



You're projecting! Global Britain, European strategic autonomy and the discursive rescue of the internationalised state

Benjamin Martill & Angelos Chryssogelos

To cite this article: Benjamin Martill & Angelos Chryssogelos (13 Nov 2024): You're projecting! Global Britain, European strategic autonomy and the discursive rescue of the internationalised state, *European Security*, DOI: [10.1080/09662839.2024.2425641](https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2024.2425641)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2024.2425641>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 13 Nov 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 123



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

You're projecting! Global Britain, European strategic autonomy and the discursive rescue of the internationalised state

Benjamin Martill ^a and Angelos Chrysosgelos ^b

^aSchool of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK; ^bSchool of Social Sciences and Professions, London Metropolitan University, London, UK

ABSTRACT

How do leaders respond to costly demands to re-nationalise political control? The re-shaping of state–society relations engendered by globalisation has produced a backlash in the form of populist demands to “take back control”, yet leaders face significant costs in responding to demands to re-nationalise highly interdependent economies. In this article, we show how leaders respond to these demands by crafting new discourses of their polity’s position in the international system, a process we term “discursive externalisation”. Externalisation is a cheap way of responding to domestic pressures which avoids powerful domestic veto players while benefiting from the rallying effects of foreign policy renewal. By keeping rhetoric broad, externalisation can co-opt elements of the status quo in favour of new representations of state–society relations and a new basis for political legitimacy. We demonstrate our argument empirically by examining the articulation of new discourses in the foreign and security policy domain after the 2016 Brexit referendum in both the UK and the EU. We show how ideas of “Global Britain” and “European strategic autonomy” both helped to rearticulate the relationship between the polity and its citizens by externalising agendas for internal reform, transforming crises of legitimacy into discourses of international renewal.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 6 August 2024
Accepted 1 November 2024

KEYWORDS

Externalisation; strategic autonomy; Brexit; Global Britain; European Union; globalisation

Introduction

Globalisation has radically re-shaped state–society relations over the past several decades through the internationalisation of the state, the increasing interdependence of economies and the articulation of new political subjectivities. In recent years, popular reactions to internationalisation have taken the form of increasingly ideational and diffuse demands to “take back control” and re-establish democratic sovereignty, associated most prominently with the rise of populist movements (Borriello and Brack 2019, Chrysosgelos 2020, Ibsen 2019, Menendez 2016, Rodrik 2021). Yet reversing

CONTACT Benjamin Martill  benjamin.martill@ed.ac.uk

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

internationalisation is almost impossible in practice given the high costs involved, the opposition of powerful domestic interest groups and the extent of policy “lock in” at the supranational level. How, under these circumstances, do leaders address popular discontent with internationalisation?

We argue leaders increasingly respond to these pressures through *discursive externalisation* – that is, by crafting broad discourses of foreign policy renewal which seek to re-orient the state’s position on the world stage. Focusing on foreign policy rather than internal issues avoids costly domestic veto players while benefiting from the rallying effects of novel representations of the polity and its international significance. Because discursive externalisation operates at a high level of abstraction, it occludes significant societal differences and is able to obtain a broad consensus by allowing different constituencies to project their preferences onto a given concept. By articulating novel foreign policy discourses, leaders can externalise opposition to the policies of the internationalised state without undertaking costly efforts towards genuine re-nationalisation, signalling to marginalised constituencies a new – if inefficacious – basis for political legitimacy.

We demonstrate our argument through a comparative analysis of the emergence and use of two foreign policy discourses in recent years in Europe: Global Britain in the UK and strategic autonomy (and strategic sovereignty) in the EU. In response to the disruptive effects of the 2016 UK referendum on both polities, elites sought to articulate new discourses of their place in the world. By linking Brexit to an enhanced international status for both actors, externalising domestic reform agendas to a diffuse range of external actors and possibilities, and projecting broad-based conceptions of independence that cut across political divides, the twin discourses of Global Britain and European strategic autonomy/sovereignty helped transform crises of internal legitimacy into strategies of foreign policy renewal.

Our theoretical framework helps explain why these two new foreign policy discourses emerged in the wake of major legitimacy crises for the political establishments of both the UK and the EU after the Brexit vote in 2016, why both sides decided to focus on foreign policy and strategic change rather than more salient issues, and why both sides in the Brexit “divorce” ended up following remarkably similar strategies of renewal. Theoretically, our article contributes to research on externalisation (e.g. Destradi *et al.* 2022) by demonstrating the tendency of both populist and non-populist leaders to manage legitimacy crises by emphasising foreign policy issues. It also contributes to our understanding of framing in foreign policy (e.g. Christou and Damro 2024, Jourde 2007) by highlighting the suitability of this domain for broad-based discursive articulations of reform which cannot be operationalised so easily in domestic policy domains.

The article proceeds as follows. In the first section, we articulate a theory of discursive externalisation as a response to domestic legitimacy crises, spelling out the assumptions of our conceptual framework and situating it in relation to existing concepts. In the second section, we discuss our case selection, providing an overview of the circumstances surrounding the 2016 referendum in the UK and discussing the attributes of our linked cases. In the third and fourth sections, we examine how the UK and the EU respectively responded to the referendum, showing how Global Britain and European strategic autonomy both fulfil our criteria for discursive externalisation. Finally, we discuss the implications of our study for the existing literatures on foreign policy framing, externalisation and internationalisation.

A theory of discursive externalisation

The globalisation of world politics over the last three decades, coupled with the internationalisation of political rule and increasing economic interdependence this involved, have brought about a crisis in state–society relations in Western democracies. Globalisation entailed a restructuring of the functioning of states and their linkages with domestic society (Baccaro 2008). First, it weakened political representation and the promotion of specific class interests through party politics (Mair 2013). Second, globalisation has come along with integration in intrusive international regimes with the ability to impose rules on their members, often bypassing national parliaments and courts (Zürn 2004). Third, economic globalisation underpinned the internationalisation of the state, as policymaking was detached from its national constituencies and transposed to horizontal trans-governmental and transnational networks of governance (Bickerton 2012, Chryssogelos 2020). Fourth, new legitimising discourses emerged reflecting cosmopolitan conceptions of statehood, citizenship and sovereignty (Buzan and Wæver 2003, pp. 22–23), presenting class-based politics as old-fashioned (Blyth and Katz 2005), and prompting new kinds of representation based on individualised consumer-citizens and a procedural, rights-based efficiency-driven mode of politics (Kratochwil 2014, p. 119, 129, Mair 2002).

The depoliticising effects of globalisation and the creation of new patterns of “winners” and “losers” resulted in a significant backlash in many societies (e.g. Kriesi *et al.* 2008, Rodrik 2020, Zürn 2004). Political opposition to globalisation took aim at the different facets of the emerging international order, seeking to challenge the increasing power of supranational institutions, the dominance of free-market economics, and the universalist philosophical underpinnings of cosmopolitanism and liberal individualism (Noël and Thérien 2008). Whilst attention to the anti-globalisation movement was initially drawn to direct action outside of the political sphere, most notably the anti-WTO protests in Seattle in 1999 (Levi and Murphy 2006), such ideas began filtering into mainstream political discourses – including within the EU – especially in the aftermath of the financial crisis (Hooghe and Marks 2009).

