” nature (i.e., cruises or coach tours). Of the 52 people interviewed, only four ceased to go abroad completely after Stoddards ceased to operate the tours, which suggests that the tours succeeded in giving people the confidence to travel abroad (and three of the people who ceased to travel abroad did so for health reasons).

Furthermore, an interesting split appears if we look at *how* the people travelled when they continued to travel abroad. Twenty eight people had travelled abroad independently after Stoddards ceased to operate. Of these twenty eight people, sixteen said they felt European. The other twenty four had not gone on any independent tours in Europe once Stoddards had ceased to operate. Some had, however, visited English speaking Commonwealth countries independently, but they had not travelled to Europe independently. This suggests that visiting Europe by coach is unlikely to make people feel more European. Of course, the other explanation may be that people choose the places that attract them, and so people who are already more pro-European by nature and the nature of their politics choose to visit Europe, whilst people who are more inclined towards Commonwealth, English-speaking countries will visit these.

But we should also look at how the interviewees themselves believe the holidays affected their view of Europe.

As one of the drivers, Mr Hodgshon said, many people were coming on these holidays with very little prior knowledge of life or culture on the continent, and also very little experience with foreigners. Even Mrs Aspey, who can be considered one of the more pro-European people in the group, said: “I suppose I always thought foreigners were a touch strange but after I’d met a selection of people from different countries [this changed].”¹⁹⁹

In all, 31 people said that they believed that the holidays had changed their view of Europe positively by opening their eyes to different cultures or making them “more accommodating” of different

¹⁹⁹ Mrs Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

customs. Comments such as the above can therefore be taken as representative for the whole segment.

The sentiment that the holidays made foreigners “more human” was not just made by those who considered themselves Europeans. This is a common sentiment that runs through the responses and is shared by people who do not consider themselves to be Europeans. Mr Green, for example, explained that:

“You probably felt you’d learn about them after you’d been to the countries; about what they’re like. Well, it makes them more human. Yes, it puts things into context, had we not gone. We’d be more insular and anti-Europe.”²⁰⁰

Mr Booth admitted to the holidays having actually made him feel more pro-European:

“Travel’s a great educator and you get a great understanding of what sort of... their way of thinking and you get a greater impression of the society across Europe. I think it has made me more European. You know the British mentality, ‘Oh the hotel was full of Germans’. I love them, I’m happier when the hotel’s a combination of Dutch, Germans, fellow Europeans and everybody being there from Leeds, whereas a lot of people would say they don’t want to be in a hotel with Europeans.”²⁰¹

Mr Booth’s statement is the most pro-European of all those in the group, indicating that he would prefer to mix with people from different countries than only people from his own country (and region, Leeds being only 100 km from Cheadle). It must also be remembered that Mr Booth worked with Stoddards as a courier, so he was professionally involved in organising the holidays. He had also done a great deal of travelling across Europe independently and, perhaps the most important factor here, was also the youngest person to be interviewed. At the age of 53 he was twenty two years younger than the average of the passengers (76). He himself was of the opinion that age made a great difference to people’s feelings regarding Europe:

“I would think the younger people, born into a European mentality, more towards Europe. Because the older would be going in that direction [of the Commonwealth].”²⁰²

It would of course require another survey to find out if this was true, but there is certainly a case to be made for suggesting that people who grew up at a time when strong travel restrictions still existed for travel around Europe would be less open towards different cultures than people of the younger generation, who grew up in an era of open borders, and when many more people from different countries travel to England to work and settle. This was a view shared by Mr Hodgshon who remembered an incident involving his mother:

²⁰⁰ Mr Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

²⁰¹ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

²⁰² Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

"[She] said a continental driver pulled up and asked her directions to BIS [a quarrying company] and she almost said, 'If you don't know why don't you clear off back to your own country.' And me mum (*sic*) wasn't particularly biased or anything or racist just a natural."²⁰³

Again, we are discussing a rural-industrial area where very few people of different nationalities or ethnicities settled up until quite recently. As Mr Hodgshon said, it must not be assumed that people in this area disliked foreigners, but that they were very much treated as the Other, in that people had very few terms of reference for dealing with people from different areas, or could not comprehend (in Mr Hodgshon's mother's case), why someone would not know their way around the area.

Clearly, opinions about foreigners ranged from dislike to a sense of them definitely being the Other. We also have examples of the trips abroad with Stoddards leading to old resentments being buried, especially related to Germans:

"I had a very difficult job getting my husband to Switzerland. And to Germany. He didn't want to know. But he completely fell in love with the Germans. He just didn't want to know them [before he went]. We both fell in love with the German people. It's amazing how many speak English. Especially in the tourist orientated areas. It was seeing how they lived and their way of life. We hadn't really thought about it before."²⁰⁴

Mrs Allen indicates here that her husband had a certain distrust of German people which was completely overturned by the welcome they received in Germany. She herself showed that the chance to see how German people live broadened her horizons and made her think about things that she hadn't really thought about before.

A similar comment was made by Mr Carnwell about the French:

"Yeah, it breaks down that barrier. We maybe think a bit different about the French before we went. Not so good and then you change your opinion when you go. We never found any animosity."²⁰⁵

Similarly, Mr Moses states that they "[became] more accommodating of different ways. Bit of apprehension the first few times."²⁰⁶

Four people said that they had always had positive feelings about Europeans, so nothing had changed, whilst 17 people stated that the holidays had not affected their opinions regarding Europeans. Mr Button commented that he was surprised by the friendliness of the Maltese whilst serving there, but regarding the French:

"I think you have pre-conceived ideas. Nothing's really changed. Something's they don't like about the English but something's I don't like about the French."²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

²⁰⁴ Mrs Allen. Interview. 23/09/2014

²⁰⁵ Mr Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

²⁰⁶ Mr Moses. Interview. 24/09/2014

²⁰⁷ Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

This is interesting, in that he confirms that he had pre-conceived ideas before going on holiday, but that his experiences there confirmed them.

Mrs Beardmore though pointed out the issue of whether holidays would truly change someone's views,

"Well, we've only picked the nice places haven't we... where we want to go."²⁰⁸

As we can see from her comment, it is difficult to assess whether the tours had truly changed people's views, as people went on holiday to destination they would *expect* to enjoy. So it is therefore to be expected that they would enjoy them.

In conclusion then, we can say that the majority of people, starting from a stand point where foreigners and people of a different ethnicity were treated as the Other, became more open and accepting of foreigners. This does not necessarily mean that these people became more European, but a majority of the people interviewed overcame the threshold of fear involved in talking to and interacting with foreigners.

3.4.3 Associations of Europe

In order to find out what the passengers thought of in connection with Europe, the interviewees were asked which words they associated with Europe. The results show the way in which the EU has come to dominate the discourse over Europe and also the way in which personal experiences still play an important part. From the 52 people questioned, twelve associated Europe purely with Brussels and the EU. Their answers were usually one word answers and used the words Brussels, "the EU" or the European Union. Interestingly, two people (the Davieses) used the word "Common Market", showing that, for them, the old designation still applied. After this, seven people stated they associated Europe with their holidays, either directly using the word "holiday destination" or talking about the countries and scenery they had visited (For example, Mr Gould thought about "Austria, Switzerland, mountains and lakes"). For this group of people then, Europe is primarily a holiday destination, and the "political side" of European integration does not concern them. Typical for this group was Mr Randle's response:

"Got a lot going for it with the Austrians and the Swiss and all the countries you can go to. France has tremendous sightseeing. EU doesn't concern [me]. Don't get mixed up with all the bureaucrats."²⁰⁹

Mr Randle use of the phrase "got a lot going for it" is interesting, as it is very much positive, but at the same time indicates that "Europe" is a distinctive concept that is separate from England and revolves around the topics of sightseeing and holidays. Mr Randle also makes it very clear that he prefers not to associate Europe with its political aspect ("don't get mixed up with").

²⁰⁸ Mrs Beardmore. Interview. 04/09/2014

²⁰⁹ Mr Randle. Interview. 05/09/2014

Following this group comes those who associated Europe purely with politics, and in a negative light. Nine people responded in this manner, typically using key phrases like “bureaucracy”, “rules coming out of Brussels” or merely “bad connotations” (in Mr Turner’s case). Mrs Williamson gave a particularly telling response with “I think, ‘What are the French up to now!’” This indicates that, for Mrs Williamson at least, the political Europe is associated with France, who are always “up to” something, in the sense that they are attempting to create schemes which will affect England badly. Four people though, brought up the fact that, for them, Europe was both a place to take holidays *and* was associated with Brussels and the EU, and usually not in a positive way. A representative answer for this group came from Mrs Edwards:

“If it’s in general then I think of holidays if its political I just think of some faceless bureaucrat in Brussels telling me what to do when I’ve had no chance of voting for him at all.”²¹⁰

However, an immediate association of Europe with negative aspects does not automatically mean that the person in question themselves has a negative attitude towards Europe. Mr Booth said that he thought of “TV, politics. Crisis.” For him, this was a reflection of the negative media coverage given to Europe by the English media, resulting in many people seeing Europe in a negative light. Two people thought about Germany and politics, and not in a positive sense, indicating that they believed that Germany dominated Europe.

From the remaining twenty interviewees, six of them associated Europe with foreignness, or being separate, using words such as “foreign” or “nothing to do with us”. For these people, Europe is still most definitely the Other (Indeed, Miss Taylor even said “It’s us and them”). Two people thought about the history of Europe, particularly the Second World War and Germany, but not in a purely negative light, as Mrs Ditchfield shows:

“War! They were all in the war. I can remember seeing a Japanese car and Auntie Hilda went nuts. Our cousin killed. The younger you are, the more you’re able to... Nobody else remembers wars. That’s a good thing. Germany are allies now. No bad feelings now. The younger you are now, and young ‘uns (*sic*) go all over there. There’d be no prejudices. No prejudice; give people a smile.”²¹¹

This indicates that we should not take an association of Europe with past conflicts as indicating that said person holds prejudices against the belligerent nation in question. Rather, as Mrs Ditchfield shows, remembering those killed is also combined with an attitude that things should be forgiven, and that the younger generation, who did not lose any close family members through the war, will have less prejudice towards other nations.

Finally, four people immediately associated Europe with unity, or being a part of Europe. This was either qualified, in the case of Mr Burton (“We’re part of Europe- lots of people want good things out

²¹⁰ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

²¹¹ Mrs Ditchfield. Interview. 02/09/2014

of Europe without putting anything in.”) or an immediate statement that “it is the continent we belong to” (in the case of Mrs Lovatt).

