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“We have the character of an island nation”  
A discourse-historical analysis of David Cameron’s  
“Bloomberg Speech” on the European Union

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## **Abstract**

More than three years have passed since former British Prime Minister David Cameron delivered a much acknowledged and controversial speech on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013, in respect to the British relationship with the European Union. Europe and the European Union (EU) are now, of course, facing different challenges than three years ago. The contrasting national and transnational identities which emerge in the so-called Bloomberg Speech (BS) imply a nationalistic body politics which constructs the United Kingdom and England as separate entities contrasted to “the continent”, i.e. Europe. Hence, BS oscillates between two extremes, in its attempt to alternatively observe maximum distance to the EU and some proximity to its economic policies. Moreover, both the *topoi of urgency and threat/danger* are appealed to – warning the EU that it would suffer under the loss of the United Kingdom; but also warning British voters that Brexit would damage their future and prosperity. This speech can be perceived as the starting point for the referendum on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 – which resulted in a tiny majority wanting to leave the EU (‘Brexit’). Of course, there is no clear causal connection between BS and Brexit; but many arguments of the “remain and leave campaigns” can be traced to the BS; as well as the huge ambivalence framing Cameron’s position towards the EU.

## **Keywords**

British EU-Referendum, rhetoric, Bloomberg Speech; Brexit; argumentation analysis; discourse-historical analysis; body politics; identity politics





“[A] national culture is a discourse – a way of constructing meanings which influences and organises both our actions and our conception of ourselves [...]. National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about ‘the nation’ with which we can identify; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it.” (Stuart Hall 1996, 613)

## 1. Introduction\*

At the time of writing this chapter, more than three years have passed since David Cameron’s so-called “Bloomberg Speech” (BS) delivered on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013; Europe and the European Union (EU) are now, of course, facing different challenges than three years ago<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, it seems as if the EU is currently being overwhelmed by a range of crises it is widely perceived as being unable to cope with: the financial crisis since 2008, the Eurozone crisis since 2010, the crisis in the Ukraine since 2014, the “Greek crisis” and the “refugee crisis” both since 2015. Although the EU has always been struck by unpredictable new events which have led to huge upheavals (e.g., Triandafyllidou et al. 2009), the years 2015 and 2016 may mark a culmination of global insecurities and uncertainties. The rise of right-wing and left-wing populist as well as extremist parties indicates that European citizens across the EU are searching for the new answers promised by these parties and movements (e.g., Grabbe 2014; Wehling et al. 2015; Wodak 2015, 2016).

Nevertheless, Cameron’s proposals in his speech of 2013 remained unchanged in respect to the referendum in the United Kingdom, held on 23 June 2016. Thus, in the speech, as will be outlined below, British citizens are called to vote either to remain in an unstable and fragile EU, under the new agreements negotiated by the British Prime Minister in the early spring of 2016; or to opt out of the EU, thus choosing “Brexit”, which would imply a difficult transition lasting at least two years, with unpredictable economic and social outcomes (Mayer 2016; Müller 2016; Smith 2016; Weale 2016). Cameron’s case is based on the premise that since the EU has succeeded in securing *peace* in the post WWII era (one of the constitutive reasons for founding the EU in the eyes of the “founding fathers”; e.g. Boukala 2013; Krzyżanowski 2010; Weiss 2002; Wodak & Weiss 2007), it now has to secure *prosperity*. Hence, the foremost priority – as defined by Cameron – would be to establish the economic competitiveness of the EU in the “global race to the top” (Charteris-Black 2014). A neo-liberal agenda is thus promoted, in an EU composed of powerful nation states. Social and legal *integration* of the 28 member states, usually framed by the slogan “*an ever closer Union*” is perceived – by Cameron – as less important than their economic relationships and ties. This juxtaposition is, of course, not new but has overshadowed European and Eurosceptic debates for a long time (Alexandre-Collier 2016; Daddow 2015; Milizia 2014; Sol & Gifford 2015; Todd 2014; Wodak & Boukala 2014, 2015).

In the following, I will focus primarily on the argumentation for an economic union as laid out in Cameron’s Bloomberg Speech and will have to neglect the developments since 2013 (e.g., Dommett 2015; Lynch 2015; Schreiweis 2013; Ungureanu 2013) as well as a detailed discussion of the British political and party contexts since the 1950s (e.g., d’Ancona 2016; Peet 2016; Todd 2014). Indeed, d’Ancona summarises his narrative of the rise of the “Brexit” idea and campaign as follows while tracing the arguments to post-Thatcher governments, and especially to a rejection of former Prime Minister Tony Blair’s pro-European stance:

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\* I would like to thank the Robert Schuman Center, European University (Florence), for inviting me as a Distinguished Schuman Fellow in the spring of 2016. This inspiring period supported me during the writing of this chapter in many important ways.