Right-wing variants drew on ethno-nationalist beliefs and emphasised the value of political community and the illegitimacy of supranational authority, seeking to dismantle liberal norms and establish less constraining forms of international cooperation (Abrahamsen *et al.* 2020, De Orellana and Michelsen 2019, Drolet and Williams 2018). Conversely, left wing alternatives focused more on domestic policy autonomy and articulating a critique of transnational capital rather than seeking to re-establish the bounds of the nation, whilst sharing a profound scepticism towards the liberal international order (Eklundh *et al.* 2024). Precisely because mainstream parties had converged to the (free-market) centre-ground, anti-globalist sentiment tended to emerge via insurgent political movements or specific factions within broader mainstream parties, limiting their influence and their ability to coordinate with like-minded movements (Gidron and Ziblatt 2019).

Growing opposition to internationalism has coincided with the rise of populism (Cadier 2024, Destradi *et al.* 2022, Hadiz and Chryssogelos 2017). Various understood as an ideology, strategy, discourse or style (Mudde and Rovira-Kaltwasser 2017), the core populist move underpinning divergent views is the positing of an antagonistic relationship between “the people” and their enemies, including the “elite” and external “enemies” (Breeze 2019, Chryssogelos *et al.* 2023). Populist strategies are usually employed by

those on the political periphery – or those who can credibly claim to be “outsiders” – who benefit from their claim to an unmediated relationship between leaders and followers of their movements (Chrysogelos and Martill 2021, Barr 2009). While populism is ideologically “thin” (Stanley 2008), its emphasis on the undifferentiated people and their (external) enemies resonates with themes of anti-internationalist thought (Destradi *et al.* 2022). Populism has thus proved especially effective at galvanising citizens in the wake of economic crises (Gidron and Hall 2020, Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014) and in response to cultural disgruntlement with immigration (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018, Tournier-Sol 2015).

For this reason, populists have not only attempted to de-legitimise political elites but also vented against internationalisation, presenting popular sovereignty as inextricably linked with the repatriation of political authority. As such, the nature of populism is across-the-board antithetical to the conventional way that interest representation within compartmentalised sovereign states operating in an open system of international exchange was supposed to operate. It encompasses discourses, modes of communication, ideas of political representation and organisational forms that each in their way respond to the breakdown of these representational links due to internationalisation (Chrysogelos 2020). This is especially true on the political right, where the rise of populism has been linked to concerted efforts to dismantle supranational forms of authority, in contrast with the more muted criticism of left populists (Giurlando and Monteleone 2024). Yet this attribute of populism – namely, its radicalised response to failures of representation – is something that underpins all populisms, whether they are on the left or the right (Gerbaudo 2016, March 2017), and whether they espouse economic or cultural closure of polities (or both).

Yet calls for (partially) reversing the internationalisation at the heart of popular discontent with globalisation have, in the most part, largely failed to produce meaningful change. There are four reasons for this. First, re-nationalisation entails significant adjustment costs in terms of redesigning modes of policymaking and institutional linkages between states and societies. Second, it threatens to cut off state elites from international networks they are used to drawing expertise and reputational resources from. Third, de-internationalisation finds opposition among powerful and concentrated interest groups at the domestic level that are difficult to overcome. Fourth, it would put a host of policy areas that had been effectively outsourced and depoliticised back under the scrutiny of national electorates. As a result, in practice political systems have been much more resistant to curbing internationalisation. This includes populist leaders themselves, who continue to pursue their states’ integration into the international system, continuing to sidestep domestic demands after they come to power (Beattie 2022).

The practical impossibility of de-internationalisation creates a legitimacy problem, since leaders face demands they are either unable or unwilling to respond to. How can they overcome these legitimacy problems and reconcile domestic opposition to the (internationalised) state with the continuation of the internationalised status quo? We believe that the solution lies, paradoxically, in foreign and security policies. We argue that leaders often engage in discursive externalisation – the deployment of foreign policy discourses to articulate domestic policy objectives – to solve protracted legitimacy crises at home. This involves the re-articulation of established formulations of the national interest to signal accommodation of emerging domestic demands that the political system cannot otherwise address. Our argument builds on research showing the role

of foreign policy change in the establishment of new bases of domestic legitimacy (Chryssogelos 2021, Welch 2005). Research has shown externalisation dynamics were important during the Cold War, since détente helped co-opt elements of political resistance into the political mainstream in the absence of costly internal reforms (Chryssogelos and Martill 2021). Other prominent efforts to re-brand national positions and signal strategic change have as a core motivation the mobilisation of domestic support, with prominent examples including Donald Trump's claims to "Make America Great Again" (Edwards 2018, Restad 2020) and Viktor Orbán's instrumental politicisation of EU foreign policy (Maurer and Wright 2021).

Promises of strategic reorientation are especially helpful at signifying change, since they avoid treading on the toes of powerful economic elites and allow leaders to blame external constraints for non-delivery of reforms (Chryssogelos and Martill 2021). Foreign policy can also provide an alternative arena through which leaders can politicise identity debates and establish the bounds of the political community (Hintz 2016). A focus on foreign and security policy can also help leaders to divert citizens' attention from domestic problems (Smith 1996), rallying them "around the flag" (Kritzinger *et al.* 2021) or compensating for domestic reforms that are too costly to implement (Martill and Mesarovich 2024). Discourses of externalisation may be formulated defensively against emerging "threats" and challenges, articulating a discourse of ontological insecurity showing the existing parameters of a political system to be under threat on multiple fronts and thereby identifying domestic arrangements not as "problems" but as values in need of protection (e.g. Browning and Joenniemi 2017). And externalisation can also provide for the continual mobilisation of domestic constituencies, a tactic exploited in recent years by populist governments keen to emphasise the nefarious role of external "enemies" (e.g. Destradi *et al.* 2022, Lacatus and Meibauer 2022, Verbeek and Zaslove 2017).

Discursive externalisation projects the fulfilment of important reforms of a state's socioeconomic governance and representative processes onto the area of foreign policy, turning them from concrete policy goals into open-ended and international strategic objectives that require constant effort, yet – by definition – may never be fully realised. Externalisation operates primarily at the level of strategic orientation and the overall national interest, rather than lower-level means and tactics of foreign policy (Hermann 1990). The higher the level at which the new purpose, mission or national role that will be articulated, the more comprehensive it will be in terms of the domestic deficits it appears as a solution to. Such new purposes and strategic orientations can appear as a solution to multiple domestic problems of political representation, economic inequality or the reduced legitimacy of an official ideology all at the same time. Paradoxically then, this promise of new strategic orientation does not presuppose or necessitate prior sweeping domestic change in a range of sectors, as the original concept of foreign policy "restructuring" during the Cold War theorised (Holsti 1982), but is designed precisely to *avoid* such reforms because it is external change that will resolve domestic failures.

Discursive externalisation differs from both internationalisation and re-nationalisation. Internationalisation prioritises external goals as the best way to safeguard the state and society's interests and seeks to de-politicise state–society relations by insulating political and economic elites from domestic pressures (Bickerton 2012, Blyth and Katz 2005).

Contrary to internationalisation, externalisation does not seek to channel sub-state interests into new forms of institutionalisation at the international level (e.g. Verbeek and van der Vleuten 2008), but rather seeks to shift the focus of reform demands into the domain of more traditional foreign and security policymaking. Re-nationalisation, on the other hand, aims to repatriate policymaking powers and prioritise domestic sovereignty over international commitments, institutions and rules. Externalisation, in contrast, consciously articulates foreign policy as a solution to domestic representational deficits, but does not extend this to the point of accepting a fully re-established control of domestic society over the political system.