One person, Mr Gilbert, thought about work. However, apart from the coach drivers, he was the only person in the sample who had worked on the continent (also excluding those who had served in the armed forces). Even his comment though was qualified by the current situation:

“Well it would have associated it with a working market that we were involved with. I don’t know what I think of it now, really. So many angles being put. But it’s still important.”²¹²

Five people were not able to give any answer to the question.

Below can be found a graph showing the general associations people have with Europe (with the various answers simplified into nine groups).

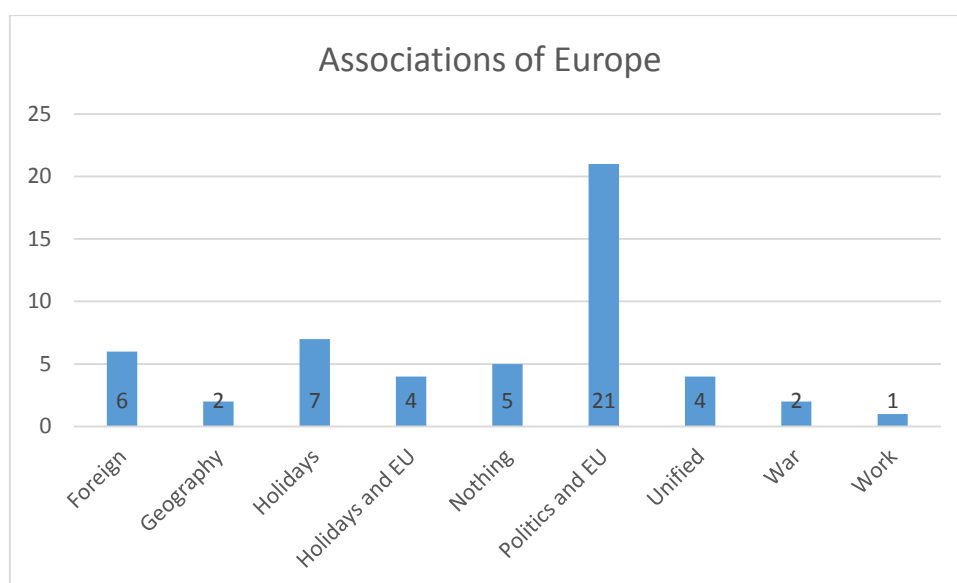


Fig. 5: Associations of Europe.

Out of the twenty nine people who associated Europe with either the EU, Brussels, bureaucracy, war, or foreigners, 22 people also stated in a previous question that they did not feel European. This indicates that there is a correlation between negative feelings towards Europe as a whole and feeling separate to Europe.

The seven people who associated Europe with the above factors, but still felt European, did so because they felt the EU was a “necessary evil”, or because they believed the media influenced people’s perceptions of Europe (in the case of Mr Booth). Similarly, out of the 29 people in this group, only four had travelled independently, indicating that there is a correlation between independent travel and the number of positive impressions which one has of Europe.

²¹² Mrs Gilbert. Interview. 29/08/2014

In summary, Europe for the majority of those questioned is associated either with the EU, holidays, foreignness or a combination of the above. It is interesting to note that even people like Mrs Aspey, who considered herself a European, still thought first about past wars and World War Two. Again, the five people who associated Europe with unity or work had either travelled extensively there, made friends there, or worked there. It would appear that these are the decisive factors for someone to feel a closer sense of belonging to Europe.

3.4.4 EU laws, “not playing by the rules”

One criticism levelled at the EU, and Europe in general, was that “they [Europeans] don’t play by the rules, whilst we do.” This was the belief that only English people obey EU regulations, whilst the rest of the continent do not. Ten people levelled this criticism. Noticeably, all but one of these ten people stated that they did not feel European. This is a very subjective criticism, but also one which the interviewees claim to have real experience of, as Mr Scarratt showed:

“We play by the rules but I don’t think other countries do. When we were travelling in France German buses come past us like we were standing still and Paul said, ‘Well, I can only go so fast. 60mph, that’s me limit’. Where a German bus would whip [*driver quickly*] past us, and they couldn’t care less.”²¹³

We have here again an example where one specific situation is used to confirm a stereotype. It is also interesting that this comment should come from Mr Scarratt, who stated that he felt that the Austrians were “like brothers” to him. It is therefore necessary to maintain a differentiated view of people’s attitudes towards Europe as a whole.

However, it is an example of where a genuine situation from the holidays is taken to illustrate a political viewpoint. Mr Davies also mentioned something from his holiday experiences which reinforced his belief that “we obey the rules and they don’t”:

“Something that stuck in my mind, especially Spain and parts of France, we’re all supposed to be in the EU, yet you go round Cheadle, Leek, Uttoxeter market, any market in this country and you won’t find a side of pig hanging up. Spain, bloody half a pig hanging up. You want some bacon they just cut it off!”²¹⁴

Again, we have here an example of an event seen on holiday which confirmed the belief that England was disadvantaged by the EU.

Interestingly, it is France or Germany who are given as the countries who are bending the rules to their needs, or France or Germany is implied. Mr Meakin, a dairy farmer, gives a good example of this:

²¹³ Mr Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

²¹⁴ Mr Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

“CAP; [it’s] not a level playing field. French get the benefit of it... Most farmers are a bit anti... Import and export subsidies works against English farmers. Export levies. If French don’t want our lamb, they will put levy on it and it’s dearer against French lamb.”²¹⁵

This is a good example of how EU regulations are seen to disadvantage England and benefit another country. This feeling of not playing by the rules is, in this author’s opinion, intrinsically linked to the English sense of identity- English people “play by the rules” whilst foreigners are more likely to try and break the rules.

However, both Mr Meakin and the other dairy farmer in the sample, Mr Gould, both agreed that English farmers cannot afford to leave the EU, as they would not be able to compete on the world market otherwise. Mr Gould states:

“We’re dealing with them more aren’t we, I mean personally, a lot more than we are with America I mean most of the meat and what not comes from there.”²¹⁶

Thus, the majority consensus in this group is that attempts to work with other European countries are marred by the fact that English people are more likely, from their nature, to follow the rules, whereas “Europeans” will not. However, those like Mr Gould and Mr Meakin, who have practical experience of trade and subsidy agreements within the EU, recognise that, for better or for worse, England needs these institutions.

We shall return to the issue of England and the EU in a later section, as well as the fact that France or Germany are those who do not conform to the rules.

3.4.5 The EU and the holidays- a disconnect?

As we have seen, even the people who considered themselves European had very few positive comments to say about the institutions of the EU. From the 52 people interviewed, 29 made negative comments on the EU whilst only two people made neutral comments. Mr Booth believed that the fact that the EU has become more of a fact of life since the tours began has meant that people have naturally begun to complain about it more:

“Media attention is microscopic, everything’s polarised so [Europe has become more political].

Yeah, we were starting the journey as a European nation in them days in a sense that it was a learning curve... There’s always going (*sic*) be differences, whether it be local politics in Cheadle or Staffs Moorlands or whether it be more national.”²¹⁷

This indicates that continental Europe at the time of the holidays was still considered an adventure in many ways and that, as England has become more closely involved with the European Union at a

²¹⁵ Mr Meakin. Interview. 23/09/2014

²¹⁶ Mr Gould. Interview. 01/09/2014

²¹⁷ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

political, it has become more mundane and led to the inevitable arguments surrounding the various issues.

Mr Ellis believes that the negative press is responsible for the anti-EU feeling within England:

“We regard ourselves as not being part of Europe and that’s been infiltrated into the minds of people. I am pro-European, pro-Common Market. I keep calling it that. You get newspapers that’ve got an agenda and this is this infiltrated into people’s minds; they’ll come up with all these straight banana stories. A lot of it’s untrue. They’ll seize on the bad things. I remember in the Guardian there was a professor somewhere and he’d wrote a list right down the page, the advantages of being in Europe. You never see that, [only] the bad things.”²¹⁸

This belief was echoed by Mrs Lovatt, who noted:

“The daft people, the men behind desks. They’re silly fools. Saying we’ve got to have less powerful sweepers [*vacuum cleaners*] ... I ask Michael and he says, ‘that’s nonsense’. So it’s all talk... I read it and I don’t believe it. The media’s so immediate now with television and pictures. We didn’t get it back then.”²¹⁹

This is interesting, as Mrs Lovatt notes that negative aspects of the EU have become more prominent for her, but that she also believes that this is due to more extensive media coverage, some of which cannot be trusted. Again, we must repeat the statement that people are not passive recipients of information, and, even if some are aware that the discourse concerning Europe has become more negative, they also question the reason for this.

From the 29 other people who expressed negative opinions regarding the EU, the statements were sometimes cautiously critical:

“It started at as a Common Market and trade between the countries but it’s just got massively over top heavy administrative lump of bureaucracy.”²²⁰

Outright hostile comments were also made:

“I’ve never ever believed you could have a great big set up like Europe. They can’t even run their own bloody country without getting over there without trying tell other folk how do it. I don’t think anything’s changed. They can do what the hell they want. It’s just a load of different countries. They aren’t going make them one big state because that’s the intention of it and it isn’t going happen. They can do the foreign currency stuff, but it inna goin [*isn’t going to*] happen. They’re all getting on with their own lives. It’s only politicians playing silly sods [*doing stupid things*] and making money out of it.”²²¹

²¹⁸ Mr Ellis. Interview. 09/09/2014

²¹⁹ Mrs Lovatt. Interview. 03/09/2014

²²⁰ Mrs Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

²²¹ Mr Godwin. Interview. 26/08/2014

What is interesting though is that a dislike for the EU does not automatically mean that the interviewees have any problem with other European countries, rather that the problem is with politicians who are trying to dictate to people how they should live. This is best summed up by Mrs Edwards:

“I’ve always liked European people. That’s never changed... I love Europe, I love going to all the different countries, but the EU is a different kettle of fish altogether. When the Common Market was first proposed I voted in favour of it.”²²²

