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The voices that matter: A narrative approach to understanding Scottish Fishers' perspectives of Brexit

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1. Keywords

Fisheries management; Brexit; Narratives; Attitudes research

2. Introduction

A slender majority maybe, but the 51.9% vote of UK electors in June 2016 to leave the European Union after more than forty years of membership was enough, and a decision of huge importance to the future of both the UK and the EU was made. Widespread reaction to liberal internationalist policies has left Europe without one of its largest and most influential members, replaced instead with rising uncertainty about its future. Many disputes appeared at the forefront of the European debate, but the role of catch fisheries¹ was particularly significant if only for the degree of argument it engenders (House of Lords 2016). Fisheries are of relatively low economic value overall contributing 6.5% of the GVA of the agriculture, forestry and fishing section (Marine Management Organisation 2018). However, the industry is a source of enormous employment and social importance in many peripheral islands and coastal areas across the UK (Carpenter & Kleinjans 2017; House of Lords 2017). This is particularly relevant for Scotland, which houses 4,799 fishers who landed in 2017 64% of the overall UK landing. Although, a smaller country than neighbouring England, Scotland accounts for the 55% of the total British fleet capacity (GT) (Marine Management Organisation 2018). Most influential for the European debate, the industry also carries with it an aura of national pride. The idea of ‘foreign’ fishers catching ‘our’ fish in ‘our’ waters stimulates ready national indignation (see section 3). In Scotland, the catching sector helped to organise a strong ‘Fishing for Leave’ campaign of which main representatives were the Scottish Fishermen’s Federation (SFF). The fishers themselves have long argued against the EU’s Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), to which all member states must sign up.

¹ The term “catch fisheries” refers to the part of the industry that focuses its efforts on catching and landing fish. This paper does not cover the processing sector or fishing trade. Catch fisheries includes inshore or also named non-sector fleet; demersal and pelagic fisheries both also referred to as sector fleet.

Scottish fishers' desire to leave is believed to have been high and in this they supported their English counterparts.

It is clear from the 'Fishing for Leave' campaign that the EU CFP has attracted much of the blame from UK fishers for the difficulties and decline of their industry. It is less publicised that the era of the UK joining the EU coincided with dramatic shifts in international law of the sea and in jurisdictions over the rights to resources (UNCLOS 1982). Therefore, the increase of restrictions to fishermen's activities was not merely due to the EU desire to use the resources. In addition, there seems to be a willingness to forget that even though the main framework is provided from the CFP the tools via which these are implemented are left to the discretion of the member states. For example, in Scotland the management of the industry is left to the Scottish Government, who regulates activities via licensing (UK Fisheries Administrations 2012; UK Fisheries Administration 2016; Stewart 2017; Scottish Government 2017).

In an effort to provide a novel approach to the issues of Brexit and fisheries, this paper does not tie itself up in legal or policy discourses; there is already some excellent research which use these lenses (see for example Boyes and Elliott 2016; Phillipson and Symes 2018). While many studies have explored the failures of the CFP (European Commission 2009; Gray & Hatchard 2003; Hatcher 1997; Khalilian et al. 2010; Kooiman 1999; Symes & Phillipson 1999; The Royal Society of Edinburgh 2004; Walter 2010), little has been written on the misconceptions of these historical events. The purpose of this study is to capture a moment in time as fishers across the UK begin their negotiation for a new national regime of fisheries management. It dives deeper into understanding the nuanced attitudes of those within the industry whose opinions may have been overshadowed by a larger more powerful narrative played out in the media, capturing divides in the industry between types of fishing and geographical distribution. It also makes clear the need to listen to fishers for future policy making, a demand that has been made clear in similar research (see for example Turnhout et al. 2012; Hartley 2006; Wilson et al. 2006).

Following a narrative approach, the researchers use testimonies from a number of those in the catching sector, both active fishers and individuals in supporting roles, to tell the story of fishers and their reactions to Brexit. The study focuses on fishing-dependent communities in the north of Scotland, where support for Brexit is rooted in even more complexity around Scottish independence. The Scottish Government supports EU membership and intends to hold a second referendum about independence as soon as conditions allow. The date depends primarily on the poll ratings and the prospects for success, as well as the continued control by the Scottish National Party (SNP).