Externalisation works through the articulation of discourses and narratives designed to channel existing criticism of the internationalised state into new representations of the state's position in the international arena. Such discursive moves do not so much represent societal demands as transpose them away from their original bearers to the international level, where they can supposedly be served better. In this way, discursive externalisation repackages demands and seeks to divert attention away from underlying issues; namely, the socio-political consequences of internationalisation. Externalisation relies heavily on ambiguity and on the articulation of broad discourses as 'empty signifiers' (Laclau 2006). In this way, objectives of foreign policy such as independence, sovereignty, security or prosperity are transformed from measurable indicators of international success into signifiers of domestic reform onto which different constituencies are invited to project their preferences and aspirations. This strategy allows leaders to obtain more "buy-in" while also occluding significant divergences between different political constituencies (e.g. globalists vs. nationalists). The breadth of the discourse also allows elites to co-opt a range of policy responses into delivery of the new foreign policy.

Case studies: Global Britain and European Strategic Autonomy

In the remainder of this article, we examine the articulation of "Global Britain" and "Strategic Autonomy" discourses in, respectively, the post-Brexit UK and the EU. We argue that both discourses are rooted in the existential crises of legitimacy which Brexit brought about for both sides, in response to which elites sought to articulate new discourses of their respective polity's place in the world. By linking the Brexit vote to enhanced international status, externalising the implementation of post-Brexit agendas to a diffuse range of external actors and possibilities, and projecting broad-based conceptions of independence that cut across political divides, the twin discourses of Global Britain and Strategic Autonomy/Sovereignty worked in similar ways to transform crises of internal legitimacy into strategies of foreign policy renewal.

Our aim is to show that, underneath such differences, there is a common response in the recourse to externalisation. To the extent that externalisation can be shown to be a common response undertaken by different actors with different interests, our findings about the core dynamics of externalisation will be more robust and hold greater external validity. Our two cases are not independent, but by highlighting common and uncoordinated responses in the same direction to the same circumstances, they help confirm our claim that externalisation is a helpful response to domestic crises. Nor are the cases explicitly "domestic" in the traditional sense, since Brexit concerns both the UK's difficult relationship with the EU – broadly speaking, a facet of UK external policymaking – and

the process through which a member state can exit the EU. Yet the distinction between internal and domestic issues within the respective societies and “political systems” operates in a similar manner, making comparison not only justified, but helpful. In both cases, we see a similar pattern of an ostensibly populist-generated (or in any case populist-informed) crisis of domestic legitimacy – in the shape of the vote for Brexit and rising Eurosceptic movements across the EU – leading to elite responses that tried to split the distance between apparent popular demands for return of national sovereignty and the need to keep the polity engaged with the international realm. In so doing, leaders in the UK and the EU had to rearticulate significant parts of their foreign policy priorities in terms responsive to the sense of domestic crisis, in essence incorporating populist tropes to strategic discourses aimed at pacifying popular anger and insecurities (Roch and Oleari 2024).

Global Britain

The UK joined in 1973 a project which it had done little to shape after over a decade on the outside, and never sat comfortably with aspects of the integration project. While the Maastricht Treaty came with opt-outs for the sceptical UK, these failed to quell a belief among many Conservatives that the Treaty represented a step too far, such that Eurosceptic attitudes continued to grow in the party (Fontana and Parsons 2015). While Euroscepticism had its origins in elite sentiment, increasingly it came to take the form of a popular movement. Euroscepticism helped mobilise the Conservative base, especially in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, with austerity policies and squeezed incomes auguring well for easy scapegoats (Hobolt 2016, Hopkin 2017). This was wound up with broader continent-wide developments, including the breakdown in state–society coordination during the 1990s, the emergence of new patterns of winners and losers from globalisation, and the resulting decline of the “permissive consensus” through which European integration had been sheltered from high levels of political salience (Bickerton *et al.* 2015, Sternberg 2013). The UK Independence Party (UKIP), with its blend of populism and Euroscepticism, was well-placed to capitalise on these attitudes, and the party’s rising support among Conservative voters was one reason David Cameron committed his party to an in/out referendum on EU membership in January 2013 (Bale 2018, Tourner-Sol 2015).

Cameron had hoped that the referendum would secure a majority for his renegotiated agreement, but the success of the Leave campaign’s promise to “take back control” – among other factors – helped secure a 51.9% margin in favour of withdrawal. While the idea that Brexit represented a grassroots movement of the downtrodden is a subjective and highly politicised perspective, it is also true that the Brexit vote channelled significant discontent at the UK’s political system and economic choices. The Leave campaign’s messaging was highly effective at co-opting dissent against the status quo. Voting data show that the campaign was successful in mobilising new constituencies of the electorate which felt disenfranchised by the choice between similar mainstream parties (Curtice 2017). The distinction between Leavers and Remainers cut across socio-economic fault-lines, affording the categories a particular resonance within UK society (Hobolt 2016, Sobolewska and Ford 2020). Leave was a popular option among low-skilled workers who found themselves particularly exposed to the vicissitudes of

globalisation and in the de-industrialised heartland of northern England – the so-called “left behind” (Glencross 2016).

Having failed to prevent Brexit, Cameron resigned in the aftermath of the vote, leaving it to his successor – Theresa May – to deliver withdrawal from the EU. While May was not a dyed-in-the-wool Eurosceptic, she was a pragmatic politician and was certainly no Europhile, and committed immediately to delivering on what she interpreted as the “will of the people” enshrined in the referendum. May was motivated by a desire to keep the fractious Conservative Party together but also to act on the disaffection expressed in the Brexit vote. Yet delivering Brexit was far from simple. Much of the UK’s trade was oriented towards Europe and frictionless trade with the continent was guaranteed by the EU’s Single Market and Customs Union, which together removed most barriers to economic activity (Hix 2018). And while it was possible to participate in the Single Market as a third country, this would make Britain a rule-taker in a manner even less conducive to placating Eurosceptic opinion. While May recognised some – but not all – of these trade-offs at the beginning of her tenure, and acknowledged that the UK would find itself in a more distant relationship, she had no desire to fully sever the economic relationship. Her intention was to leverage EU access to the UK’s market to obtain a bespoke agreement in which the UK could selectively access elements of the Single Market whilst upholding “red lines” aimed at delivering on the promise to “take back control” (Martill and Staiger 2021).

In spite of the internal divisions highlighted by the Brexit referendum, the May government’s rhetoric emphasised Britain’s changing role in the world. This was most clearly evident in the “Global Britain” slogan which was deployed in May’s party conference speech in October 2016 (Haugevik and Svendsen 2023). The idea that Britain would be “global” post-Brexit tapped into a preoccupation with globality and the UK’s independence among Leave supporters, as well as nostalgia for a time in which the UK was a more important global player (Gamble 2021, Melhuish 2022). Leave campaign materials had argued that EU membership constrained Britain’s actions overseas, effectively diminishing its global credentials and preventing it from running an independent and more agile foreign policy (Rogstad and Martill 2022). But the prominence of Global Britain was surprising. Foreign affairs issues had featured comparatively little in the referendum debate (Hill 2018). Moreover, the impact of Brexit on foreign and security policy was not thought to be as significant as other areas. EU security cooperation had always been but one framework among many through which European security issues could be handled, and in any case the UK’s significance in this area meant prospects for continuity post-Brexit were strong (Svendsen and Adler-Nissen 2019). And May in particular sought to maintain the existing relationship in this area, unveiling proposals for a security partnership with the EU in May 2018 (HM Government 2018).