As we can see, a dislike of the EU in no way equals a dislike of European people, rather the two principles, going on holiday to other European countries and a dislike of the EU, are treated as two entirely different concepts. But continuing with this thesis, a “love” for European countries does not necessarily indicate that one feels close to them. As Mrs Edwards shows with her use of vocabulary (“going to”, “Europe”), she primarily views Europe as a holiday destination and does not consider England to be an integral part of Europe. There is therefore a case to be made that a dislike of the EU may be linked to a continued view of European people as the Other, since one of the EU’s missions is to achieve closer integration of European countries and, through the principle of freedom of movement, cause a closer exchange of ideas and culture across Europe. As Mrs Edwards said, she voted to stay in the Common Market because she believed that the issue was that of trade. Her husband agreed with this, as he said:

“It was presented as a good thing in 1975 and not as a political union. It was sold as a trade agreement.”²²³

The issue at stake is that, in 1975, the Common Market was presented to the English public as being purely a trade agreement, and as discussed in a previous section, the political aspects were mentioned, they were not the main focus of the referendum campaign. If a person rejects any closer political union, then this must not automatically be taken to mean that they view Europeans as the Other, but it may be assumed that there is a correlation between the two, and people who are not in favour of the EU are more likely to view Europeans as being different and foreign to themselves, and less likely to wish to be more closely associated with them. This is especially surprising in the Edwards’ case, as they are practicing Catholics and attended Masses whilst on holiday:

“Going to Mass here, you don’t actually speak to a lot of people. You go to Mass, you come out.”²²⁴

As we have seen in the first section, one of the things which historically separates England from the rest of the continent is that the Reformation in England led to strong anti-Catholic feelings for a long time, wherein Catholicism was seen as an invasive threat. As Mrs Edwards shows though, even

²²² Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

²²³ Mr Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

²²⁴ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

people who are practicing Catholics feel separate from Catholic Europeans, as other factors are more powerful in influencing their opinion than their religion, especially if they do not treat the Mass as being an inclusive ceremony.

The disconnect between a dislike of the EU and favourable comments on their holidays also spreads to the issue of border controls. The question of border controls was not directly raised in the questionnaire, but it was a point that several people brought up during the interviews. Many people mentioned the fact that it had become much easier to travel between different countries, and, where strict border controls existed, people were surprised enough to mention it, as Mr Moss and Mr Gould commented on the strict border controls in Switzerland. Once again though, it seems to be more the people who travelled independently who recognise the real benefit that open borders have brought, whilst those who travelled more often on coach tours do not tend to recognise this. This may be because, as we have already seen (see section “The origins of the coach tour and Stoddards’ role”), coach operators take care of all the details when going on holiday, and so there are no issues for the passengers with organising paperwork for travel, etc. Although, when the border controls were strict, this was also noted, as Mr Gould explains:

“First bloke [from the border control] called me in, had a look through the first one, got four more up and the next one said, ‘Yes sir, let’s have a look.’ And I said ‘Here, help your bloody self.’ And he says, ‘Oh, carry on sir.’”²²⁵

This indicates that strict border controls are recognised as an inconvenience by some passengers. What is also interesting is the issue of open borders and immigration. Upon being asked about the EU, many interviewees began to discuss the issues they had with immigration, in particular the number of immigrants who were arriving in England via Calais. It is important to note that these interviews took place in August and September 2014, when a great deal of media attention was focussed on the attempts of immigrants to enter the UK via Calais and, in particular, a video was in circulation showing immigrants attempting to “storm” the ferry port at Calais. The issue of open borders was therefore highly present in people’s minds whilst the interviews were being conducted: “News about immigrants makes it [Europe] more negative but that’s only France.”²²⁶

As we can see from this comment, the news had created a more negative view of Europe for Mrs Grindon, although this was focussed on France. The equating of Europe with France is a phenomenon which we have already discussed. Those who mentioned the issue of more relaxed border meaning more migrants could come over did not consider the fact that stricter border controls would also lead to English people having to wait longer to leave England on holiday until this was pointed out.

²²⁵ Mr Gould. Interview. 01/09/2014

²²⁶ Mrs Grindon. Interview. 05/09/2014

The response to the question of whether they would accept more difficulty in travelling if it meant stricter border controls resulted in interesting answers, as given by Mrs Randle:

“Yes, true that. I think something ought to be done about these [people]... it’s our country. We’re the soft touch. We’d have to be put it with it. To try and sort it out. Need something doing. Really, it’s some of our greed. Because immigrants will work for nowt [*nothing*]. Like the Polish people. And they’re the hard working ones. Like Hainsley’s²²⁷ giving up. They’re going abroad.”²²⁸

As Mrs Randle shows, she would be ready to “put up with” stricter border controls if it meant fewer immigrants coming. She also brings up the prevalent idea that England is a “soft touch” for migrants, meaning that anyone who arrives here has access to social services and health insurance. Several studies have shown that this is not the case, and it would be interesting to do a study to discover if every country in Europe believes that they are the “softest touch” for immigration, but it is enough to show that this is a prevalent idea and that this is another factor in people’s dislike of the EU, as freedom of movement is one of the principles of the European Union. What is interesting in Mrs Randle’s case is that she goes on to some self-reflection in that she notes that it is English people’s greed that means more immigrants come over, as many of them (in this case Polish people), are ready to work for lower wages. This reflects a real concern that migrants from other European countries will push down English wages, as they are perceived to be prepared to work for lower wages than English people because they come from a country with a lower standard of living. This is a complaint about Europe’s freedom of movement which can be heard in many other countries. Mr Scarratt, who had ceased travelling due to health reasons, believed that travel had now become more difficult:

“No, I mean I should imagine it’s more difficult now because of all these people who are trying to get across to England. We had nothing like that... [In the past] they just looked at your passport. Whoever was driving would say he’d got 50 passengers and that was that. But I should think it’s a damned awkward job nowadays.”²²⁹

As we can see then that, for those who no longer travel, border controls seem to have become a more complicated issue, due to the amount of media attention paid to the then current situation at Calais and other ports.

Other people were angered by the situation, as they believed people could enter the country so easily, as mentioned by Mr Beardmore:

“You tell me, how these people come into the country. We’ve come back, they’re checking our passports for come back (*sic*) to our own country.”²³⁰

²²⁷ Hainsleys- North Staffs baking company. Now closed.

²²⁸ Mrs Randle. Interview. 05/09/2014

²²⁹ Mr Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

²³⁰ Mr Beardmore. Interview. 04/09/2014

Again we see the complaint that common English people are discriminated against (by being asked to show their passports to re-enter the country), whilst migrants are allowed to enter the country easily. This is a theme taken up by Mr Beardmore's wife:

"...a lot of them [migrants] just come over here. Sponge off [*exploit*] the country, get houses, benefits. We've worked all us (*sic*) lives. But we couldn't do that in their country."²³¹

Clearly then, we are dealing with a concept where English people are treated unfairly, whereas migrants are treated much better, unfairly so, and this is an issue linked to open borders and the EU. Interestingly, Mr Beardmore was one of the only people to admit that he would vote UKIP and that he had previously voted Labour, but he went on to say that this was not because of Europeans, but because of border controls. The issue of border controls and migrants coming over is therefore not linked to the western European countries where people go on holiday, but to an ill-defined group of "migrants" who come to England to live from the social welfare system. The fact countries like Austria are not included in this is made clear by Mrs Beardmore:

"I don't know as much about Austria and places like that. But Romania and people coming over from all these countries, haven't got jobs, pickpockets and drug dealers. They don't seem to be able to do anything about it."²³²

As we can, Austria is implicitly stated not to be included in the criticism of European migrants, whereas Romania and "all these countries" are. In this case, the divide between western and eastern Europe is clearly very much alive in older people's minds in England too, with western Europe stereotyped as a place to take holidays and enjoy oneself, whereas Eastern Europe (or "all these countries") is a distant and disreputable place. The Beardmores were also one of the couples who had travelled independently to Austria and made friends there. Clearly, for them, Austria was no longer the Other, but the Other had now become the Eastern European nations. The fact that it is not the entirety of Europe which is being criticised when criticising the EU is made clearer in the next section.

3.4.6 Criticism of the EU- A French and German problem

When being questioned about the problems involved in border crossings, Mrs Scarratt raised the issue of paying duties for goods being imported into England. Mrs Scarratt commented that the rules on duties were "were rules and you didn't break them", to which Mr Scarratt responded:

²³¹ Mrs Beardmore. Interview. 04/09/2014

²³² Mr Beardmore. Interview. 04/09/2014

“This is where you get the Germans or the French, well more the Germans. They’re not satisfied with what they’ve got, they want have more... Probably coming back on the boats or going, they’d want more than what the allocation was. They’d take that attitude.”²³³

In regards to “not playing by the rules” and disobeying regulations, Mr Scarratt clearly had the firmly held belief that the Germans or the French will attempt to exploit the system. It must also be pointed out that Mr Scarratt had not travelled to Germany on Stoddards tours, so had not had the chance to have these attitudes dispelled. We have already discussed the fact that France attracted the most negative comments from the interviewees, and the criticism of France and Germany “not playing by the rules”, but we will delve more deeply into the fact that, for those who had a negative attitude towards the EU, France and Germany were a focus for this dislike, whereas countries such as Austria or Italy were not included in this. In all, seven people mentioned either Germany or France in their criticism of the EU.

As has been mentioned, some participants were of the opinion that there was an essential enmity between England, France and Germany (see section, “France – still the old enemy?”):

“You’ve only got to listen to the Germans talk and the French talk- They don’t want us! French mortally hate us.”²³⁴

It is unclear if Mr Davies was talking about the German and French people as a whole, or about the political elites within the EU, but he definitely indicated that England’s problems within the European Union are not just caused by English issues with EU legislation, but (in his opinion), by the fact that Germany and France are also opposed to England.

Others in this sample expressed enmity to Germany or France, but still maintained that the way in which the European Union was organised benefited these two countries to the detriment of England. Mrs Williamson, for example, observed that she believed that it was more the French than the Germans who “ran” England. Mrs Williamson had already stated that she disliked the French and found that they were not “grateful for us liberating them”.²³⁵ A dislike of France, based on previous historical events, is therefore linked to current disquiet related to the current political development of the EU, especially as Mrs Williamson also mentioned that she believes that England is the “cash machine” of Europe. Once again then, the fact that France are ungrateful towards England is linked to the fact that France had a strong hand in setting up the European Community and obstructed English attempts to enter it.