Initially, the paper provides an historical context of Brexit, as well as the role of the EU and its fisheries policy, before discussing the methods. Thereafter, the authors explore the results of the interviews, establishing the narratives of respondents from before the campaign through to present day and to the future of the UK fishing industry. This allows for discussion of the potential arising conflicts, feelings of left behind and historical misconceptions. Finally, the paper concludes with an appeal for greater emphasis on such story-telling approaches for understanding political movements like the Leave campaign and Brexit as a whole, and to listen to those stories for a better and more efficient policy making process.

3. Brexit and the Common Fisheries Policy

The CFP was the brainchild of a new neo-functionalist thinking in environmental management that promoted interdependence between nations. Replacing the original fragmented fisheries policies in 1983, the new CFP meant a more comprehensive sustainable approach to managing its combined fish stocks, working with both member states and third-party states. Importantly, it continued to formally recognise the *acquis communautaire*, a free and equal access market for fishing in EU waters, which had been extended to 200 nautical miles (NM) in response to the implementation of Law of the Sea Convention (LOSC). This required all member states to open their newly enclosed economic zones and resources to foreign fleets. Since its introduction, the CFP has also initiated multiple regulations and limitations on European fleets in attempts to strive for sustainable fishing practices. The policy

reforms, arriving every decade or so, have brought new regulations that have had arguably mixed reactions (Long & Curran 2000; for criticism on the reforms of the CFP see also Shuman et al 2010; Daw & Gray 2005; Gray & Hatchard 2003).

The tenet of equal access, a top-down management approach, and inflexible regulations, have resulted in an industry incredibly vocal in its dissatisfaction. The CFP has been routinely deemed 'fundamentally illegal' (Wright 2004: 118), as well as 'unfit', and 'unfair' (House of Lords 2016). In particular, the EU have repeatedly solicited criticism from an industry that felt fundamentally ignored during the reform processes. Waves of decommissioning schemes beginning in the early 2000s reduced the number of Scottish vessels, and despite this bringing the prospect of an improved, more efficient fleet, it also was criticised for threatening the industry's future (Carpenter & Kleinjans 2017; Cassell 2003; The Royal Society of Edinburgh 2004).

These are feelings which have persisted and grown in the British fleet for decades and been used as the basis for arguments to dispense with the CFP, and simultaneously the EU. This was extraordinarily evident in the language used by campaign groups like 'Fishing For Leave', which played on the underlying discontent in the industry to elevate their stance in the media in the run-up to the referendum vote. The SFF similarly cited reports like that from the NAFC² Marine Centre regarding foreign catch in Scottish waters, as arguments against the doctrine of historical access enforced by the EU and CFP. For example, Napier (2016) states that more than half of the fish and shellfish caught within the UK EEZ were by EU vessels, a figure that has been replicated in numerous Leave campaigns (Uberoi 2017; SFF 2016).

The decision to leave was not a homogenous one amongst the population; Scotland and Northern Ireland both voted to stay, as did the area of Greater London. It seemed the UK was divided, with cracks appearing between countries, between communities, and even within its political parties. The

² The NAFC Marine Centre (previously North Atlantic Fisheries College) is a research centre for marine science based in the Shetland Islands and part of the University of Highlands and Islands.

fishing industry, however, appeared as a rare unified group in its support for the Leave campaign. Campaigns like 'Fishing For Leave' and nationalist parties like UKIP had successfully become the dominant narratives for the industry, with their slogans and mantras being mimicked by fishers up and down the country. News coverage from the sides of piers and in fish warehouses depicted communities with an overwhelming sense of excitement for the future of a Scottish fishing industry outside of the CFP. Fisheries became the forefront of a nationalist movement that would blame the EU for the pain of the British masses (see Armstrong 2016; Durkin 2016). Such debate also offered one of the most entertaining moments of the Brexit debate pre-referendum, when a "battle" between leave and remain took place on the Thames in London (BBC 2016).

4. Materials and methods

This study has its roots as a master's degree research in the Northern Isles (Orkney and Shetland). As such it benefited from proximity to the heart of all three sectors of the Scottish fishing industry; pelagic, demersal and shellfish. Lerwick in Shetland is the second largest UK port for fish landings, mainly pelagic and demersal, with about half the UK pelagic fleet based in the islands (Marine Management Organisation 2018). Orkney has established one of the most advanced shellfish harvesting and processing businesses in the UK with marketing of live product across Europe and exclusive deals with major retailers in the UK (Orkney Sustainable Fisheries 2017). The two archipelagos are therefore key barometers of the UK fishing industry and the results promise to be important benchmarks in the understanding of the fishing sector priorities. The study has been limited in size by time and funding, but its small nature is still important in the emerging Brexit debate, when time is of the essence.