While the government frequently invoked the Global Britain moniker in respect of foreign and security policy commitments (e.g. HM Government 2019), what was being sold through this concept – in practical terms – was very much what had gone before. Rather than indicating a fundamentally new foreign policy direction, Global Britain was a branding exercise that was aimed at domestic constituencies (Daddow 2019). Talk of Global Britain provided a means of signalling the opportunities from Brexit, partly as a means of laying the groundwork for a discourse that could distract from the material damage Brexit was likely to bring about (Turner 2019). The discourse also allowed the

government to signal to pro-Brexit constituencies that their worldview was informing the direction of UK policymaking and its position in the international order. Because a more distant economic relationship with the EU would be far more costly, signalling divergence in the foreign policy domain also allowed UK governments the ability to compensate for divergence not deemed feasible in the trading relationship (Martill and Mesarovich 2024). Furthermore, the Global Britain discourse stabilised the UK's identity and "sense of self" and helped soothe ontological anxieties introduced after Brexit (Haugevik and Svendsen 2023, Rogers 2024).

The vagueness of the Global Britain concept allowed the government to craft the message to different constituencies, resulting in a somewhat confused rendering of contradictory promises in the government's rhetoric (Beasley *et al.* 2021, Oppermann *et al.* 2020). Global Britain first-and-foremost sought to appease Brexit supporters, and helped occlude key differences within the Leave camp, notably between those who venerated empire versus those wishing to embrace a post-European future (Melhuish 2022, Saunders 2020), and between those who supported greater openness to the global economy and those who preferred greater protection (e.g. Saunders 2020).

The emphasis on globality, rather than specific new partners, enabled adherents of more specific designs on post-Brexit foreign policy – including those based, variously, on the Anglosphere, "emerging markets", transatlantic relations, and the Commonwealth – to buy-into the overarching concept (e.g. Bell and Vucetic 2019, Gamble 2021, Namusoke 2016, Wellings 2019, pp. 83–89). For European audiences, meanwhile, Global Britain further helped to reinforce the credibility of the UK's threat to walk away from the European project without a deal if necessary (Martill and Staiger 2021). Simultaneously, the concept offered a means of signalling to international and domestic audiences that Britain remained committed to its global responsibilities (Haugevik and Svendsen 2023, p. 2394).

The rhetoric of Global Britain proved adept at packaging ostensible wins from Brexit and outlasted May after her departure in July 2019, becoming equally associated with the performative politics of her successor, Boris Johnson. Johnson not only deployed the slogan in speeches and as the basis of significant policies, like the *Integrated Review* – title: "Global Britain in a Competitive Age" (HM Government 2021) – but also enshrined the concept in a more right-leaning foreign policy, which included breaking ties with the EU security and defence apparatus (Martill and Mesarovich 2024), reducing the UK's long-standing commitment to a 0.7% of GDP target on overseas development aid (Walton and Johnstone 2024), and brandishing "rollover" trade deals as significant victories (Heron and Siles-Brügge 2021).

The rhetoric of Global Britain also informed the decision to sign the AUKUS agreement with the USA and Australia, a pact aimed at securing the Indo-Pacific region from Chinese influence which saw Canberra renege on an agreement to purchase French nuclear-powered submarines in favour of American providers (Vucetic 2022, p. 261). In bringing together the major players in various permutations of Global Britain – Australia, the United States – and in conveying a growing UK presence in the Asia-Pacific, AUKUS represented an ideologically motivated effort on behalf of the Johnson government to demonstrate the efficacy of the concept of a Global Britain, albeit at the expense of the UK's relationship with key European partners, especially France (Holland and Staunton 2024).

To summarise the UK case, popular disenchantment with globalisation and the UK political system was successfully channelled by insurgent parties and Conservative backbenchers into support for Brexit. Those charged with delivering on the Brexit mandate sought to do so in a manner that would preclude economic damage and actively sought to channel discontent in turn into support for a new foreign policy imaginary. The vagueness of “Global Britain” helped leaders appeal to broad constituencies while effectively selling little in the way of change, with May seeking continuity in UK foreign policy and Johnson using Global Britain to sell largely symbolic changes as victories for post-Brexit Britain. By discursively externalising demands rooted in objections to the internationalised state, successive UK leaders were able to signal a clearer break with the status quo than occurred in many areas (notwithstanding that Brexit has changed Britain’s economy and society in significant ways).

Strategic Autonomy

The EU interpreted the referendum in the UK as an existential crisis. Not only was Brexit largely unprecedented, it also represented a significant dent to the EU’s credibility and its movement – at least in principle – towards “ever closer Union”. More practically, Brexit brought with it the threat of contagion and the break-up of the European project. EU leaders worried that an outcome in which the UK obtained beneficial arrangements from outside would lead to an inevitable clamour for exit from other states (Schuette 2021). Moreover, the EU27 anticipated UK efforts to “divide-and-rule” among the remaining member states, predicting – correctly, as it turned out – that London would seek to make individual side-payments to peel individual states away from the collective EU position after withdrawal (Laffan 2019).

Brexit also highlighted broader, structural issues with the EU polity. The 2015 migration crisis and the Eurozone crisis were recurring themes in the pro-Brexit literature and fed into arguments in the UK that the Union was falling apart (Nugent 2018). Brexit also highlighted the problematic strait-jacketing effect of common EU rules across diverse national economies (Bickerton 2019, Thompson 2017). It also highlighted some of the difficulties of reform, especially efforts to roll-back areas of integration deemed potentially problematic, but subject to the “joint-decision trap” (e.g. Scharpf 1988). Without buying into the UK’s stylised representations of the “democratic deficit”, it showed that fears regarding the hollowing-out of national parliamentary control could feed into potent narratives domestically (Cygan *et al.* 2020). Finally, Brexit highlighted broader problems at the heart of the European demos, including polarisation, Euroscepticism and the increasing political assertiveness of the “losers” from globalisation (De Vries 2017, Hobolt 2016).

Brexit thus became a critical juncture and a moment for reflection. One part of this concerned the need to articulate a response to Brexit and a plan for moving forward. This saw coordination among the EU27 in the initial days after the Brexit vote, articulation of the EU’s position on the Brexit negotiations by the European Council, and the tasking of the Commission to lead the negotiations on this basis (Schuette 2021). The EU position, broadly speaking, sought to preclude contagion and defend the integrity of the Single Market and the EU’s decision-making autonomy from UK efforts to “cherry pick” access to the EU, a strategy which relied on the UK not obtaining a beneficial deal from the outside (Beaumont 2019, Laffan 2019). But another equally important part of this was

galvanising the European project with a renewed sense of progress. In this respect, Brexit opened up a moment of reflection among European leaders, who took advantage of the sense of crisis to table various proposals for further integration. Thus, as well as seeking to manage the Brexit process, EU leaders also sought to narrate the Union's role in the world post-Brexit.

What came to define the period of European integration in the aftermath of Brexit was not anything connected to issues raised in the Brexit campaign or internal fissures made salient by the vote, but rather the idea of "strategic autonomy". Broadly speaking, the term refers to the capacity for Europeans to take on responsibility for their own security, although variants of the concept exist in relation to other areas of external relations too, including in relation to technology and external economic relations (Csernatoni 2021). Strategic autonomy is not a new concept. The St Malo agreement which led to the establishment of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in 1998 made mention of the desire for Europe to be able to act autonomously from NATO and the United States, and arguably the *raison d'être* for establishing this capacity was to overcome the EU's weakness as a security actor and its perceived dependence on NATO (Hofmann and Mérand 2020). Yet these references to autonomy did not come to dominate the European political discourse in the way "strategic autonomy" would post-Brexit.

