

# The Light and *Shadow* of 'Brexit'

An article by **David Furlong** based on the book *Illuminating the Shadow*

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The events leading up to the recent EU referendum and its dramatic fallout provide some fascinating insights into the way the *shadow* operates within society. Despite the fears generated by 'Brexit' this article suggests that there could be a bright optimistic future outlook for both Britain and Europe, if the right initiatives can be grasped.

## Background

In order to make sense of what is happening through the insights into the *shadow*, which might be defined as those elements that generally sit beneath the radar of human consciousness, some background information is necessary. In my book I argue strongly that the *raison d'être* for life, or one its prime drivers, is the evolution of consciousness, which in turn is dependent upon 'free-will' expression. Therefore, those institutions, religions and governments that provide the greatest amount of flexibility and 'free-will', within their regulations, beliefs and laws are most in line with this principle. This is predicated on the proviso that the 'free-will' expression does not negatively or harmfully affect the 'free-will' of others to live as they choose. Clearly, balances need to be struck between the rights of the individual against that of society or the collective. In some cases, 'free-will' expression needs to be tempered to serve the common good. For example, some years ago car seat-belt legislation was introduced into the UK because of the downside financial and emotional costs to society when injurious accidents occurred. On the other side of the coin, the lifting of oppressive laws against homosexuality has been a very positive development in allowing the expression of the 'free-will' element.

## The Shadow

Secondly, I suggest that the *shadow* operates at three levels. The positive *shadow* holds all of our potential, whilst the negative *shadow*, generally sitting in the unconscious, holds all of those elements we do not want to acknowledge or accept and therefore tend to suppress or deny. The malign *shadow*, either overtly or subliminally, tries to control and limit action through fear, which can spill over into hatred. Its dynamic might be seen as the opposite of all that is loving, optimistic and good.

## Polarities

The last principle that needs to be understood is the way that opposites or polarities sit within everything. As soon as any statement is made, or a stance taken, its opposite polarity becomes an intrinsic part of that proposition. As long as this opposite is acknowledged as a potential there is generally no issue. For example, we might aspire to do things correctly but need to accept that we will inevitably make mistakes. However, within human activity the opposite of our intention will sometimes slip into the *shadow*, where it then can become a latent problem manipulating situations through subconscious activity, which can occur both individually as well as within the collective. We cannot avoid polarities: we need to understand and work with them as part of our journey through life. Within the referendum debate this pattern was very evident. For example, Michael Gove on several occasions stated emphatically that he did not consider himself to be Prime Minister material, yet then put himself forward for this position in the ensuing election battle.



## Section Summary

To summarise this section, the evolution of consciousness suggests that we should work towards developing those institutions and beliefs that give the greatest expression of 'free-will', both individually and collectively. In this process we need to be mindful when the negative or malign *shadow* is being used to manipulate or control situations. Finally, we need to consider the way that polarities work within systems, which, in the case of 'Brexit', was posed by the referendum itself on whether Britain 'remain' or 'leave' the institution of the EU.

## The 'Brexit' Debate

When considering the debates from both sides of the spectrum it was clear how often the 'fear card' was played. It has been long recognised how fear can be used to control both thinking and action. Fear is deeply woven into our psyche having its origins in our survival as a species, which is why we often need to make a conscious effort to resist its restrictive tentacles. The 'fear card' is still used widely by religions, institutions and governments when trying to control and manipulate both action and thought. Both sides in the debate used this ploy extensively. In the 'remain' camp it was the fear of what would happen to Britain's economy if we left Europe, whilst on the 'leave' side it was the fear of mass or uncontrolled immigrants flooding these lands. Interestingly, particularly on the remain side, little stress was given to the many positives of being in the EU, such as collaboration and the sense of a common purpose. The leave side did present some positive elements, such as greater freedom and flexibility, which, as I have suggested, is in line with the 'free-will' concept that supports the evolution of consciousness and self-expression.