The topic of the EU was taken up by Mr Williamson, who had a different opinion:

²³³ Mr Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

²³⁴ Mr Davies. Interview. 15/09/2014

²³⁵ Mrs Williamson. Interview. 15/09/2014

“Germany is running the show now and Europe is going downhill in relationship to us and them... Media says we’re being ruled... We’ve become a German satellite. Never met many Germans... Austrians are basically run by Germans... I regret not having been to Germany. I’d keep me mouth shut about being a ‘German satellite’ but I might change my opinion after I’d been over. We think all these things up... Nobody gets the better of Mrs Merkel.”²³⁶

For Mr Williamson, there is a clear evidence that Germany is running England and that this is a negative thing for the future of Europe as a whole. What is interesting is that Mr Williamson then qualifies this statement by admitting that he has never been to Germany himself and that he might change his attitude if visited there. His statement that “we think all these things up” indicates that he is aware that certain prejudices against Germany are imagined, or at least exaggerated by the media (as he does earlier state that is “the media” who say we are being ruled by Germany). His statement that “nobody gets the better of Mrs Merkel” indicates a grudging respect for her. In all then, we have a statement that indicates that anti-EU and anti-German statements should not always be taken at face value; opinions change and many people are aware of the fact that the views they give are based on general perceptions. Miss Taylor noted something similar when she said:

“As I’ve got older, I’m more reined into it [anti-European thought] than I was then... It isn’t the people that live there it’s the politicians, and I can’t stand that Merkel for a start. And him who used to wear the Cuban shoes, the little French git... Sarkozy.”²³⁷

This indicates that Miss Taylor is, like Mr Williamson, aware that one’s opinions change over time and that her animosity towards the EU has increased over time. This self-awareness of one’s changing attitudes shows that people do not simply passively maintain their opinions, but are aware that they change over time and are not set in stone. She also chose Mrs Merkel and the (previous) President of France as examples of the politicians who she disliked as representatives of the EU. On the one hand, it could be pointed out to be natural that the presidents of the two most prominent countries in the EU would be chosen as figureheads when criticising continental politicians. However, this argument is essentially tautological, as France and Germany’s prominence in the EU naturally leads to any animosity being expressed to be directed against them. The vehemence which Miss Taylor expressed towards the two presidents, particularly Mr Sarkozy (“the little French git”) indicates that dislike towards France and Germany is deep-rooted and stems from more than the current media attention paid towards negotiations over the EU.

Returning to the notion that Germany is exerting too much pressure on the European Union, this view is shared by Mr Turner, who connected the two in a very clear way:

²³⁶ Mr Williamson. Interview 15/09/2014

²³⁷ Miss Taylor. Interview. 10/09/2014

"I'm talking about the whole centralisation and the Euro. You've got German domination of Europe. Merkel. The European Central Bank is in Frankfurt and all the rest of it. And they control everything. No doubt about it. As far as the people are concerned I've got nothing against it. But as far as the politics is concerned, I've got no time for the politics. This centralisation."²³⁸

Again, two notions stand out here. The first one is that German "dominate" Europe and "control" everything. The language used is similar to the language Mr Turner used when discussing Germany's role in the Second World War, so we may assume that there is a link between the two. This returns to a point mentioned in the opening section, which indicated that there was a rise in anti-German xenophobia, linked to the English founding myth of the Second World War, when German re-unification became an issue in the 1980s and Mrs Thatcher raised the spectre of Germany dominating Europe.

We have already discussed the issues relating to Anglo-German and French relations in previous sections and the comments made in this section reinforce the conclusions made there. In terms of criticism towards France, this can be seen within a continuity of English attitudes towards France stretching back to the eighteenth century and further. The comments regarding French hatred of the English, mockery of French political leaders and criticisms of French attempts to "control" Europe have, as we have seen, a long tradition in English political discourse and should be seen in this light. Criticism of Germany may also be seen within this context although, again, in terms of personal hostility, the comments towards Germany were not as extreme as those towards France. This should also be seen in the light of the fact that, in terms of England's worries concerning one nation destabilising Europe's "balance of power", Germany is a relatively new player on the scene. Mr Turner, whose views most closely express the twentieth century view of Germany as the aggressor of Europe, was understandably the participant who, more than any other, saw Germany as the dominant force in Europe.

For those though who believed that either Germany or France controlled Europe, this was clearly to England's detriment. German or French control meant that England's position in the EU was being adversely affected, and was clearly part of the reason why people with this opinion could not consider themselves European.

We should also address the issue raised by Mr Turner that he had nothing against "the people" but against the politics. Again, we have a very clear statement showing that there is a clear separation between the interviewees' views of politics within the EU and the people. The question remains whether the two can ever really be treated as separate, as one could argue that a dislike for another

²³⁸ Mr Turner. Interview. 23/09/2014

country's politics would automatically lead to a dislike of this country, but, in the perception of the participants, there was a clear division between the politics and the people of Europe.

Some interviewees also acknowledged the fact that dislike of the EU was not a purely English phenomenon, as Mrs Edwards showed:

"...some faceless bureaucrat in Brussels telling me what to do when I've had no chance of voting for him at all. When I should imagine there's a lot of people in Europe who think the same."²³⁹

This indicates very clearly that, for Mrs Edwards, there was a clear separation between what she thinks about the political side of Europe and what she thinks about the people, and recognises a connection between herself and other European people who are against the EU.

3.4.7 Has the EU changed the participant's view of Europe?

As we can see from the previous section, the EU has become the dominant paradigm through which attitudes and opinions regarding Europe are filtered. For the people in this sample, Europe is still primarily related to holidays and sightseeing, but the political aspect is never far from the surface. The question remains of whether this has changed over time.

Twelve people stated bluntly that their view of Europe had changed for the worse because the EU had become an increasingly present factor in the discourse over Europe. Representative for these comments was Mr Turner, who stated that it had "soured" his view of Europe.

Twelve different people stated that their view of Europe had got worse, but generally did not feel that this affected their holiday experience, or their interaction with people, as Mr Aspey says:

"I think there are too many countries who have joined it who are super dependent upon it and are being subsidised very heavily. It hasn't changes how [they] see European countries... Changes how [we] see politics."²⁴⁰

Taking Mrs Aspey as a representative voice for this group, we can see that, although people in this section did feel that their view of the political side of Europe has got worse, but they did not allow this to affect how they see the people.

Mr Booth also expresses this sentiment very accurately when he stated that "[The political aspect] doesn't impact on me everyday life. I don't go to France and think, 'Bloody hell, their unions are playing up, I'm not going to Paris or France for me (*sic*) holiday.' Never entered me (*sic*) head."²⁴¹

As Mr Booth shows, the media coverage of negative aspects of continental political life (and Mr Booth refers here to the English myth that the French strike a lot) remain separate from the holiday making aspect of travel to the continent.

²³⁹ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

²⁴⁰ Mrs Aspey. Interview. 02/09/2014

²⁴¹ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

Five people stated that the EU was not such a big topic when they were travelling (implying that it has become a bigger topic now). Typical for this group was Mrs Allen's comment:

"[politics] Oh no no. It wasn't an issue [when they went on holiday]. I think more about the holidays."²⁴²

This indicates that, in the past, Europe was purely associated with holidays. Mr Scarratt's statements also coincided with this:

"Well, Europe wasn't so much of an item in them days. It's only in the last ten years that it's really took off. So it didn't really bother us."²⁴³

This is interesting. Mr Scarratt stated that the topic of Europe was "not so much of an item", meaning that it was not as present in the media at that time as it is now. He then stated that "it didn't really bother us", indicating that their holidays were not affected by the topic of the EU. The people who had ceased to go on holiday after Stoddards had ceased operating the tours belonged to this group. Eight people gave responses that indicated that they had always associated Europe with negative aspects, or that indicated that their views had at least not changed since England had been part of the Common Market. Mrs Carnwell's comments may be taken as representative for this group:

"I don't agree with Europe telling us what we can and can't do, but I mean that's gone on for years. That's gone on ever since we joined the Common Market and the rules seem to come from there and we keep up with them. But we don't like it."²⁴⁴

As we have seen from the above statements in this section, Mrs Carnwell is unusual for this sample, in that she believes that the European community, in which ever form, has been imposing rules on England since British entry into the Common Market.

The remaining people (thirteen) stated that their views had not changed at all.

Two people stated that they had always had a positive view of Europe, and that this hadn't changed. The graph below shows that, on the whole, most people felt that they had either always viewed the EU negatively, or their view had changed negatively (but not for the countries).

²⁴² Mrs Allen. Interview. 23/09/2014

²⁴³ Mr Scarratt. Interview. 07/09/2014

²⁴⁴ Mrs Carnwell. Interview. 11/09/2014

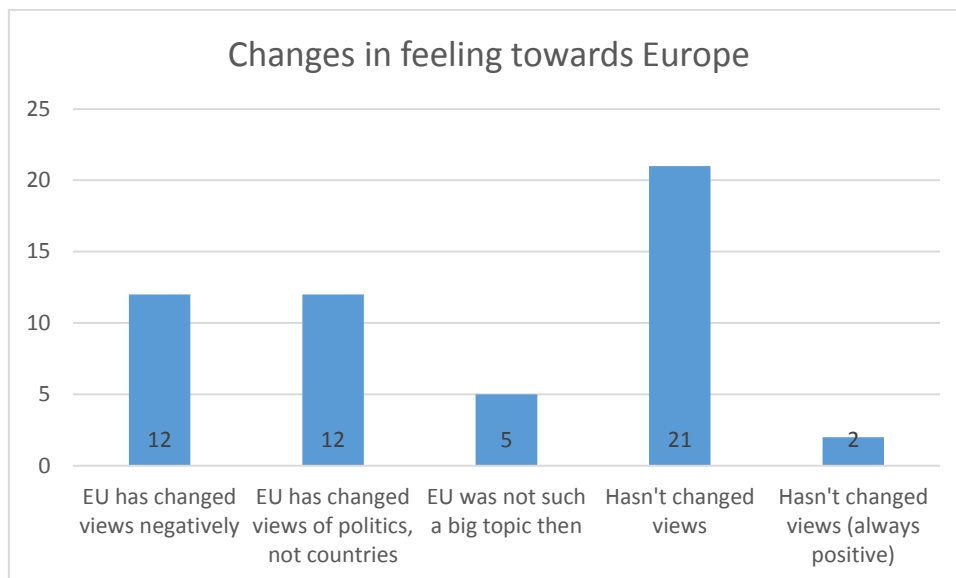


Fig. 6: Changes in feelings towards Europe. The sample who had always had a negative view and those who stated that their views had not changed have been grouped together.