Importantly, strategic autonomy did not emerge as a consequence – directly, at least – of what the UK's departure from the EU might have implied for the Union's place in the world. Early assessments of the impact of Brexit on UK–EU security cooperation were rather optimistic about the extent of continuity which might be possible in this area, owing to several factors. These included the general lack of salience of strategic questions in the referendum campaign (Hill 2018), the ability of policymakers to continue collaborating "under the radar" (Svendsen and Adler-Nissen 2019), the fact that the EU was only one among many frameworks for security cooperation on the European continent (Whitman 2016), the clear mutuality of interest on both sides on the need for continued strategic engagement (Sus and Martill 2019) and the UK's relative capabilities in this area coupled with the resulting contribution it could make (Svendsen 2022). With both sides keen to reach an agreement, security and defence might even have been considered one of the least likely domains in which to expect politicisation on either side.

Emphasis on strategic autonomy after the Brexit referendum was motivated by several inter-related factors. One was the desire to show integration was proceeding in spite of Brexit. An emphasis on strategic autonomy helped show integration was on track and projected a sense of internal coherence and external strength during the Brexit "divorce". This was enabled by several specific internal factors, including the ready availability of pre-existing proposals for security and defence integration – PESCO, for example, was in the Lisbon Treaty, but never activated – and the fact that the EU had historically done little on defence, meaning the immediate gains of cooperation represented low-hanging fruit while the domain presented few examples of failure attributable to the EU (Martill and Sus 2019). Moreover, the UK's impending departure meant the traditional Atlanticist state blocking movement in this area was not empowered to veto policy proposals. These internal drivers were further enabled by changes in the Union's external environment, including the election of Donald Trump and fears of American disengagement from Europe (and NATO) as well as growing concern about Russia's actions on the continent's Eastern flank (e.g. Tocci 2018).

The EU's post-Brexit emphasis on strategic autonomy was not a "flash in the pan", nor was it confined to a few select mentions. Rather, it represented a sustained discourse placed at the forefront of the Union's agenda, coming to define not only the individual Commission presidencies of Juncker ("autonomy") and von der Leyen ("Geopolitical Commission") but also the overarching concept within which policies and reforms needed to be justified. Indeed, the emphasis on strategic autonomy became so highly entrenched that specific *Directorates-General* began articulating their variants of the concept, such as "open strategic autonomy", put forward by DG Trade to head-off what it regarded as protectionist assumptions within the broader concept (Christou and Damro 2024). Member state leaders, too, were prone to repeating the language of autonomy, notably French President Emmanuel Macron, who spoke frequently of the related idea of European sovereignty (Fiott 2021, p. 11). Essentially, the post-Brexit emphasis on strategic autonomy came to define how the Union viewed itself – and the future self it wanted to become – as well as the policies deemed necessary for the integration process to prosper.

Strategic autonomy was also actualised in a number of specific policy proposals which together formed part of a post-Brexit moment in EU security and defence. In the weeks following the referendum, the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, unveiled the EU Global Strategy, setting out the EU's priorities on the world stage and emphasising the commitment to a more autonomous Union (EEAS 2016). Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) was launched in December 2017 after having lain dormant in the Lisbon Treaty since 2010 (Blockmans and Crosson 2021). The European Defence Fund (EDF) was also launched in 2017, marking the first time the EU budget had been used for defence spending. Various subsequent mechanisms aimed at improving coordination and inter-operability were also justified on the basis of the nascent ambitions of autonomy, including the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) announced in 2017 and reporting in November 2020, and the Strategic Compass, which would subsequently act as a key forum for discussing the Union's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Whether novel or pre-existing, these initiatives were all justified in the aftermath of Brexit under the banner of EU strategic autonomy and on the basis of what was necessary following the Brexit vote (Michaels and Sus 2024).

Alongside the development of new programmes and structures aimed at (partially) realising strategic autonomy, the EU also began to articulate a distinct position on its security relationship with the UK post-Brexit. The member states and the Commission were keen to see the UK stay closely aligned to the EU's foreign and security policy after Brexit in order to prevent a security gap emerging and to continue to capitalise on the UK's significant diplomatic and military capabilities (Dee and Smith 2017). Yet despite its keenness to secure an agreement going forwards, the EU position was limited in several respects in what it could offer, and early indications were that no arrangements in which the UK might be involved in decision-making would be countenanced by the Commission (Sus and Martill 2019).

The Commission's position was a result of several inter-related constraints. One was the need to defend the Union's decision-making autonomy and avoid giving the UK influence from outside (Barnier 2021). Then there was the related concern about offering the UK a beneficial deal that would promote "à la carte" ideas about integration, with security issues increasingly viewed through the prism of the broader Brexit process (Martill and

Mesarovich 2024). Another limitation was the lack of available options for third countries when it came to participating in EU security and defence policies from outside (Wessel 2019). Added to this was the fear of establishing a precedent for other third countries, like Turkey, which might expect to be offered similar arrangements (Svendson 2022). Thus, while strategic autonomy more generally sought to demonstrate that integration could still move forward after Brexit, the specifics of the UK–EU relationship also became increasingly intertwined with the politics of Brexit.

Strategic autonomy was powerful because it conjured up an image of an increasingly integrated Union post-Brexit. It allowed European policymakers to show that integration was back on track without encountering the kind of resistance they would have in reshaping problematic internal policies which had (in part) influenced the UK's decision to leave. In so doing it effectively externalised to the security and defence field debates about pertinent domestic deficits that the Brexit vote raised for the EU as much as it did for the UK, including the lagging political legitimacy of elites, a sense of representational impotence of citizens, uneven economic growth, and concerns about national and cultural sovereignty. Brexit became an opportunity for the EU to project these problems on the image of a hapless UK struggling to exit in an orderly fashion, while framing them not as domestic problems but as external threats that only a stronger EU as a security actor would be able to address.

It helped that the language of strategic autonomy operated at a high level of abstraction, such that both policymakers and observers expended many hours trying to figure out what the concept actually meant. The broad discourse meant that strategic autonomy could represent developments in a manner that simplified underlying tensions within respective developments and instead emphasised a singular outcome in a more resilient EU. Crucially, only some of the visions for autonomy were compatible with the overarching narrative of a successful post-Brexit rejuvenation. The discourse did not specify whether it was EU or European autonomy that was to be prized, and whether the aim was for the EU to supplement NATO's actions, or to seek alternatives to Atlanticist structures. Nor did the discourse spell out clearly what the intended relation was with the post-Brexit UK, and whether the aim was to co-opt third countries into this vision, or to exclude them from it. This lack of specificity meant that actors supportive of very different notions of what autonomy meant could project their ideas onto the master-frame and therefore endorse the concept (Csernaton 2021).

How this manifested in practice shows the value of the vague framing. DG Trade could present a concept of "open strategic autonomy" alongside French notions of "strategic sovereignty" which were more protectionist in their designs on the EU defence market (Christou and Damro 2024). And Atlanticist states like Poland – and even the USA and the UK to some extent – could endorse in principle the idea of autonomy if it meant more equal burden sharing within NATO. Developments like PESCO also illustrated many of these tensions, with some projects seeking to supplant existing Atlanticist projects but others contingent upon collaboration with the USA and the UK and designed to reinforce NATO (e.g. Military Mobility) (Blockmans and Crosson 2021, Huntley 2022, Sweeney and Winn 2020). And non-EU initiatives including French proposals for a European Intervention Initiative (EI2) that fed into the discourse of autonomy in many ways represented a challenge to the overall EU position in that they sought extra-EU frameworks that were nimbler and could keep the British on board (Fiott 2021). In this way,

piecemeal developments as well as some which actively challenged the EU's role in security and defence could be co-opted into the broader discourse of a more relevant Union post-Brexit.