<sup>1</sup> See Charteris-Black 2014 and Wodak & Boukala 2015 for a detailed analysis of the BS along a range of rhetorical, pragmatic, functional, stylistic and argumentative dimensions; these analyses, however, relate to other research questions. I am very grateful to Salomi Boukala, John Heywood, Brigid Laffan, Sabine Lehner, and Markus Rheindorf for important comments and suggestions. Of course, I am solely responsible for the final version of this chapter.

“In the history of ideas, context is all. In the last days of this contest [before the referendum on June 23, 2016; RW], the leave campaign is concentrating remorselessly upon immigration – its prime doorstep issue. But there is a broader setting, too: the embrace of Brexit by a significant tranche of the political class reflects despair with the EU, matched, more interestingly, by a faith in Britain’s ability to go it alone and a conviction that the 21st century will favour nimble states over cumbersome bureaucratic blocs. Those who seek such a role for this country no longer define Britain’s place in the world by its presence at all its top tables, from the UN Security Council to the G8 to the EU itself. They envisage the millennial UK as something closer to a buccaneering galleon, unrestrained and versatile. Whatever else may be said about this declaration of independence, it has little in common with the calls for parliamentary sovereignty to be restored that defined the case for withdrawal in 1975. Even if leave loses on 23 June, the aspiration it reflects will survive, and live to fight another day.”<sup>2</sup>

As Cameron’s speech is being analysed through the discourse historical approach, some aspects of British Euroscepticism and European policies have to be discussed at least briefly, such as the policies and ideologies of the Coalition Government of 2010 and of UKIP in respect to the EU, both of which influenced the subsequent programs of the Conservative Party and provide many intertextual references, in form and in content.

Below, I first summarise the methodology applied in this analysis, i.e. the discourse-historical approach (DHA) (Wodak 2014 a, b); secondly, the broad and narrow contexts of the speech are described in as much as they impinge on the structure of Cameron’s proposals in the way of intertextual and interdiscursive references. Furthermore, I analyse the micro-texture of the speech-genre, a so-called “visionary (or speculative) speech” (e.g., Wodak & Weiss 2004), which contributes largely to the overall argument. I explore the discursive construction of “Us”, the British, and “Them”, the EU and the Europeans, as well as their salient collocations. The contrasting identities which emerge in this speech, I claim, imply a nationalistic body politics which constructs the United Kingdom and England as separate entities contrasted to “the continent”, i.e. Europe (Musolff 2004, 2010; Wodak 2015). Hence, BS oscillates between two extremes, in its attempt to alternatively observe maximum distance to the EU and some proximity to its economic policies. Moreover, both the *topoi of urgency and threat/danger* are appealed to – warning the EU that it would suffer under the loss of the United Kingdom; but also warning British voters that Brexit would damage their future and prosperity. In sum, as Copsey and Haughton (2014, 81) maintain:

“In contrast to Germans who have tended to see ‘Europe’ as an integral part of national identity and the French who see European integration as a chance to further national identity [...], Britons – or perhaps more accurately the English – tend to see *Europe* as a threat to national identity. They have difficulty reconciling themselves to the idea of being both British and European.”

## 2. The Discourse-Historical Approach and Nationalistic Body Politics

### 2.1. The Discourse-Historical Approach – a summary

The discourse-historical approach (DHA) belongs to the broadly defined field of critical discourse studies. Many theoretical and also methodological concepts used in the DHA are equally valid for other strands in critical discourse studies—even if their contexts of emergence have led to different toolkits (e.g., Hart & Cap 2014; Wodak & Meyer 2015). Still, these approaches draw on each other, thereby reproducing a common conceptual frame while they develop their own distinct orientations. The DHA is distinctive both at the level of research interest and methodological orientation (an interest in identity construction and in unjustified discrimination; a focus on the historical dimensions

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/15/brexit-how-a-fringe-idea-took-hold-tory-party>; downloaded 16 June 2016.

of discourse formation and on [national, local, transnational, and global] identity politics and the politics of the past) and with respect to its epistemological foundation—that is, being oriented toward the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, and in particular toward Habermas’s language philosophy (e.g., Reisigl & Wodak 2015; Wodak 2011, 2014a, 2015). A thorough discourse-historical analysis ideally follows an eight-stage program. Typically, the eight steps are implemented recursively:

- 1 literature review, *activation of theoretical knowledge* (i.e., recollection, reading, and discussion of previous research);
- 2 *systematic collection of data and context information* (depending on the research questions, various discourses, genres, and texts are focused on);
- 3 *selection and preparation of data for specific analyses* (selection and downsizing of data according to relevant criteria, transcription of tape recordings, etc.);
- 4 *specification of the research questions and formulation of assumptions* (on the basis of the literature review and a first skimming of the data);
- 5 *qualitative pilot analysis* (this allows for testing categories and first assumptions as well as for the further specification of assumptions);
- 6 *detailed case studies* (of a whole range of data, primarily qualitatively, but in part also quantitatively);
- 7 *formulation of critique* (interpretation of results, taking into account the relevant context knowledge and referring to the three dimensions of critique);
- 8 *application of the detailed analytical results* (if possible, the results might be applied or proposed for application).