In conclusion then, we have a picture of a steadily deteriorating image of English relations with the EU at a political level (or the concept that the relationship has always been negative) but, in the majority of cases, these negative aspects were not allowed to interfere with people's enjoyment of their holidays. It would appear that the EU has come to dominate the discourse about Europe and that this was not a factor up until the 2000s. The extent to which we can say this is true is unclear, as passengers gave differing answers, and obviously this is based on the interviewees' varied levels of exposure to media or information concerning European affairs. As Mr Booth stated in a previous section, England was only beginning its journey to becoming a European nation in the 1990s and, as we have seen that many people admitted to having very little information or fore knowledge about other European countries before embarking on their trips, it may be expected that they would be travelling then with very little knowledge of English involvement in the European community, or what effects this would have on England. Europe remained a place to take holidays, whereas nowadays it is a place to take holidays and *also* a source of political tension, but the two concepts remain, in most cases, mutually exclusive.

3.4.8 Europe- positive or negative?

The final question was whether the interviewees were, on the whole, positive or negative about Europe. This question was, unfortunately, a late addition to the questionnaire, so it was not possible to get a definite response from all of the interviewees. In some cases, the response was implied from the interviewees' previous comments.

Interestingly, a majority of the interviewees (twenty-two) said they still had a positive view of Europe. This not only included those who already said that they were pro-European, but also those who did not consider themselves to be European, or who had expressed sentiments against the EU. Mr Meakin, for example, who had not overly praised the EU in previous comments, said: “[my] view of Europe is mainly positive; got to go forwards. Can’t go back to dark ages. I’ll admit that.”²⁴⁵ This indicates that, despite his reservations about the EU, he still believed that England’s future ultimately led to Europe, and that to look back would be to go back to the “dark ages”. Others, like Mrs Burton, were impressed by the friendly welcome they received on holiday:

“We didn’t know what to expect. Soon changed when saw how friendly and welcoming they were.”²⁴⁶

Clearly, in the case of Mrs Burton, politics have not played a strong part on his view of Europe, and her attitude has remained focussed on the positive aspect of his holiday.

Following on from this group, eleven people said that they had a positive view of Europe, but mentioned their reservation regarding the political aspect, or that they were positively disposed towards the people, but not towards the politics. Typical responses were “Yes, positive, but I don’t like the way they are trying to run this country.”²⁴⁷

Similarly, four people indicated that their views were “middling”, showing that the influence of the EU had affected their views. These views are best represented by Mrs Moss, who noted: “On balance, I’m 50/50... Good and bad... Issue with vacuum cleaners comes into head now.”²⁴⁸

This shows that, as we have seen in the previous sections, that there is definite feeling that increasingly negative reporting on the EU (the vacuum cleaner issue, as mentioned by Mrs Lovatt) has resulted in people’s views of Europe becoming less positive.

Fifteen people were unsure whether they had a positive or negative view of Europe, or their responses were not explicitly positive or negative. As we can see from the graph below, most people had an overwhelmingly positive view of Europe, or were positive, but had reservations regarding the political side.

²⁴⁵ Mr Meakin. Interview. 23/09/2014

²⁴⁶ Mrs Burton. Interview. 22/09/2014

²⁴⁷ Mr Button. Interview. 08/09/2014

²⁴⁸ Mrs Moss. Interview. 09/09/2014

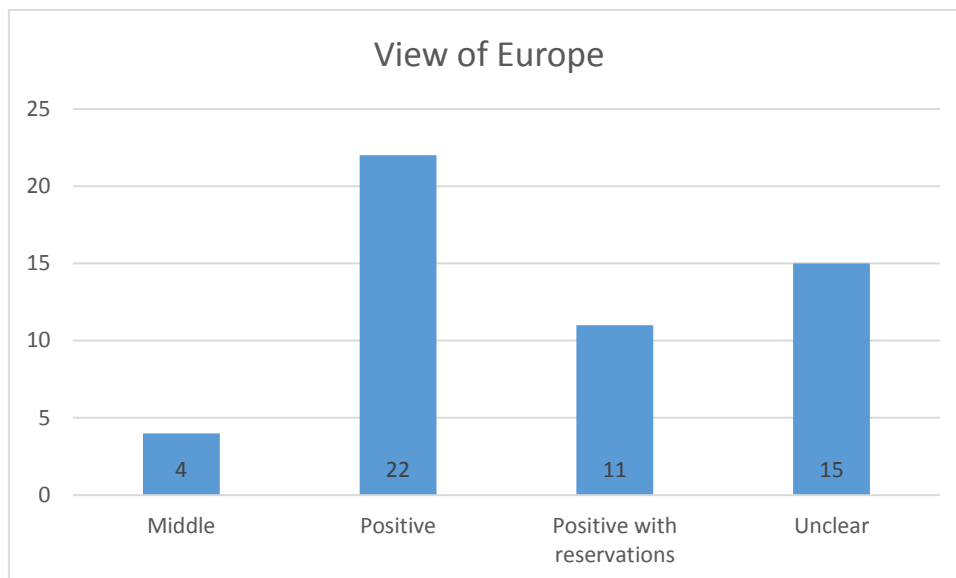


Fig. 7: View of Europe

In conclusion then, we may surmise that the presence of the EU has a negative effect on people's perceptions of Europe as a whole, because, whereas this generation previously had a positive view of Europe associated with holidays and sightseeing, these waters have now been "muddied" by increasing media attention to the negative aspects of EU regulations on English affairs. Whether, as Mr Ellis previously said, this is because the media only tend to concentrate on the negative aspects of the EU, or whether this a true fact, is beyond the scope of this thesis.

3.4.9 No longer British, but not European?

In the introductory section we discussed Colley's theory that Britishness was the glue holding the various English nations together and that the erosion of this glue is related to the issues which English people have in seeing themselves as European. It is therefore necessary to examine whether there was any correlation with issues related to Great Britain and England and feelings of being European. Most people within the interviews used the words Britain and England interchangeably and did not refer to any issues they had related to this. Only one person still explicitly ascribed to the belief that the English or British were in some way superior to the Europeans:

"They look after their own ends more than... and one of our problems is that we do tend to play... It doesn't seem to be but we do care. More basic Christian principles. We think of people more whereas they tend to think of themselves first and others afterwards... They wouldn't be allowed to manage properly without England.... I'm not saying we're right be any manner and means, like this tom-foolery ... it's like distributing aid and things and looking after other people. We do it better I

think. ... We're in the middle between Europe and America and if they'd all listen to us. They do come for advice but they get it wrong."²⁴⁹

As we can see from these statements, Mr Green used the word "England", but still maintains the belief that, at least in policy-making and values, the English are superior to the Europeans (and Americans). Mr Green, as has already been mentioned, comes from a British Army tradition which emphasises the old British values discussed in the first section. His surety that England is superior to other countries is impressive in comparison to other people, who were not so convinced of England's pre-eminent position.

Other people, such as Mr Godwin, expressed a dissatisfaction with the fact that the British sense of identity was no longer so easy to define:

"They call us English I've no idea (*sic*), because we haven't got a country anyway. I'm not European. If I could change my passport to English, that's what I'd be... I don't want be Scotch, I don't want be Irish, I certainly don't want be European."²⁵⁰

Although not explicitly stated, Mr Godwin shows that there is a connection between the issues relating to whether one should now consider oneself English, British, or European. A similar sentiment was expressed by Mrs Edwards:

"I'm English. Do you know, years ago, whenever I filled in a form, I said I'm British. Now, when I fill in a form I'm English. That's because I'm irritated. Not because of the European side, but because I'm irritated by our government keep telling us we should be multi-cultural whereas I'm thinking, 'I would just like to be allowed to be English please.'²⁵¹

Again, whilst not explicitly stated, there is clearly a correlation between the fact that it is difficult to decide whether one is English or British, and the perceived imposition of a European identity.

In conclusion, although no-one explicitly linked the loss of a British sense of identity with a rejection of a European sense of identity, the above comments indicate that there is a correlation between a rejection of a European sense of identity and a sense of disquiet about the loss of a British one, and the loss of pre-eminence which is connected to European integration (as mentioned in the section "England and Europe after World War Two").

4 Driver's statements

We have already seen some of the driver's comments made regarding how they assessed the passengers' feelings on the tours and a brief summary will be made here of the drivers and courier's general opinions.

²⁴⁹ Mr Green. Interview. 03/09/2014

²⁵⁰ Mr Godwin. Interview. 26/08/2014

²⁵¹ Mrs Edwards. Interview. 29/08/2014

Generally speaking, all four agreed that there were a certain number of passengers who were more interested in the cultural experience of travelling and those who were only sight-seeing:

“You’ve got a vast cross section of people. Either professionals who’d travelled extensively and wanted to take it easy. Didn’t want the hassle of arranging things. Job done. They weren’t shy of telling you you’d dropped a bollock [*make a mistake*], if Joan of Arc died in 1798 and not 1297... [And] about 20 to 25% who were there for the holiday experience. Weren’t too worried. Coffee on the go, dropping them off at the right place. When to go and when to be back. Giving them general guidance about when to be back. They were happy as Larry. But they weren’t too worried...They’d like know if that building was a prominent building in Habsburg times. ‘Where did we go today John? That nice place that family built.’ They’d forgotten three hours later! That was history to them.”²⁵²

The other three drivers agreed with this assessment, stating that they felt some passengers (those with a professional background) were interested in the culture and history of the area, whereas some were coming for the adventure of being abroad. As we have seen, being more aware of the history of a country does not make someone more European, because people were more likely to impose their pre-conceived ideas on the country in the question. We say this very clearly with those who served in the armed forces and continued to “see” Europe in the manner which their training had led them to.