In sum, notions of strategic autonomy and strategic sovereignty gained strength after the Brexit vote as a means of demonstrating the continued viability of the European project in the face of significant challenges to the *raison d'être* of the European project manifest in the Brexit vote. While Brexit highlighted structural problems at the heart of the European project and chimed in many ways with growing criticism of the Union among citizens of the EU27, the politics of UK withdrawal mitigated against soul-searching and rather prioritised efforts to preclude contagion by demonstrating the value of membership and reinforcing narratives of European collective power (Laffan 2023). The renewed focus on strategic autonomy which emerged out of the Brexit vote allowed the Union to signal responsiveness to the demands of citizens while shifting reforms into a domain where there was little pushback and where representations of the EU could be easily built through new foreign policy narratives. Thus, through abstract and ill-defined notions of autonomy, existing priorities were packaged as novel ones with broad support obtained from almost all quarters.

Conclusion

This article has examined the tendency of leaders to articulate strategies of discursive externalisation when responding to crises of domestic legitimacy. We demonstrated our argument by looking at both sides of the Brexit divorce between the UK and the EU following the June 2016 referendum. We showed how both the UK and the EU articulated distinct and highly salient representations of their international role after Brexit in response to the crises of legitimacy opened up in both polities. In the UK, the May government articulated a "Global Britain" discourse which aimed to connote British relevance in the post-Brexit world. The discourse was broad and aimed to signal to Brexit supporters that May was committed to a meaningful Brexit, and to international stakeholders that Britain had no intention of pursuing an isolationist path. In the EU, a top-level discourse of "strategic autonomy" emerged out of EU security and defence reforms, an important aim of which was to demonstrate that the integration process was moving forward. The discourse was pitched at a level of generality which ensured buy-in from the broadest range of actors possible and which effectively framed piecemeal – and contradictory – policies as connoting increased EU actorness post-Brexit.

Empirically, our case highlights key similarities between Global Britain and strategic autonomy that have not been acknowledged in the existing literature on Brexit and foreign affairs on either side (e.g. Beasley *et al.* 2021, Oppermann *et al.* 2020, Tocci 2018, Sweeney and Winn 2020). Our findings also help to explain why it was that foreign and security policy became an area where both sides sought not only novel reforms but also a more distant relationship from one another, in spite of the *prima facie* case for continuity in this area (e.g. Svendsen and Adler-Nissen 2019). Moreover, by showing that these dynamics are also present in the response of liberal actors (i.e. the EU) to internal crises, we help broaden the scope of applicability of an approach which has hitherto focusing on populist and sovereigntist actors (e.g. Destradi *et al.* 2022, Martill and Mesarovich 2024). While such actors indeed catalyse a sense of political

and representational crisis, the instinct to continue to draw legitimacy from the international sphere and to insulate political rule from domestic demands is the driving force behind strategies of externalisation of politicians of all stripes.

Theoretically, our findings point to an important link between domestic crises and foreign policy change (e.g. Welch 2005), showing how the balance of costs between different kinds of reforms often pushes leaders to narrate new foreign policy trajectories in response to demands for de-internationalisation. We also contribute to research on framing, signalling, rhetoric and narrative in foreign policymaking (e.g. Christou and Damro 2024, Jourde 2007) by showing how leaders seek to deploy broad representations of change to obtain support from multiple constituencies of opinion. Finally, our findings speak to the distinctiveness of foreign policy as a domain of policymaking (Hudson 2005). By showing that the nebulous nature of foreign policy can be attractive to leaders when responding to domestic crises, we flip common sense understandings of the distinctiveness of foreign policy and “high politics” on their head.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful and constructive suggestions on the manuscript.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Benjamin Martill  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2505-1624>

Angelos Chrysogelos  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2350-9112>

References

- Abrahamsen, R., *et al.*, 2020. Confronting the international political sociology of the new right. *International political sociology*, 14 (1), 94–107.
- Baccaro, L. (2008) Labour, globalisation and inequality: are trade unions still redistributive? *IILS discussion paper*, 192. Geneva: IILS.
- Bale, T., 2018. Who leads and who follows? The symbiotic relationship between UKIP and the conservatives – and populism and Euroscepticism. *Politics*, 38 (3), 263–277.
- Barnier, M., 2021. *My secret Brexit diary: A glorious illusion*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Barr, R.R., 2009. Populists, outsiders and anti-establishment politics. *Party politics*, 15 (1), 29–48.
- Beasley, R., Kaarbo, J., and Oppermann, K., 2021. Role theory, foreign policy, and the social construction of sovereignty: Brexit stage right. *Global studies quarterly*, 1 (1), ksab001.
- Beattie, A. 2022. The populist strongmen who are strangely keen on globalisation. *Financial Times*, 27 April 2022.
- Baumont, P., 2019. Brexit and EU legitimisation: unwitting Martyr for the cause? *New perspectives*, 27 (3), 15–36.
- Bell, D., and Vucetic, S., 2019. Brexit, CANZUK, and the legacy of empire. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 21 (2), 367–382.
- Bickerton, C.J., 2012. *European integration: from nation-states to member states*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Bickerton, C.J., 2019. The limits of differentiation: capitalist diversity and labour mobility as drivers of Brexit. *Comparative European politics*, 17 (2), 231–245.
- Bickerton, C.J., Hodson, D., and Puetter, U., 2015. The new intergovernmentalism: European integration in the Post-Maastricht era. *Journal of common market studies*, 53 (4), 703–722.
- Blockmans, S., and Crosson, D.M., 2021. PESCO: A force for positive integration in EU defence. *European foreign affairs review*, 26 (3), 87–110.
- Blyth, M., and Katz, R., 2005. From catch-all politics to cartelisation: the political economy of the cartel party. *West European politics*, 28 (1), 33–60.
- Borriello, A., and Brack, N., 2019. 'I want my sovereignty back!' A comparative analysis of the populist discourses of Podemos, the 5 Star Movement, the FN and UKIP during the economic and migration crises. *Journal of European integration*, 41 (7), 833–853.
- Breeze, R., 2019. Positioning “the people” and its enemies: populism and nationalism in AfD and UKIP. *Javnost – the public*, 26 (1), 89–104.
- Browning, C.S., and Joenniemi, P., 2017. Ontological security, self-articulation and the securitization of identity. *Cooperation and conflict*, 52 (1), 31–47.
- Buzan, B., and Wæver, O., 2003. *Regions and powers: the structures of international security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cadier, D., 2024. Foreign policy as the continuation of domestic politics by other means: pathways and patterns of populist politicisation. *Foreign policy analysis*, orad035.
- Christou, A., and Damro, C., 2024. Frames and issue linkage: EU trade policy in the geoeconomic turn. *JCMS: journal of common market studies*, 62 (4), 1080–1096.
- Chryssogelos, A., 2020. State transformation and populism: from the internationalized to the neo-sovereign state? *Politics*, 40 (1), 22–37.
- Chryssogelos, A., 2021. *Party systems and foreign policy change in liberal democracies: cleavages, ideas, competition*. London: Routledge.
- Chryssogelos, A., et al., 2023. New directions in the study of populism in international relations. *International studies review*, 25 (4), viad035.
- Chryssogelos, A.S., and Martill, B., 2021. The domestic sources of détente: state–society relations and foreign policy change during the cold war. *Foreign policy analysis*, 17 (2), orab003.
- Csernatoni, R., 2021. Disruption ahead? European strategic autonomy and future technology. In: B. Martill, and J. Dobber, eds. *Beyond autonomy: rethinking Europe as a strategic actor*. Brussels: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung and LSE IDEAS, 18–23.
- Curtice, J., 2017. Why leave won the UK's EU referendum. *JCMS: Journal of common market studies*, 55 (S1), 19–37.
- Cygan, A., Lynch, P., and Whitaker, R., 2020. UK parliamentary scrutiny of the EU political and legal space after Brexit. *Journal of common market studies*, 58 (6), 1605–1620.
- Daddow, O., 2019. Globalbritain™: the discursive construction of Britain's post-Brexit world role. *Global affairs*, 5 (1), 5–22.
- De Orellana, P., and Michelsen, N., 2019. Reactionary internationalism: the philosophy of the new right. *Review of international studies*, 45 (5), 748–767.
- De Vries, C.E., 2017. Benchmarking Brexit: how the British decision to leave shapes EU public opinion. *JCMS: Journal of common market studies*, 55 (S1), 38–53.
- Dee, M., and Smith, K.E., 2017. UK diplomacy at the UN after Brexit: challenges and opportunities. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 19 (3), 527–542.
- Destradi, S., Plagemann, J., and Taş, H., 2022. Populism and the politicisation of foreign policy. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 24 (3), 475–492.
- Drolet, J.-F., and Williams, M.C., 2018. Radical conservatism and global order: international theory and the new right. *International theory*, 10 (3), 285–313.
- Eatwell, R., and Goodwin, M., 2018. *National populism: the revolt against liberal democracy*. London: Penguin.
- Edwards, J.A., 2018. Make America great again: Donald Trump and redefining the U.S. role in the world. *Communication quarterly*, 66 (2), 176–195.