This is a small study, researched and presented in a narrative style to showcase the stories of the set of participants. Narratives have been defined previously as dialogues which link events in a 'meaningful way' and 'offer insights about... people's experiences' (Hinchman & Hinchman 1997: xvi). A narrative approach is essential for capturing nuances in experiences and understandings of real life

events, showcasing stories of those who actively participated in such events. It also gives the flexibility to analyse aspects of the information that might otherwise get lost in a positivist generalisation of the results (Elliott 2005).

The study is based on data collected via semi-structured interviews (n=12), conducted either in person or by phone between May and July 2017. The interviews were carried out primarily in the Shetland and Orkney Islands, with two conducted in Mainland Scotland. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling, which focuses on purposely choosing a group of individuals who will have an opinion on the research topic. Using purposive sampling allows one to focus not on the 'representativeness' or size of the sample, but rather on the quality and detail of the information collected (Crang & Cook 2007; Maxwell 1997). The first people who were contacted were individuals who were well established within the industry and thus seemingly both well informed and connected. More interviewees were then gathered using the snowball technique, with future contacts provided by previous participants (see table 1).

Table 1: List of interviews and Scottish region

Interviewee	Relevance to the study	Region
A	Representative for inshore fishers	Orkney
B	Inshore fisher	Orkney
C	Community Representative	Orkney
D	Inshore fisher	Orkney
E	Inshore fisher	Orkney
F	Representative for inshore fishers	Orkney

G	Pelagic fisher	Shetland
I	Pelagic fisher	Shetland
L	Fisheries consultant	Shetland
M	Demersal fisher	Shetland
N	Representative for demersal and pelagic fishers	Shetland
O	Representative for demersal and pelagic fishers	Mainland
P	Demersal fisher	Mainland

The structure of the interviews was kept purposely flexible with just 3 core questions:

1. What were your first expectations for fisheries when Brexit was voted for in the referendum?
2. How have these expectations evolved since then?
3. The Fishery industry has often been vocal on the inefficiency linked to the CFP, how would you see the policy change following the negotiations?

This choice allowed reciprocal exchange of information, providing flexibility for the researchers when formulating questions and affording the interviewee the opportunity to fully express their thoughts and opinions in a two-way process with the researcher (Edwards & Holland 2013). At the same time, semi-structured interviews give the opportunity for the interviewer to tailor the questions to the experience of the interviewee - thereby transforming the process into a conversation.

Prior to the meetings, interviewees were provided with a consent form – to give the researchers full disclosure to use the information - and an abstract of the study, in this way they were aware of the aims of the study and types of questions. Two interviews were conducted by phone due to resource

limitations. Moreover, to ensure the reliability of data collected and to facilitate the analysis, interviews were recorded and stored appropriately.

Following, all interviews were transcribed and sent back to the participants to check information and to ensure they were satisfied with the information being used in the study. Most interviewees expressed their wish to remain anonymous, therefore in this paper all participants are addressed to with a letter system (i.e. interviewee A). In this way, the image of none of the interviewees could be compromised.

The data collected was then thematically analysed through qualitative data analysis software NVivo Pro 11, using an open coding system (Corbin & Strauss 2015). This allows for interpretation of the data via 'continuous dialogue' between the concepts and the data, using grounded theory to extract common nodes (Becker 1998: 109). Five primary nodes were identified during the coding process: reactions; visions; industries; background; and reasons. These were then divided into smaller discussion topics to identify common arguments, and which have been used to view our participants' reality through a co-construction with our own meanings and understandings. This process of data gathering and analysis was thus a continual reciprocal process.

5. Results

In order to present the results in an organised manner, the five primary nodes were reorganised and three main results' themes - as a direct result from each core question. Table 2 summarises these three themes and their discussion points as they emerged within the interviews. The table also highlights the arguments made by the interviewees, providing evidence of similarities or divergences amongst the participants.