The question of whether the drivers shielded the passengers from the more exotic location did not find agreement. Paul Stoddard argued against this wording:

“I wouldn’t say shield. When we went to big cities ... when we went into Venice, or into Rome, or into Milan, we would pick up the local guide, and he would say, ‘This is a busy street, there are a lot of pickpockets.’ So they weren’t shielded, the other way really, they were given the advice that they’d got to be more focussed when they went into inner cities, then when they were in the little villages. But as a driver/ tour manager I tried to not frighten them of different ways of life in these bigger cities, just crossing the road, they’d never been anywhere where they were driving on the right. So I wouldn’t say I was being childish in my information but I just said to mind crossing the road, use the pelicans [crossings]. Isolated, shielded, I’d say no, even though a lot of people hadn’t travelled abroad. 70%. So yes, a bit of both.”²⁵³

As Paul Stoddard showed, he believed the extra advice was necessary for people who had little experience of foreign travel. The other drivers and couriers agreed that it was necessary to support the customers and that many of the customers had chosen the organised tour because it meant they *didn’t have to make* an effort in organising the holiday:

²⁵² Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

²⁵³ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

“They don’t want neither [*problems, worries*] over things. It’s part of being on an organised tour. You don’t have to... I think that applies as much as being in England... comfortable isn’t it. They don’t have to. I don’t think they didn’t want to. Those who could interact, they’d enjoy it. They’d always appreciate a very friendly waitress, for example. They’d remember it, ‘that Heidi, she’s a great little girl, always happy.’ You know, that sort of talk... If they make an effort, they enjoyed it. I think it was laziness, and we were doing it for them. I’m sure, they would have enjoyed it more the more, in an easy social sense.”²⁵⁴

As we can see from these comments, Peter Stoddard felt that the nature of coach tours meant that people didn’t have to interact as much with local inhabitants.

The general consensus also existed among the drivers and courier that many of the passengers came from a rural, isolated background who had not had a great deal of experience of interaction with anybody from a different background:

“For a lot of the people it was an adventure and a journey. Lots of those people hadn’t been out of this locality. Anything outside 20m, ‘What, we’re going that way.’”²⁵⁵

Although this may seem like an exaggeration, we have seen that many of the interviewees commented on the fact that, for them, Londoners and even people from Stafford were considered quite different to themselves. This in turn meant that, while there may not have been overt hostility towards foreigners, they were considered “alien” by many:

“Maybe not rant about foreigners but say, ‘I didn’t reckon much to the food, dunna [*don’t*] speak English.’ Half then. Half wouldn’t be aggressively against foreigners but wouldn’t regard them as humans, as all a bit strange. They weren’t people. You could probably convert 5 of them.”²⁵⁶

Again, as Mr Hodgshon states, this applies to (in his estimation) half the passengers, where we are not speaking of prejudice against foreigners, but definitely treating them as the Other.

We have already seen there was a consensus between two of drivers on the fact that more enmity still existed against the French (see sections “France- still the old enemy?” and “Germany – forgive but not forget?”) than against the Germans, but there was also agreement on why Austria was so popular:

“[in connection to the war] Not for Austrians ... It wasn’t Germany. A lot were involved in the war... Not ignorance, lack of knowledge. They’d got no identification for Austria and Switzerland. They hadn’t shot at us or been nicking [*stealing*] the sun beds.”²⁵⁷

Those assessment was shared by the other drivers, with an emphasis on the high quality of the Austrian holidays:

²⁵⁴ Peter Stoddard. Interview. 08/09/2014

²⁵⁵ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

²⁵⁶ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

²⁵⁷ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

“The Austrian one was incredibly popular. Because they knew how to cater for what the English liked.”²⁵⁸

All four members of this sample also mentioned the interest which the people took in the Austrian and Swiss farming methods, which reinforces the theory that people find it easier to understand and assess foreign environments when they have a familiar point of reference.

Therefore, the popularity of the Austrian holiday and the ease with which the English passengers interacted with the local residents was a combination of good service to tourists and a lack of past resentment against Austria.

There was also agreement that the age of the passengers meant that did not consider themselves Europeans, because they had been brought in an ideology (elicited by Linda Colley) that “Britain is best”:

“England’s England. The Queen. Pound. We had a war with Germany, can’t trust the French and some of them Italians are dodgy [*untrustworthy*] because with the rest they’ve got no history.”²⁵⁹

“I think English are inherently arrogant and consider themselves better. If they try [to] communicate with a foreigner they just shout loudly. I thought it was a myth but I’ve seen it.”²⁶⁰

Finally, we shall return to the topic of food. We discussed in the opening sections the description of Harold Wilson as a “protestant, northern, meat and two veg man” who “distrusted foreign food”.

This is also a point on which all the drivers and couriers agreed; a successful hotel catered to English tastes in food:

“I dined every night with the clients, from the same menu and when you start having you know asparagus, octopus soup. There was a lot of food that went back. ‘I’m not having this.’ And I do believe it was a shock to some of the people, that their cooking and the things they had on the menu was a total “wow”. As the week got on, they buttoned down to it, lots of pasta, lots of lettuce, lots of water on the table. So yeah, I think they did get it, but there were some dishes that were turned away. We had cuttlefish soup which was a non-seller for the people, but yeah, depending on the client. They younger the client was, the more diverse the eating habits were.”²⁶¹

The other drivers all agreed that it was essential that the food not be too exotic so here we may agree that, at least for the older generation, continental food was considered exotic and another way by which Europe was defined as the Other.

²⁵⁸ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

²⁵⁹ Mr Booth. Interview. 25/09/2014

²⁶⁰ Mr Hodgshon. Interview. 26/09/2014

²⁶¹ Paul Stoddard. Interview. 07/09/2014

5 Conclusion

We began this thesis by asking what effects the holidays undertaken by the participants had on their views of Europe and feelings of belonging to it. The results of the interviews have shown that the coach tours have played their part in affecting the interviewees' view of Europe, but that there were also many other factors involved. What is important to bear in mind is that the participants' attitudes towards Europe were formed by surroundings which today may seem difficult for us to comprehend. Even the recent past can be a foreign country to us. It is hard to remember that, in the days before cheap air flight and open borders, travel to foreign countries was a difficult and complicated affair. Even in affluent England, foreign travel for the majority of the population only began in the 1970s with package holidays to Spain and, as comments here have shown, these were not considered "good" foreign holidays where one could experience foreign culture. Staffordshire, a county in the middle of England, was and is a long way from any foreign country, so what Stoddards were offering from the mid-1980s onwards was something different and exciting for the people in this survey; the chance to visit a foreign country, see something different and experience a little foreign culture, but all within the framework of "ontological security"; the feeling of safety and comfort whilst experiencing something different. For a majority of the people in the survey, going on holiday to the continent resulted in their eyes being "opened" to how different people lived and dispelled the feeling of apprehension they had about visiting foreign countries and people. We are there proceeding from a starting point where all foreigners were viewed as the Other.

The first conclusions to be drawn is that, except in a very small minority, people had their views of particular countries changed or improved, but the view of Europe as a concept remained intrinsically the same. This was because Europe as a concept was more overarching than the individual holidays. Witness the fact that the majority of people discussed how much they enjoyed their holidays on the continent and had pleasant memories, but were still hostile towards the EU. For the majority of the participants, Europe has become synonymous with the EU, and thus the word itself has negative connotations. The individual countries and their inhabitants are associated with holidays, but the overarching concept is associated with the EU and the project of political integration. Thus the question of whether being Eurosceptic automatically means one is negatively disposed towards Europe is essentially false, because Europe "the holiday destination" and Europe "the political entity" are two distinctive concepts for the majority of the participants.

The sociological theories discussed by Katy Greenland in her paper *"Can't live with them, can't live without them': stereotypes in international relations"* (see the section "Tourism and the Others") discussed the theory of cognitive bias, which indicated that people are likely to exaggerate differences between groups. This theory has been partly proven by this paper, as it has been shown that, in cases where strong negative stereotypes exist, they are used to confirm that any negative

experiences suffered in the country in question are due to these stereotypes. However, it must also be remembered that many of the people in the sample recognised the stereotypes and (in the words of Mr Carnwell) acknowledged that they “carried these things” in them. Furthermore, the theories set forward by Greenland to combat stereotypes have also been shown to be partly true. The theory of decategorisation (bringing two different groups together and encouraging them to see similarities between outgroup members and participants and differences between participants themselves) has been shown to function where the participants are in a pleasant location (such as Waidring) where no previous suspicions exist, or where experiences in these countries *directly contradict* negative stereotypes. In these cases it is possible that people from these countries become less like the Other (as is the case with Austria and Germany). If negative experiences take place in a country where negative stereotypes exist (as in France), then individuals from that country remain, in the eyes of the participants, the Other. The decategorisation method is particular relevant here, as many of the participants noted that they felt closer to people from a rural background than they did to people from an urban environment, so categorising oneself as “rural” may take precedence over one’s nationality. The recategorisation method can also be applied to the participants as, by interacting with local inhabitants and developing friendships, they were encouraged to feel a closer connection and, if not all the participants saw themselves as European, then they all “had their eyes opened to how they lived”.

In terms of the research into tourism, this paper has partly proven the theories put forward by Urry, Andsager and Drzewiecka concerning the tourist gaze, the desire for ontological safety and the habit of applying images seen on holiday to the whole country, but again with the following caveat; many of the participants *at the same time* recognised that these are only images, that they cannot be applied to the whole country and that such images are open to change. Generally speaking, participants were more likely to question negative stereotypes (Germans are arrogant), than they were to question positive stereotypes (Italian drinking culture is better than English). This paper has also definitely proven the theory that coach tours function as a bubble, shielding people, but also giving people who are not confident about foreign travel the chance to experience “foreignness” in a safe environment.

In regards to the current state of research into attitudes towards Europe, this paper has shown that the Othering of Europe is not just a construction of the English political elite but enjoys widespread support in the population. Even those who claimed to like “Europeans” still considered them the Other for a variety of historical reasons. This paper has shown though, that this view of the Other varies from country to country; feelings of similarity were higher for Austrians than for Italians or the French. As long as the conditions were right (a pleasant rural setting, a friendly hotel and a lack of negative historical interaction) then it was possible for participants to feel closer to the local

inhabitants (as was the case in Austria). Even in the case of Belgium, which has not had a history of hostile relations with England, the inability to interact with the local inhabitants meant it was difficult for people to establish closer relations (although the general consensus was that, as northern Europeans, Belgians are more akin to the English).

The case of Germany, though, shows that negative stereotypes can be overturned. The majority of participants who visited Germany admitted going there with apprehension, but their positive experiences there meant they could overcome these images. Germany disproves Andsager and Drzewiecka's theories concerning the tourist gaze, as it shows that images held by tourists travelling to different countries can be changed.