- EEAS. 2016. *Shared vision, common action: A stronger Europe. A global strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*. June 2016. Available at: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf. Accessed 2 August 2024.
- Eklundh, E., Stengel, F.A., and Wojczewski, T., 2024. Left populism and foreign policy: Bernie Sanders and Podemos. *International affairs*, 100 (5), 1899–1918.
- Fiott, D., 2021. A clash of concepts? Making sense of 'European sovereignty' and strategic autonomy'. In: B. in Martill, and J. Dobber, eds. *Beyond autonomy: rethinking Europe as a strategic actor*. Brussels: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung and LSE IDEAS, 8–12.
- Fontana, C., and Parsons, C., 2015. 'One woman's prejudice': did Margaret Thatcher cause Britain's anti-Europeanism? *JCMS: Journal of common market studies*, 53 (1), 89–105.
- Gamble, A., 2021. The Brexit negotiations and the Anglosphere. *The political quarterly*, 92 (1), 108–112.
- Gerbaudo, P. 2016. Post-neoliberalism and the politics of sovereignty. *Open Democracy*, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/post-neoliberalism-and-politics-of-sovereignty/>.
- Gidron, N., and Hall, P.A., 2020. Populism as a problem of social integration. *Comparative political studies*, 53 (7), 1027–1059.
- Gidron, N., and Ziblatt, D., 2019. Center-right political parties in advanced democracies. *Annual review of political science*, 22, 17–35.
- Giurlando, P., and Monteleone, C., 2024. Institutional change, sovereigntist contestation and the limits of populism: evidence from Southern Europe. *International affairs*, 100 (5), 2047–2067.
- Glencross, A., 2016. *Why the UK voted for Brexit*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hadiz, V.R., and Chryssogelos, A., 2017. Populism in world politics: a comparative cross-regional perspective. *International political science review*, 38 (4), 399–411.
- Haugevik, K., and Svendsen, Ø, 2023. On safer ground? The emergence and evolution of 'Global Britain'. *International affairs*, 99 (6), 2387–2404.
- Hermann, C.F., 1990. Changing course: when governments choose to redirect foreign policy. *International studies quarterly*, 34 (1), 3–21.
- Heron, T., and Siles-Brügge, G., 2021. UK–US trade relations and 'Global Britain'. *The political quarterly*, 92 (4), 732–736.
- Hill, C., 2018. Turning back the clock: the illusion of a global political role for Britain. In: B. in Martill, and U. Staiger, eds. *Brexit and beyond: rethinking the futures of Europe*. London: UCL Press, 183–192.
- Hintz, L., 2016. "Take it outside!" national identity contestation in the foreign policy arena. *European journal of international relations*, 22 (2), 335–361.
- Hix, S., 2018. Brexit: where is the EU–UK relationship heading? *JCMS: journal of common market studies*, 56 (S1), 11–27.
- HM Government. 2018. 'Framework for the UK-EU security partnership'. May 2018. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5af2d6f6ed915d586f32aad4/2018-05-0_security_partnership_slides__SI__FINAL.pdf. Accessed 1 August 2024.
- HM Government. 2019. 'Collection: Global Britain: delivering on our international ambition'. 23 September 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/global-britain-delivering-on-our-international-ambition>. Accessed 2 August 2024.
- HM Government. 2021. 'Global Britain in a competitive age: the integrated review of security, defence, development and foreign policy'. 16 March 2021. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-britain-in-a-competitive-age-the-integrated-review-of-security-defence-development-and-foreign-policy>.
- Hobolt, S.B., 2016. The Brexit vote: a divided nation, a divided continent. *Journal of European public policy*, 23 (9), 1259–1277.
- Hofmann, S.C., and Mérand, F., 2020. In search of lost time: memory-framing, bilateral identity-making, and European security. *JCMS: journal of common market studies*, 58 (1), 155–171.
- Holland, J., and Staunton, E., 2024. 'Brothers in arms': France, the Anglosphere and AUKUS. *International affairs*, 100 (2), 712–729.
- Holsti, K.J., 1982. *Why nations realign: foreign policy restructuring in the postwar world*. reprint. London: Routledge.