Table 2: Primary themes, subsections, and arguments

Primary themes	Discussion points	Arguments presented by interviewees
Attitudes towards EU and CFP	<p>'Slow' transitions from idyllicism</p> <p>'Non-democratic' and marginalising processes</p> <p>'Poor' science</p> <p>Benefits?</p>	<p>Most interviewees had very similar attitudes towards the CFP, indicating feelings of betrayal, marginalisation and 'othering'. Only one interviewee appeared to convey a different opinion, commenting on the benefits of the CFP and the apparent mythicizing of the past by representatives.</p>
Potentialities of Brexit	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Control</p>	<p>Initial reactions to the vote suggested vastly different visions of the opportunities that Brexit could afford the fishing industry, particularly between inshore fishers and the pelagic/demersal sector fishers (see table 1).</p>
Reassessed visions	<p>Uncertainty</p> <p>Regionalism</p>	<p>Time between the vote and the interviews did not give many participants a strong opinion on the future of a post-Brexit, demonstrating huge uncertainty as to the forthcoming negotiations, and continued conflict between sector and non-sector exaggerated by regionalism.</p>

The following section unpacks the nodes and their subsections. By elaborating on these primary nodes, we seek to give deeper insights as to the processes of decisions leading up to and after the vote.

5.1 Attitudes towards the EU and CFP

For the 9 of 12 interviewees who voted to Leave, a large amount of each interview centred on participants' general mistrust of the EU and dislike for the CFP, presented as reasonings behind their want for a referendum. The sole interviewee (O) who openly voted to Remain demonstrated a

different attitude, focussing instead on the benefits the EU had brought to the Scottish fishing industry and Scotland more in general. These attitudes are explored in the subsections that follow.

5.1.1 Slow transition from Idyllicism

Idyllicism was a major plot point amongst most interviews, with many commenting on the slow transition from an idyllic past to a draconian present, and the turning point fixed on the UK joining the EU in 1973. Before decisions about fisheries became the responsibility of those in Brussels, the members of the fishing communities we talked to describe an idyllic scenario where the business of fishing meant using small dinghies to fish with family members.

“When I was 16 years old, I left school and I went into the fishing. My father was a fisherman, so was his father.”

The practice of leaving school young to work on demersal vessels was seen as a viable option for those who wanted to start earning money. In Shetland particularly, they described this system as self-reliable and almost free of limits, unconstrained by nationally fixed quota or landing obligations. Then when the UK joined the common market, this romantic lifestyle was apparently shattered.

Many interviewees spoke of a transition away from freedom, towards oppression from increasing regulation and competition from foreign vessels. There were repeated comments that the CFP was responsible for gradually creating the problems that decimated the industry, predominantly because of the *"sheer inflexibility"* of the regulations. They gave examples like the rigidity on minimal mesh size regulations which stopped the advancement of moving onto more selective gear, and the stringency in quota allocation that has led to what they believe is blatant inequity within the industry and between nations.

“That’s what’s wrong with it, too one sided. Give, give, give...”

Two of the older fishers used the term *“didn’t happen overnight”* when speaking of this transition. After being *“dragged into it”*, the industry was being undermined by new EU rules slowly but surely.

5.1.2 'Poor' science

'Poor' science and decision-making were also key parts of the fishers' overwhelmingly negative attitude to the EU and its regulations. A crucial point in the CFP's history for the participants' narratives was the decommissioning scheme, mentioned by every interviewee. Many of the participants viewed the scheme as the major contributing factor to the decimation of the UK fleet in the 1980s. They blamed the EU's ruling for a heavy reduction of the British fishing fleet, arguing that fishers were "cornered" into giving up their vessels. They were also adamant the scheme's main aim was to reduce the UK fleet so that foreign fleets could access the grounds.

"They cut the catching capability of Scotland to make space for the European fleet to come in, and this has affected the young generations in all coastal ports of Scotland."

However, just four participants seemed to have a full understanding of the scheme, with other participants unsure of either its origins or ambitions.

The interviewees also commented heavily on the 'poor' science used by the EU to regulate fishing efforts. They told stories of scientists using the wrong models to inform ICES on the choice of quotas, consistently reducing available fish stocks and therefore limiting their chances to profit from their efforts.

"The size of that mistake... it takes many years to go back up, no industry can survive that, that's the stupid situation we are in just now."