But, even though a majority of passengers had a positive experience on their holidays, it still remained difficult for a majority to say they were Europeans. For those who called themselves Europeans, a combination of independent travel (to Austria or France), an ability to reflect on English stereotypes or a generally open attitude towards foreign countries led to this. For the rest of the sample, rejection of the EU and the countries controlling it (primarily France, but also Germany), meant that it was impossible for them to consider themselves European. An important factor for those who felt themselves European was that they did not believe all of the negative media coverage surrounding the EU. Although the old image that Britain is intrinsically better than other countries was no longer explicitly present among all but one of the passengers, the old images of England as an island nation with its own liberties and historical heritage prevailed, and this still stands in the way of the majority of people in the sample feeling European. For a majority of the participants, the European Union is diametrically opposed to English heritage and history. This image is intrinsically linked to the image of France as the old enemy.

It must however be remembered that this paper was limited to a limited sample of 52 people (with an average age of 76) from a small area in North Staffordshire. It would be interesting to see if a different generation, with more experience of travel to and interaction with Europe, would display different attitudes.

6 Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Zusammenfassung

Titel: Welchen Einfluss hatten Urlaube, die zwischen 1985 und 2003 von Nordstaffordshire zu (kontinental-)europäischen Reisezielen unternommen wurden, auf die Sichtweise der englischen Reisenden auf Europa und ihr Zugehörigkeitsgefühl zu Europa?

Diese Masterarbeit untersucht die Beziehung zwischen England und Europa. Ziel der Forschung ist es herauszufinden, ob Busreisen aus England zu Zielen in Kontinentaleuropa einen Einfluss auf die Wahrnehmung Europas und das Zugehörigkeitsgefühl aus Sicht der Engländer hatten.

Für die Analyse wurden 56 Personen interviewt, die alle in Nordstaffordshire leben. Sie alle haben zwischen 1985 und 2003 an einer Busreise der Firma Stoddards teilgenommen, die sie in Reiseziele in Frankreich, Deutschland, Belgien, Österreich, Italien und der Schweiz geführt hat. Zu den befragten Personen zählen 52 Passagiere, vier Fahrer, Reiseleiter und der Chef der Firma.

Der erste Teil der Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit dem historischen Kontext Englands und der Beziehung zum Rest Europas. Darüber hinaus wird erklärt, dass Busreisen eine populäre Form des Urlaubs in England darstellen und es wird eine kurze Übersicht über die soziologischen und kulturellen Theorien des Tourismus, den Einfluss von Tourismus auf Stereotypen und den Umgang mit diesen gegeben. Mithilfe dieser theoretischen Grundlage können die Antworten der TeilnehmerInnen in Kontext gesetzt werden. Der zweite Teil der Analyse zeigt, wie die befragten Passagiere sich in den oben erwähnten Ländern fühlten, wie sie sich generell während der Reise fühlten, ob die Urlaube ihre Sicht auf Europa verändert haben, ob sie sich als „Europäer“ fühlten und was sie mit Europa assoziierten. Die historische Forschung zu der Beziehung zwischen jedem Land und die Kommentare der Busfahrer helfen, die Meinungen und Perspektiven der Passagiere zu erklären.

In der Schlussfolgerung werden die soziologischen und kulturellen Tourismustheorien mit den Ergebnissen der Befragungen zusammengefasst. Die Ergebnisse bestätigen die Theorien, zeigen aber auch, dass viele Passagiere sich Stereotypen bewusst sind, und dass sie selber fähig sind, ihre Meinungen und Stereotypen abzubauen oder zu ändern. Die Ergebnisse zeigen auch, dass eine Mehrheit der Passagiere sich nicht als „Europäer“ fühlen, dass die Reisen ihre Sicht zu Europa aber zum Positiven verändert haben. Gleichzeitig glaubt eine Mehrheit der Passagiere, dass die Europäische Union ihre Sicht auf Europa negativ beeinflusste. Die Schlussfolgerung ist, dass eine Mehrheit der Passagiere Ausländer als „etwas komisch“ betrachteten, bevor sie ihre Reise antraten und dass die Reise ihnen dazu verhalf, den Menschen anderer Länder kulturell offen entgegen zu treten. In den Ländern, bei denen vor der Reise keine allzu negativen Stereotypen existierten, konnten die Passagiere eine gute Beziehung zu den Einheimischen entwickeln und sich sogar mit ihnen anfreunden. Bei einer kleinen Minderheit führten diese guten Beziehungen sogar dazu, dass sie sich als „Europäer“ fühlten. Für die Mehrheit war aber die Europäische Union ein großes Hindernis, um sich selbst als „Europäer“ zu betrachten.

Curriculum Vitae

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Schulbildung

1999-2001

College Education

Moorlands Sixth Form Centre, England, A-
History, B- Sociology, B- English Literature, C-
General Studies

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Secondary School Education

Cheadle High School, England, 11 GCSEs

Studienverlauf

Oktober 2012 – April 2015

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Masterstudium Historisch-
kulturwissenschaftliche Europaforschung

Oktober 2001 – Juni 2004

University of Wales, Bangor

Schwerpunkte: Zeitgeschichte, Amerikanische
Bürgerrechtsbewegung, Moderne Zentral- und
Osteuropäische Geschichte

Juni 2003 – Mai 2004

Bachelordissertation: Eine Untersuchung der Auswirkung von Einwanderung in einem Dorf in England

Titel auf Englisch: The effects of immigration from North Wales on the quarrying village of Cauldon Lowe

Arbeit

Oktober 2011- Juni 2014

Sprachenzentrum der Universität Wien
Engischlehrer auf freiem Dienstverhältnis

September 2010 – bis jetzt

MHC Business Language Training
Businessenglisch unterrichtet mit Schwerpunkt auf kulturellen Austausch

Juni 2005 – September 2006

ALPHA Sprachinstitut
Englisch auf Werkvertragsbasis unterrichtet

Ehrenamtliche und journalistische Tätigkeiten

September 2004 bis August 2005

Freiwilliger bei Europäischen
Freiwilligendienst. Kinderbetreuer bei
Europahaus des Kindes

April 2011 bis August 2012

Kontributor and Blogadministrator für die
Onlineplattform *Café Babel* (Deutsch und
Englisch)

January 2009 bis August 2012

Artikel für die englischsprachige
monatliche Zeitung *Vienna Review*
veröffentlicht

June 2009 bis August 2012

Veröffentlichte Blogs und Artikel für das deutschsprachige Magazin *Biber*

Weitere Qualifikationen

Sprachen

English – Muttersprache

Deutsch – fließend (Deutsch-Zertifikat, C1 nach CEFR)

Andere Fähigkeiten

Microsoft Office, gelegentlicher Übersetzer Deutsch auf Englisch.

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AUSTRIAN TYROL. AUGUST 12 ~ 21 2000

7 Nights Half Board at the Waidringerhof Hotel & 2 Overnight stops Half Board

Once again we return to the sheer delights of the Tyrolean village of Waidring, for what must be called the classic tour of the Tyrol. Staying at the 4 Star Waidringerhof hotel, situated in the lovely Stub valley. Previous travellers will know this means total commitment by the staff, equally matched by 1st class accommodation all under the watchful eye of the Zardini family.

Saturday 12 August Depart from Cheadle 5.30am to connect with the 11.30am ferry from Dover to Calais, crossing time approx. 90 minutes, allowing you to have lunch on board, or exchange some money. From Calais we drive through Northern France to Metz, for our evening meal and first overnight stop at the Mecure Hotel situated a short walk to the centre of the City and Cathedral. The restaurant has nice views of the imposing Cathedral. Arrival time approx. 7.30pm.

Sunday 13 August After an early breakfast we travel through France, Germany and the spectacular scenery of the Austrian Tyrol, to reach the Hotel Waidringerhof, our base for the next 7 nights, in time for our set evening meal. Arrival time approx. 6.00pm.. Upon checking-in, you will be asked to hand in your passport in exchange for your room key. Passports will be returned at breakfast time the following day.

Monday 14 - Saturday 19 August

During these dates five excursions will be operated, consisting of 4 full days and 1 half day. Please note they will not necessarily operate in the following order as weather conditions and other fundamental factors need to be taken into account so the very best interest and enjoyment will be gained by all.

Innsbruck. Before adventuring into the City Centre we make a small detour to the awe inspiring ski jump and arena which were built specially for the 1964 Winter Olympic Games and which also gives a panoramic view of the city below and of the snow capped mountains which surround the capital city of the Tyrol. A further stop at the large church beneath the ski jump takes us to the heart of the city where we will arrive in time for lunch and the remainder of the afternoon is yours to discover the many treasures of this beautiful city including St. Jacob's Cathedral, Maria - Theresien Strasse or the Golden Roof.

Grossglockner Pass (weather permitting). This tour must be the highlight of any tour excursion programme. The summit of the pass is 8,200 ft and there are a number of viewing points, including the Edelweiss Spitze where 37 peaks, all over 10,000 ft can be viewed. Time will be allowed at the summit to have lunch, admire breathtaking scenery, take the lift down to the glacier field, and don't forget to feed the marmots before we descend the other side to the village of Heiligenblut (the Church of Holy Blood).

NB As this is a toll road, there will be a supplement to pay on this tour, approx. 120. Schillings per person.

Kitzbuhel & St Johann In Tyrol. This tour combines Tyrolean scenery and the opportunities to see the medieval walled town of Kitzbuhel, one of the top winter resorts in Europe (also one of the most expensive!) and St Johann with its beautiful church. Time permitting a cable car trip can be arranged to reach the summit of Kitzbuhel Horn (approx. 160 Shilling per person extra).

Berchtesgaden & Lake Konigsee. This excursion is split into 2 halves, sadly there is not enough time to view both attractions in the same day, so the choice is yours. Konigsee (the Kings Lake is 5 miles long and one of the most picturesque spots in the whole of Bavaria. With very steep sides rising up from the lake, it resembles a Norwegian fiord. There are plenty of restaurants to have lunch at , or you can take the boat to the Church of St Bartholomew at the north end of the lake. For those who want to reach great heights in the Brehteagaden area, take the mini coach before ascending in a gold plated lift set inside the mountain, to reach Kehlsteihaus (Hitler's 'Eagle's Nest' hideaway) standing 6,020 ft above sea level. (No matter which choice you make, you will think it is the right one).
NB The boat trip approx. £10 per person and the extra bus to Eagle's Nest approx. £9 per person are not included in the holiday price.