- Hooghe, L., and Marks, G., 2009. A postfunctionalist theory of European integration: from permissive consensus to constraining dissensus. *British journal of political science*, 39 (1), 1–23.
- Hopkin, J., 2017. When Polanyi met Farage: market fundamentalism, economic nationalism, and Britain's exit from the European Union. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 19 (3), 465–478.
- Hudson, V.M., 2005. Foreign policy analysis: actor-specific theory and the ground of international relations. *Foreign policy analysis*, 1 (1), 1–30.
- Huntley, M.D., 2022. European defence policy at a crossroads – Germany preserving the status quo and France seeking change? *European politics and society*, 23 (2), 173–188.
- Ibsen, M.F., 2019. The populist conjuncture: legitimation crisis in the age of globalized capitalism. *Political studies*, 67 (3), 795–811.
- Jourde, C., 2007. The international relations of small neoauthoritarian states: Islamism, warlordism, and the framing of stability. *International studies quarterly*, 51 (2), 481–503.
- Kratochwil, F., 2014. *The status of law in world society: meditations on the role and rule of law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kriesi, H., et al., 2008. *West European politics in the age of globalisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kritzinger, S., et al., 2021. 'Rally round the flag': the COVID-19 crisis and trust in the national government. *West European politics*, 44 (5-6), 1205–1231.
- Lacatus, C., and Meibauer, G., 2022. 'Saying it like it is': right-wing populism, international politics, and the performance of authenticity. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 24 (3), 437–457.
- Laclau, E., 2006. Why constructing a people is the main task of radical politics. *Critical inquiry*, 32 (4), 646–680.
- Laffan, B., 2019. How the EU27 came to be. *JCMS: journal of common market studies*, 57 (S1), 13–27.
- Laffan, B., 2023. Collective power Europe? (The Government and opposition/Leonard Schapiro lecture 2022) *Government and opposition*, 58 (4), 623–640.
- Levi, M., and Murphy, G.H., 2006. Coalitions of contention: the case of the WTO protests in Seattle. *Political studies*, 54 (4), 651–670.
- Mair, P., 2002. Populist democracy vs party democracy. In: Y. Mény, and Y. Surel, eds. *Democracies and the populist challenge*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 81–98.
- Mair, P., 2013. *Ruling the void: the hollowing out of western democracy*. London: Verso.
- March, L., 2017. Left and right populism compared: the British case. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 19 (2), 282–303.
- Martill, B., and Mesarovich, A., 2024. Foreign policy as compensation: why Brexit became a foreign and security policy issue. *International studies quarterly*, 68 (2), sqae014.
- Martill, B., and Staiger, U., 2021. Negotiating Brexit: the cultural sources of British hard bargaining. *JCMS:Journal of common market studies*, 59 (2), 261–277.
- Martill, B., and Sus, M., 2019. Great expectations: the Brexit moment in EU security and defence and the return of the capabilities–expectations gap. *Europe and the world – a law review*, 3 (1), 1–17.
- Maurer, H., and Wright, N., 2021. How much unity do you need? systemic contestation in EU foreign and security cooperation. *European security*, 30 (3), 385–401.
- Melhuish, F., 2022. Euroscepticism, anti-nostalgic nostalgia and the past perfect post-Brexit future. *JCMS: journal of common market studies*, 60 (6), 1758–1776.
- Menendez, I., 2016. Globalization and welfare spending: how geography and electoral institutions condition compensation. *International studies quarterly*, 60 (4), 665–676.
- Michaels, E., and Sus, M., 2024. (Not) coming of age? unpacking the European Union's quest for strategic autonomy in security and defence. *European security*, 33 (3), 383–405.
- Mudde, C., and Rovira-Kaltwasser, C., 2017. *Populism: a very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Namusoke, E., 2016. A divided family: race, the Commonwealth and Brexit. *The round table*, 105 (5), 463–476.
- Noël, A., and Thérien, J.-P., 2008. *Left and right in global politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Nugent, N., 2018. Brexit: yet another crisis for the EU. In: B. Martill, and U. Staiger, eds. *Brexit and beyond: rethinking the futures of Europe*. London: UCL Press, 54–62.
- Oppermann, K., Beasley, R., and Kaarbo, J., 2020. British foreign policy after Brexit: losing Europe and finding a role. *International relations*, 34 (2), 133–156.
- Restad, H.E., 2020. What makes America great? Donald Trump, national identity, and U.S. foreign policy. *Global affairs*, 6 (1), 21–36.
- Roch, J., and Oleart, A., 2024. How ‘European sovereignty’ became mainstream: the geopoliticisation of the EU’s ‘sovereign turn’ by pro-EU executive actors. *Journal of European integration*, 46 (4), 545–565.
- Rodrik, D., 2020. Why does globalisation fuel populism? Economics, culture, and the rise of right-wing populism. NBER Working paper 27526, <https://www.nber.org/papers/w27526>.
- Rodrik, D., 2021. Why does globalization fuel populism? Economics, culture, and the rise of right-wing populism. *Annual review of economics*, 13 (1), 133–170.
- Rogers, L., 2024. Cue Brexit: performing global Britain at the UN security council. *European journal of international security*, 9 (1), 122–140.
- Rogstad, A., and Martill, B., 2022. How to be great (Britain)? discourses of greatness in the United Kingdom’s referendums on Europe. *European review of international studies*, 9 (2), 210–239.
- Saunders, R., 2020. Brexit and empire: ‘Global Britain’ and the myth of imperial nostalgia. *The journal of imperial and commonwealth history*, 48 (6), 1140–1174.
- Scharpf, F.W., 1988. The joint-decision trap: lessons from German federalism and European integration. *Public administration*, 66 (3), 239–278.
- Schuette, L.A., 2021. Forging unity: European commission leadership in the Brexit negotiations. *JCMS: journal of common market studies*, 59 (5), 1142–1159.
- Smith, Alastair, 1996. Diversionary foreign policy in democratic systems. *International studies quarterly*, 40 (1), 133–153.
- Sobolewska, M., and Ford, R., 2020. *Brexitland: identity, diversity and the reshaping of British politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stanley, B., 2008. The thin ideology of populism. *Journal of political ideologies*, 13 (1), 95–110.
- Stavrakakis, Y., and Katsambekis, G., 2014. Left-wing populism in the European periphery: the case of SYRIZA. *Journal of political ideologies*, 19 (2), 119–142.
- Sternberg, C.S., 2013. *The struggle for EU legitimacy: public contestation, 1950–2005*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sus, M., and Martill, B., 2019. Channel trouble? challenges to UK–EU security collaboration after Brexit. In: C-A. in Baciu, and J. Doyle, eds. *Peace, security and defence cooperation in post-Brexit Europe: risks and opportunities*. Cham: Springer, 29–49.
- Svendsen, Ø., 2022. *The politics of third countries in EU security and defence: Norway, Brexit and beyond*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Svendsen, Ø., and Adler-Nissen, R., 2019. Differentiated (Dis)integration in practice: the diplomacy of Brexit and the low politics of high politics. *JCMS: Journal of common market studies*, 57 (6), 1419–1430.
- Sweeney, S., and Winn, N., 2020. EU security and defence cooperation in times of dissent: analysing PESCO, the European defence fund and the European intervention initiative (EI2) in the shadow of Brexit. *Defence studies*, 20 (3), 224–249.
- Thompson, H., 2017. Inevitability and contingency: the political economy of Brexit. *The British journal of politics and international relations*, 19 (3), 434–449.
- Tocci, N., 2018. Towards a European Security and Defence Union: was 2017 a watershed? *JCMS: Journal of common market studies*, 56 (S1), 131–141.
- Tournier-Sol, K., 2015. Reworking the Eurosceptic and conservative traditions into a populist narrative: UKIP’s winning formula? *Journal of common market studies*, 53 (1), 140–156.
- Turner, O., 2019. Global Britain and the narrative of empire. *The political quarterly*, 90 (4), 727–734.
- Verbeek, B., and van der Vleuten, A., 2008. The domesticization of the foreign policy of the Netherlands (1989–2007): the paradoxical result of Europeanization and internationalization. *Acta politica*, 43, 357–377.
- Verbeek, B., and Zaslove, A., 2017. Populism and foreign policy. In: Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul A. Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds. *Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 384–405.

- Vucetic, S., 2022. Elite–mass agreement in British foreign policy. *International affairs*, 98 (1), 245–262.
- Walton, O., and Johnstone, A., 2024. The fragmentation of the security-development nexus: the UK government’s approach to security and development 2015-2022. *Peacebuilding*. Advance online article ahead of print.
- Welch, D.A., 2005. *Painful choices: a theory of foreign policy change*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Wellings, B., 2019. *English nationalism, Brexit and the Anglosphere*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Wessel, R.A., 2019. Friends with benefits? possibilities for the UK’s continued participation in the EU’s foreign and security policy. *European papers*, 4 (2), 427–445.
- Whitman, R.G., 2016. Brexit or Bremain: what future for the UK’s European diplomatic strategy? *International affairs*, 92 (3), 509–529.
- Zürn, M., 2004. Global governance and legitimacy problems. *Government and opposition*, 39 (2), 260–287.