These gave way to stories of betrayal and anger from individuals who viewed themselves as once again "cornered" by the EU into catching 'black fish' and making earnings illegally.

"...the introduction of quota meant that he couldn't fish the way he wanted to fish anymore. And part of our experience... was black landings, because he had to discard or land illegally. So it was extremely stressful, for all of us, for myself, because you were participating in illegal landings."

5.1.3 Undemocratic Processes and Marginalisation

The most emotive and impactful of the interviews were those that featured stories of feeling neglected and lied to by those in Brussels. Fishers felt deceived, out of control, and frustrated that those in control had no knowledge about Scotland and its fishing industry, despite making important decisions about them. *“They don’t know how it works here,”* said one pelagic fisherman, for example, *“how can they make decisions for us?”*. Eleven of the testimonials also describe an industry sold off in exchange for access to the common market, indicating more feelings of betrayal.

“They gave away the access; they gave away the fish and everything, so it was a disaster for the fishing industry.”

In particular, participants were critical of the lack of transparency afforded to them by the British government of the time, which they saw as a marginalisation of their voices.

“People were suspicious that there was a sale of the fisheries at that time. But of course, it wasn't confirmed until 30 years later, when the papers for those discussions became public.”

5.1.4 Benefits

Attitudes presented by the interviewees were not wholly negative. One positive opinion was given by a fisheries expert and industry consultant. In the interview they made clear they believe the historical moments that have sourced so much ire have been overly simplified, stating that *“what is in the past should stay in the past”*. In particular, the individual was optimistic of the potential of Europe to continue aiding the Scottish industry, something which certainly was not felt amongst the other interviewees.

“I am probably one of the very few fishermen who voted to remain in, on the bases that the industry was starting profiting on the back of recovering stocks and I thought that the country as a whole would have benefited from being part of Europe.”

The participant expressed an understanding of Europe as the biggest trading market for Scottish fisheries resources, another thing that was once again not demonstrated within the remaining

interviews. However, they were also understandably at peace with the decision, working on behalf of their industry to find the best outcome from a result they had never expected.

5.2 Potentialities of Brexit

The second primary node emergent in the interviews centred on the potential opportunities for the industry that were awarded by the vote and the subsequent result. Whilst nearly all participants were adamant that Brexit would provide more opportunity for their inclusion in decision-making processes, as well as more control over assets, the way these opportunities were presented differed between interviewees.

5.2.1 Opportunities

“When the EU referendum came along, it was the first time ever that fishing [was]... a big political subject within the UK political scene.”

The referendum for many was perceived as an opportunity “to right the wrong”, and a way for fisheries to finally be given a voice in what they saw as a closed off system of authority. In particular, many of the participants were keen for the integration of their knowledge into systems of regulation.

“the SNP government they want to control everything, [but] they don’t seem to dismiss the idea of the knowledge that the fishermen have. We need to get more integrated with them.”

There was agreement across many interviews regarding the need for a more participatory organisation that includes fishers and their innate knowledge, something which has been echoed amongst.

5.2.2 Control

The interviews provided details of vastly disparate arguments for wanting to leave the EU, particularly amongst how they believe the greater control afforded by Brexit should be distributed.

The five representatives from the inshore fisheries advocated that there should be a redistribution of fishing rights amongst sectors, including an increase of opportunities for inshore fishers. Inshore fishers are by far the most numerous in terms of employment, but have little or no access to quota

(Dowler 2018). The fishery is relatively open access and the fishers are less subject to CFP regulation and intrusion by foreign vessels. The inshore fishers interviewed made it clear that their hope was Brexit would upset the system and gain access to more quota.

Representatives of the inshore fleet, espousing a need for radical reform of the current management system and 'limiting' quota system, sought more recognition and consideration of the 'small guys' following decades of feeling undervalued and overlooked. Following decades of management that has persistently lagged behind the pelagic and demersal systems, and an ingrained inequity in the distribution of quota, they understood their vote to leave as a way of providing a rebalance in power and opportunity.

"the boats within our association would like to see a radical reform of the distribution of fish.

That includes boats that have fished quota."

By comparison, the pelagic and demersal fishers did not want to move away from the quota system and the Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) but did state that more control could be the key for a better management of the resources. Pelagic fishers stand to benefit in catch from a more restrictive foreign access to British waters provided they can retain a market, as catch limits can be set internally following powers returned to the UK. Demersal fishers also stand to benefit from a less competitive use of space.