Lake Chiemsee. We take to the waters of Lake Chiemsee to seek out the magnificent castle of Mad King Ludvic II based upon on the design of the Palace of Versailles. A water bus journey takes us across Bavaria's largest lake to one of the larger islands on the Lake giving us access to this splendid castle with all its treasures.
NB The cost of this tour is approx. £7.50 for which German Marks only will be accepted.

Sunday 20 August. After breakfast we leave Waidring for Metz, returning to the Mecure Hotel for evening meal and our overnight stay. Arrival time approx.7.30pm.

Saturday 21 August. We leave Metz after an early breakfast, heading for Calais and our mid afternoon ferry home, arriving in Cheadle approx. 9.00pm.

Waidringerhof Hotel, Dorfstable 16, A - 6384 Waidring, Tirol Tel: 0043 53 53 52 28
The small village of Waidring offers a Bureau de exchange, and several shops including 2 supermarkets. The Waidringerhof is a family run-hotel in the centre of the village that offers a high standard of hospitality, cuisine and comfort. All rooms are en suite and furnished in typical Austrian style. The lift serves all floors. There is a indoor swimming pool, sauna, solarium, fitness room and pool table (extra cost). There is also a bar and comfortable lounge areas, whilst the restaurant offers a wide choice of culinary delights. Breakfast is buffet style with some hot dishes to choose from.

Adult	£465
Children (sharing)	£240
Supps: Single Room	£75

We reserve the right to alter details of this itinerary if necessary, (i.e. if we need to change overnight stops, vary the planned excursions or change ferry times or to change to Le Shuttle if ferry sailing's are impaired)

9 Appendix 2: Transcript of interview with Mrs Edwards

Date: 29.08.14

Mrs Edwards

J: John Hodgshon

M: Mrs Edwards

JE: Mr Edwards

J: Why did you choose Stoddards tours and these destinations?

M: We chose Stoddards because they're local. We'd already known the firm because they used to run the gardening trips and when we find out they were doing the continentals we were delighted because we're idle travellers. We liked somebody else to do all the work.

J: You just wanted to see Europe really?

M: Yes, I had been abroad once, two or three times. Starting when we were at school. We went to Switzerland and Venice when I was 14.

J: It was a case of wanting to visit somewhere exotic?

M: Before I was married I went to Italy, then I went to Malta. I just wanted to see more of Europe.

J: Before you visited Switzerland, Brussels and Germany did you have any pictures in your head of what they were like?

M: Well, I knew I'd got the picture of Switzerland in my head from I'd been there at school, so I knew what I was expecting.

J: So what about Bruges and Germany?

M: Germany. I'd never done any Germany. It seemed really foreign, because of all the hoardings and everything, obviously we were in Germany, but I didn't know a single word of German at all. And Bruges was beautiful. In fact, everywhere we've been has been beautiful.

J: But with Bruges and Germany, you didn't have any images in your head before you went?

M: No and I'll tell you now, Ireland is the only place where at one point I felt a bit intimidated. Wherever we go, we try to go to Mass. It's usually a mid-week Mass and we went to a Mass in Ireland and the priest was extolling the virtues of our brave lads in the North, so I didn't open my mouth.

J: That must have felt very strange.

M: Everywhere else we were made welcome, we were made welcome there, but it seemed wisest not to say anything. It was a strange feeling. The rest of it was fine, it was just that few minutes and that didn't happen anywhere else at all.

J: never felt out of place.

M: Never felt out of place.

J: Not even Germany?

M: No, the first mass we went to in Switzerland, before it started the priest asked what countries we were all from, so one of the readings was in French, the other in German, there was a bit in English.

J: The same with Belgium and Germany, you went to communion there?

M: I mean we had one in Switzerland and it was mid-week mass and we were the only ones there and the priest nodded to us as he came in, but he didn't speak and at the end of the Mass he said, "If you'd said you were English we could have done it in English." The service is the same wherever you are.

JE: We were in Ostend, we went to the cathedral in the evening and he come round with the plate and we put some on and he picked it all back up and had one coin off each of us. He wouldn't have more.

J: What were your general impressions of Switzerland, Germany... when you went there?

M: Switzerland in particular, beautifully clean. All of them do fantastic cakes.

J: So you liked the food in all the countries?

M: Yes, never turned anything away.

J: Well some people are a bit funny. What about Germany? What were your general impressions?

M: That was mainly based on the river. Boppard's on the Rhine. In the evening we liked to go and sit on the promenade and watch these huge barges come through.

JE: They all had something special on them.

M: And the train line was on the other side. The amount of industrial stuff that was coming through.

JE: They must have been a mile long- terrific!

M: We liked watching the cruise ships. I mean cruise ships on the river. I mean, everybody was helpful, particularly in Germany I found if you tried a couple of words in German, they would help you. And the same in France, but I know a little bit more French than German. I caused hysterics one day in Germany when I wanted stamps and I asked for post offices.

JE: Asked for nine post offices instead of nine stamps.

M: Because you try they were helpful. If you go somewhere and don't try at all, they'll just blank you. That's fair enough. If you go somewhere else you should try and fit in.

J: Do your best fit in. That brings me to my fourth question. Do you have a great deal to do with the people while you were over there?

M: Probably not a great lot. Just the people who were serving us in cafes and the hotel, but we didn't really mix a lot with those a lot did we?

JE: No.

J: But the people you did mix with you found.

M: Well, nothing to do with these trips but last year we went to Holland and we did mix with the people there and we went to the choir. We met with another choir and they invited us to their homes and they were really wonderful.

J: And you got on very well. And you think that was more to do with the fact you had a professional....

M: Probably because we'd got a shared interest. Because we were doing a joint concert. The rest of the time, wonderful, apart from those few minutes where I felt uncomfortable, the rest of the time was fine.

J: Would you say you were able to mix more with people in Ireland because of the lack of a language barrier.

M: No, I think it was because, generally on holiday you tend to be with the company you're with.

JE: Generally on coach parties you tend to stick with the people you're with. You've always got some company.

J: And on all your travels, would you say there's anything you say which you reminded you of things back home or would you say it was always foreign. Could you always tell you were in a foreign country?

M: Yes. I mean that's the appeal of going.

J: Would you say the people in Germany and Switzerland and France are similar to us? On a scale of 1-10.

M: I would say, very similar. I would say the family values and the work values were similar.

J: So you didn't see the language barrier as being a problem?

M: No, probably because we were in a group. I mean that's partly because Europeans are much better at learning English as we are at learning their languages.

J: Of all the places, could you imagine living in any of them.

M: Probably somewhere in Switzerland; I like Switzerland. Well-ordered. It's beautiful. I like mountain scenery.

J: But the fact that it's a different country with a different language wouldn't put you off.

M: No, I don't think it would. I'd have to learn the language.

J: While you were there, what do you think the driver's job was?

M: Apart from physically looking after the luggage and the coach, they knew where they were going and took us to wherever we wanted to be. If there were any problems they were the ones you contacted to sort it out.

J: Did they help a lot with currency?

M: No.

J: How did you get on with the currency?

M: You could spend it.

JE: It was alright, we took it with us.

M: We took it with us.

J: You've been to all these countries, but you find that the values are quite similar to ours.

M: Yes, I would say so. Family values. Family's important to them. They've got a good work ethic.

JE: Obviously you don't go and mix in families. So you only think, you're guessing.

M: Just the impression that you get.

J: Not talking about EU membership.... Would you call yourself a European?

M: No. I'm English. Do you know, years ago, whenever I filled in a form, I said I'M British. Now, when I fill in a form I'm English. That's because I'm irritated. Not because of the European side, but because I'm irritated by our government keep telling us we should be multi-cultural whereas I'm thinking, "I would just like to be allowed to be English please." I love Europe, I love going to all the different countries, but the EU is a different kettle of fish altogether.

J: Even leaving out the Brussels dimension, you still would not say you're a European.

M: No.

J: Could you say why not?

M: No, I couldn't. I don't know why not. It's just instinct.

J: When you hear the word Europe, what comes into your head?

M: Depends on the context. If it's a general then I think of holidays if its political I just think of some faceless bureaucrat in Brussels telling me what to do when I've had no chance of voting for him at all. When I should imagine there's a lot of people in Europe who think the same.

J: Absolutely.

M: But to me its two completely different things.

J: Absolutely, that's the point. It's interesting that from geography, we are actually part of Europe.

M: Yes, but the channel's there you see. I must admit, when the Common Market was first proposed I voted in favour of it.

JE: It was a better idea then.

M: We weren't told. It wasn't long after that that it stopped being called the Common Market and became the EU and that's when it went downhill. It was sold to us as a good way of improving trade but that's not what happened.

J: So if you were talking about Europe as just trading countries?

M: Yes, that'd be fine. What I object to is all these powers that are being taken from our own parliament and transferred to Brussels and we can't do anything about it.

J: Would you say the holidays you've taken in Switzerland and Germany... and to Holland with the choir.... do you think that's changed how you felt about Europe and European people? Do you think it's changed your impressions or....

M: No, I've always liked European people. That's never changed.

J: When someone says Europe to you, do you put Ireland in there?

M: No actually. I only put Ireland on the list because it is technically abroad. I don't think of any of us, Ireland, Scotland, I don't think of any of us as European.

J: If you said... Would you call Ireland as going abroad?

M: Not really.

JE: It's sort of local almost. Same as Scotland and Wales. Easily attainable, rather than going across the Channel.

J: You went to Masses wherever you went. Do you think that gave you a bit more of a connection with the people there?

M: No, I don't think so. Like going to Mass here, you don't actually speak to a lot of people. You go to Mass, you come out.

J: Was there quite a lot of mixing?

M: From the Italians- they'll elbow you out of the way in the queue! They don't like queueing.

M: If you go to any of the countries, you come across customs that you don't spot when you're on holidays.

J: Did you notice any changes with travelling that have taken place over this time.

M: No.

10 Illustrations

Pg. 35. Fig. 1: Perceived similarity of English people to Austrians.

Pg. 42. Fig. 2: Perceived similarity of English people to Italians.

Pg. 53. Fig. 3: Perceived similarity of English people to French

Pg. 60. Fig. 4: Perceived similarity of English people to Germans

Pg. 81. Fig. 5: Associations of Europe

Pg. 94. Fig. 6: Changes in feelings towards Europe.

Pg. 96. Fig. 7: View of Europe

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