As we now know, the British collective voted to leave the EU. One of the problems with coin tossing situations is that such divides can generate strong passions for there are going to be winners and losers. One of the challenges presented by such polarity splits is how to bridge the divide that has been created. In the case of the Scottish referendum the positive move of devolving more power to the Scottish parliament has to an extent helped ameliorate this split.

## Collective Wisdom

In broad terms, the collective wisdom when presented by situations that are unfettered by fear will generally, although not always, make the right choices, which is why we have ballots or a show of hands. We might therefore conclude, when considering the positives and negatives of the present EU set up, that the broadly fifty-fifty referendum split is probably about right. It could be argued that some people and institutions have done very well out of the EU, whilst others clearly have not. There is huge unemployment, particularly with young people, in many parts of southern Europe and in these cases the EU has not had the flexibility to be able to rectify local and regional problems. Britain, seen as prosperous economy, where unemployment is low, has therefore been a great magnet to migration.

## Balancing Polarities

Over time and like the tides, polarity swings, when left on their own, tend to balance themselves out. However, through consciousness awareness, we can mitigate the uncomfortable effects of these swings providing there is a flexibility in thought and action. For example, on a frosty day when stepping out of a warm house, we can mitigate the effects of the cold by putting on additional clothing. Problems arise when there is no flexibility and dogmatic stances are taken. Whilst principles, such as the freedom of movement of goods and people are an ideal, it is imperative that these ideals are applied with some flexibility because there will always arise situations that challenge

this stance. In Britain we have cherished freedom of speech, yet now know to our cost that this freedom, when used to incite hatreds, can have devastating consequences. In considering these concepts we should be ever mindful of the yin/yang symbol of the Tao, which shows that even within extreme yang there is yin and within extreme yin there is yang. The dynamic of the universe will always challenge extreme or rigid positions, sometimes causing it switch into its opposite before moving back to a position of broad equilibrium or homeostasis. As Cameron rightly stated, it was the inflexibility of EU to grasp the nettle of migration that proved the tipping point in the UK referendum debate.

### The Future

So where does this leave us? Britain's vote to leave the EU has presented a challenge to its institutions. In the negotiations that will follow 'Brexit' there is a hope that Europe will wake up to look more closely at where it has failed the peoples of Europe and accordingly amend its ways. For example, the Commission, the primary law-making authority of the EU, which is an unelected institution, generates vast amounts of EU legislation on what is termed the 'precautionary principle'. Simply interpreted this could be described as legislating through *fear*, to try to circumvent what might happen in the future. This one-sided approach, will inevitably generate the opposite of its intentions. All institutions, within a healthy democracy, should be open, above board and subject to scrutiny. Those that are not become susceptible to manipulation through the malign *shadow*. On this basis, wherever possible regulation should be devolved to local levels, as has been started to be effected within the UK with the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies. Finally, all EU laws should be subject to the sovereignty of individual states, if they so determine.

Had these issues been properly understood and addressed at the beginning or even later, as the EU developed, the referendum might never have happened. In this context, it is interesting to reflect on the dynamics that led to the referendum in the first place. The rise of UKIP and the fear of losing Parliamentary seats, pushed Cameron into offering a referendum as a way of mollifying his own supporters. Whilst in coalition with the staunchly pro-Europe Liberal Democratic party he never thought he would have to go through with this process. Winning the election in May 2015, forced Cameron's hand and although he made great effort to try to secure a better deal for Britain, the institutions of Europe were not willing to budge from their enshrined principles, which, as suggested here, should never have been cast in stone in the way that they were. There will always be exceptions to every situation and evolution demands that we take heed of them or ultimately, as some animal species have found to their cost, extinction will follow.

So let us hold a positive thought that best options can come forward for all parties. That the institutions of Europe can sufficiently evolve to allow Britain to take its place at the table in a mutually beneficial and co-creative way.



**Illuminating the Shadow** can be purchased from Atlanta Books, Malvern.

Please see: [http://www.davidfurlong.co.uk/books\\_shadow.htm](http://www.davidfurlong.co.uk/books_shadow.htm)