5.3 Reassessed visions

Initial reactions to the result of the vote appeared to be one of shock for most of the participants, although at first that shock was of an optimistic nature. However, the interviews, undertaken roughly a year post-referendum, soon expressed much uncertainty as to the outcomes of the negotiations, and disparities across the sectors.

5.3.1 Uncertainty

When the researchers asked how they envision a fit for purpose management system for Scotland, participants' answers were not as clear as expected. The industry has spent the last 40 years raging against the CFP, with fishers commenting:

"I was absolutely delighted... I never being in favour of the EU, when we joined I wasn't in favour and I thought it was a bit of a disaster."

And yet many could not give clear examples of what they would like to see for future management. Some mentioned that Scotland should ideally take example from the Norwegian system, a notion that has pervaded the media along with 'Canada +'. Most repeated particular buzzwords used by each other and their representatives in SFF, such as; the government had "*given away*" the fisheries, the industry was "*taking back control*" of their waters.

5.3.2 Regionalism

The view for future opportunities were also disparate depending on region. Fishers in Shetland, for example, presented arguments which focused on the lack of engagement from Brussels. When looking to the future, however, they seemed unconcerned about access to the free market; confidently noting that little would impact their trade. Contrastingly, the Orkney fishers' arguments for leaving focused on the opportunity to transform the quota system and displayed a deeper sense of concern for access to the European markets.

6. Discussion

The primary themes that emerged from our conversations with those in the fishing industry illustrated three discussion points that we endeavour to elaborate on here. Primarily, the interviews illustrated poorly-recorded splits within the industry, particularly between sectors and between regions. Most importantly, all interviews appeared to hinge upon what we have dubbed 'misconceptions'; affected

recollections and understandings which have resulted in an emotional and powerful narrative which ultimately saw the Scottish fishing industry representatives publicly back the Leave campaign. These discussion points allow us to understand this 'moment in time', depicting the Scottish fishing industry, its viewpoints in regards to the referendum, and their aspirations.

6.1 Sectoral and regional conflicts

The pelagic, demersal and inshore fishing sectors have come together to campaign for a Brexit which they promote for very different reasons. However, one effect of the CFP has been to deepen dissatisfaction among the fishers by exacerbating the existing conflicts between fishing sectors - principally between mobile and static gear fishers. The allocation of quota lies at the heart of internal conflict among the fishing sectors. The market in quota which has developed has seen it concentrated into the hands of a few very large fishing companies or families focused on particular species (Greenpeace 2018). The local mixed fishery system serving the whole community has virtually disappeared leaving the great majority of those employed in fishing to search for the few non-quota species available, mainly shellfish (approx. 80% of the Scottish fleet is made up of under 10m vessels). Nonetheless, each sector has a reason for wanting to break the system.

The sector fleets' want for more control over their quota, their waters and their fish, suggests a disregard for the inshore as a viable and equal sector. Rather, they view many in the inshore sector as unworthy of further opportunities following what they claim as many simply '*taking the money*' after the introduction of the current quota system, in reference to previously sector fishers who sold their quota for a large payout at the time. Whilst this depiction of the horizontal transition in the industry is true, their apparent animosity and disregarding of the inshore fleet is in keeping with a consistent feeling of marginalisation from creelers and non-quota fishers (Jones 2008; Richardson et al. 2005; Carpenter & Kleinjans 2017; Burns et al. 2016).

The interviews also provided evidence that sectoral divides are not simply the product of historical (mis)management; they are also highly influenced by geography and community histories, as

evidenced by stories of Shetland versus Orkney. Shetland has enjoyed a great deal of local autonomy by virtue of its remote geographical location. It used this independence to good effect in negotiations with the British government and the major oil companies to benefit from the advent of North Sea oil (Johnson et al. 2013a). Shetland's economy is highly reliant on its fishing activities and as such benefits from a strong representation for its highly profitable sector fleet, as well as a successful and exclusive inshore sector due to its Regulating Order (Brookfield et al. 2005). Their responses betray a hubris of an area which has enjoyed the 'luck of the draw' in terms of both quota allocation and Regulating Order success, but also a regional identity strongly connected to their fishing fleet and geographical status as an isolated archipelago.

Orkney's economy has become increasingly reliant on its inshore industry with the decline of its crofting legacy. However, the islands' fleet has also taken the brunt of repeated decommissioning schemes, and the region's shallower waters have resulted in an inshore industry that is highly reliant on fewer species. Orkney's regional identity, whilst still maritime in the eyes of its population, is also uniquely tied to its crofting legacy and highly regulated farming present (Noble 2003). The Orkney fishing industry reflects this in a narrative of historic and current marginalisation, without adequate representation on a national scale or opportunity for diversification.

Sectoral disputes are not a phenomena that has newly arisen in the post-vote era, and discrepancies in attitudes to the past, present and future of their industry are unsurprising given the inherent differences in the fleets' histories and demographics. However, this analysis does demonstrate a relationship riddled with resentment and inequity that was omitted from the popular narrative driven by the Leave Campaign and the industry representative (see section 3). The responses given by our interviewees are testament to the idea that to be a fisher in Scotland does not constitute a unified attitude to Brexit. Rather, localities of fishing communities, as well as working experiences, create complexities within the network of the industry that could become a weak point for negotiations. Internal conflicts and a lack of cross-sector conversations could compromise this mythicised unified

front put forward for the Scottish fleet, impeding the Scottish industry's negotiation power when considered within the wider context of Brexit.

6.2 The 'left-behind'

The parallels felt within the Scottish fishing community, regardless of geography or catching method, demonstrate a narrative of betrayal. This was a betrayal that, in their opinion, led to years of the EU purposely and actively undermining the industry to allow others to exploit their resources (see also Ashworth 2016; Booker 2014; Jones 2008). Even though previous reforms of the CFP were supposed to provide a better platform for using fishers' knowledge in its provisions, research has shown that the industry has felt routinely excluded from conversations and their knowledge ignored (Griffin 2009; Hind 2015).

These stories of betrayal, othering, and exclusion demonstrate a similar narrative used by the Leave campaign, replicated in the "Fishing For Leave" campaign and by industry spokespeople like the SFF. Goodwin and Heath (2016) explain that these populist proclamations were used to take advantage of the feelings of exclusion in specific communities: "the left-behind". These small peripheral communities are characterised by high unemployment or low skilled employment, combined with a sense of abandonment from the authorities (Goodwin & Heath 2016; Antonucci et al. 2017). However, in their paper, Goodwin and Heath (2016) concentrate only on a spatial-demographic analysis of the vote, which does not fully explain the words of fishers. Whilst our interviewees exhibit some of the same demographic characteristics as those analysed by Goodwin and Heath (2016), it is evident from the interviews that their sentiment has roots in the traumatic transition that their communities undertook; where, in the space of a decade, communities were required to change from being self-sufficient and insular, to being part of a European-wide fishing community sharing their EEZ (Hobolt 2016; Antonucci et al. 2017). As our interviews demonstrate, however, the 'left behind' status is more than a socio-demographic status; it becomes a feeling.

The fishers in this study could be considered as part of those communities that were 'left-behind' by socio-economic expansions beyond national borders. While others were gaining benefits from a united Europe and the common market, these fishers experienced their freedoms being limited. The result of these perceived losses instigated increasing levels of antipathy towards what was seen as an elitist establishment that was neither part of their cultural heritage nor knowledgeable of their profession. The anger expressed towards the politicians in Brussels, combined with the reality of being left behind by political changes, therefore, was what made the fishing industry the Leave campaign's perfect example of a community failed by the EU.

6.3 Misconceptions

Both the conflicts between sectors, and the parallels felt through the industry, are fed by subjective, often misrepresented, views of history. This portrayal of the past is often described as popular memory, i.e. when historical events are moulded by the subjective experience of an individual. Popular memory has also been described as memory that justifies the past, explains the present and supports future decisions (Smith 2000; Thomson 1990). By listening to these fishers, it is clear that the stories they are telling are plagued by a number of misconceptions and forgotten historical events. According to most of the testimonials, the CFP is to be blamed for a myriad of wrongs. The lack of EU engagement has resulted in decades of resentment from the fishing industry. Additionally, there is a conviction that, once away from the EU, the CFP will stop to influence UK fisheries management. However, these attitudes seem to forget two vital pieces of information. Firstly, that fisheries in Scotland are not regulated solely by the CFP. Indeed, the Scottish Government on its own authority has implemented a number of regulations that surpass European regulation in its conservation agenda, including moratoriums and area closures (Park, pers. comms. 2017). The implementation of other official regulations by the Scottish Government are not considered with the same animosity, nor the local regulations that are often used to manage inshore fisheries around Scotland. Secondly, EU

legislation regulating fisheries comprises more than just the CFP, with the UK also needing to adhere to many regulations that have been already transposed into UK law.

The potentialities of Brexit are also often miscommunicated. Inshore fishers we spoke with, for example, did not mention the risk of losing rapid cross border trade with the EU which allows much of their shellfish catch to be exported live to the continent. The pelagic and demersal fishers appeared unconcerned about a lack of reciprocal access following the closure of their own waters, and will similarly face problems with their market as much of their catch goes for export.

Aside from these misconceptions, details also go missing and the telling of history appears distorted. For example, the effects of the decommissioning schemes were indicated as a primary reason for their wanting to leave by the majority of the interviewees. Nevertheless, most interviewees demonstrated a fundamental lack of understanding as to the history of the decommissioning scheme. In fact, none mentioned the role the UK government played, nor the compensation received by fishers at the time. Although the decommissioning scheme partially contributed to the reduction of the British demersal and pelagic fleet, the movement of fishers out of the pelagic sector following quota selling also significantly reduced the fleet size.

The perspectives of the loudest and the most powerful in the fishing industry appear to have informed the Leave campaigns, who, latching onto the 'popular memory' of mismanagement and misaligned power, became the overriding voice for the masses. These voices were successful in forcing a singular view from the fishing industry, which became an effective way of garnering media attention, a lack of which can often hinder action for solving social problems (McComas & Shanahan 1999; see also Slater 2012).

It is possible that those who espouse these mythologies are cognisant of this loop, voting out merely as a way of scapegoating their dissatisfaction with the status quo. However, an understanding of the misconceptions and forced narrative that are mobilised by the Leave campaign and the industry as a whole, is not an argument for disregarding these actors. Historically, fishers' have decried institutions that routinely ignore their needs, chief among those being the ability to control one's own life

(Alexander et al. 2013). Correspondingly, there are numerous examples of the dangers of inadequate utilisation of fishers' knowledge (Johannes et al. 2000; Hind 2015). Additionally, an increasing number of studies are now calling for a more participative approach to policy-making (see Shackleton et al. 2018; Creed et al. 2018). Indeed, the arguments for wanting to leave are rooted within an innate failure to manage the industry in a sufficiently participatory fashion, something which they hope will change in the future post-Brexit Scotland.

7. Conclusions

Through the conversations with the fishers, it became possible to piece together the fishers' perspectives of past events and the transformations that the catching industry has undergone. Their narrative was simple: the EU came in with approval from the UK government, decided that fisheries had to be centrally governed and made decisions without considering people who were working out at sea. Scotland, and Scottish fishers, had little say in the matter.

The depth of feeling in the fishers' narratives about fisheries management and their rights to fish is perhaps not a surprise. They are deep-seated, complex and longstanding. The EU is geographically distant and remote, and, unlike the Westminster of old, they interfere. The narratives presented by the interviewees tell of a regulator with perceived poor science and few levers to pull in answer to the unexpected socio-economic consequences of its regulations. It is bureaucratic and able to change only very slowly. The fishers are conflicted among themselves; those that have benefited financially from regulatory schemes like quota allocation do not want to return to a scenario where they are the small fish, as it were. In contrast, those that feel they have not been dealt a good hand in the distribution of quota feel that Brexit is the perfect opportunity for radical reform. Whether these are opportunities that could come to fruition is uncertain, despite the UK nearing an end to the negotiation period.

Importantly, this study demonstrates an ongoing track record of exclusion, something which must be halted. The New Economics Foundation (NEF) short documentary 'Voices from the Coast', is a recent piece of work that illuminates the need to listen to all fishers' voices to ensure efficient decision-

making in a post-Brexit future (Carpenter 2018). Of course, participatory management has been lauded by not only academics but those in industry as well, as illustrated within our interviews. There has to be a rapprochement found between the scientific rationalism of the regulator and the reality of the lives of the fishing communities; this is a rapprochement founded on the stories of the whole fishing community and not just the loud and powerful voices of the few quota millionaires. All the voices are 'Voices that Matter'.

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