This chapter will be, of necessity, restricted to a comprehensive pilot study consisting of the analysis of one speech while considering the relevant existing literature on this text as well as on other visionary speeches on the future of the EU and more specifically, on the British positioning within it and with regard to it.

The DHA is problem-oriented. This implies that the study of (oral, written, visual) language necessarily remains only a part of the research; hence the investigation must be interdisciplinary. Moreover, in order to *analyze, understand, and explain* the complexity of the objects under investigation, many different and accessible sources of data are analyzed from various analytical perspectives. Thus, the principle of triangulation is very important; and this implies taking into account a whole range of empirical observations, theories, and methods—as well as background information, all dealing with the phenomenon under investigation, i.e. in our case, the Bloomberg Speech and its “new vision of Europe and the EU”. In consequence, the concept of *context* is an inherent part of the DHA and contributes to its triangulatory principle, which takes into account four levels:

1. the immediate language or text-internal co-text, i.e. the speech;
2. the intertextual and interdiscursive relationships between utterances, texts, genres, and discourses, i.e. references to other speeches on the EU, such as Thatcher’s “Bruges Speech” of 20 September 1988, etc.;
3. the extralinguistic social variables and institutional frames of the specific “context of situation”, i.e. the choice of the specific date for and location of the BS;
4. the broader sociopolitical and historical context which the discursive practices under examination are embedded in and related to, i.e. the development of a British Eurosceptic stance since the 1980s, the positioning of the coalition government since 2010, and the pressures perceived in the Conservative Party due to the rise of the right-wing populist anti-immigration and Eurosceptic Party, UKIP.

In the concrete empirical analysis, the DHA is oriented toward all four dimensions of context, in a recursive manner.

Furthermore, Reisigl and Wodak (2015) distinguish between “discourse” and “text”: texts are parts of discourses. They make speech acts durable over time and thus bridge two different speech situations: the situation of speech production and the situation of speech reception (e.g., Burger & Delaloye 2016 who analyse the stages in the production of an editorial in a Swiss newspaper on the BS). In other words, texts—be they be they oral or written (and/or visual)—objectify linguistic actions; they are also *polyphonic*, i.e. they integrate and manifest various voices<sup>3</sup>, in direct or indirect ways. Texts are always assignable to genres. A “genre” may be characterized as a socially ratified way of using language in connection with particular types of social activity. In this chapter, we are dealing with a specific subgenre of deliberative speeches, (Charteris-Black 2014), a visionary/speculative speech about the future of the EU which sketched out the EU’s future and challenges to be confronted in the 21<sup>st</sup> century caused by its greater expansion and integration following the launch of the euro in 1999. (Weiss 2002)

The DHA considers the intertextual and interdiscursive relationships between utterances, texts, genres, and discourses as well as extra-linguistic social or sociological variables, the history of an organization or institution, and situational frames. While focusing on all these levels and layers of meaning, researchers explore how discourses, genres and texts change in relation to sociopolitical change. *Intertextuality* means that texts are linked to other texts, both in the past and in the present. Such connections are established in different ways: through explicit reference to a topic or main actor; through references to the same events; through allusions or evocations; through the transfer of main arguments from one text to the next, and so on. In the BS, we encounter – as will be illustrated below – a set of allusions to Shakespeare’s Henry V, drawing an analogy between Britain’s situation nowadays and the 100 Years War and the Battle of Agincourt many centuries ago (October 25, 1415) as well as a frequent use of the *topos of history* which draws on Britain’s salient role in WWII and during the Cold War inasmuch as it always supported Europe during times of huge danger.

The process of transferring given elements to new contexts is labelled recontextualization. If an element is taken out of a specific context, we observe a process of decontextualization; if the respective element is then inserted into a new context, we witness a process of recontextualization. The element (partly) acquires a new meaning, since meanings are formed in language use (see Wittgenstein, 1967). Recontextualization can be observed when contrasting, for instance, a political speech with the selective reporting of that speech in various newspapers (see the comprehensive study of the reception, preparation and performance of the BS by Daddow 2015).

Interdiscursivity signifies that discourses are linked to each other in various ways. If “discourse” is primarily defined as topic-related (as “discourse on x”), then a discourse on Brexit frequently refers to topics or subtopics of other discourses, such as of immigration, terrorism/security, or the economy. Thus discourses are open and often hybrid; new subtopics can be created at many points. In the BS, many voices are referred to interdiscursively, via the labelling of topics, agenda, and various actors (such as the UK, the EU, the “island”, “Europe”, and so forth).

The DHA is three-dimensional: after (1) having identified the specific contents or topics of a specific discourse, (2) discursive strategies are investigated. Then (3) linguistic means are examined as types, and the specific, context-dependent linguistic realizations are examined as tokens. This implies analyzing the coherence of the text by first detecting the macro-topics and related subtopics. Second, it is important to understand the aim of the text producer in a specific genre: Does the speaker intend to convince somebody and thus to create or perform a persuasive text? Or to tell a story? Or to select a more factual mode and report an incident? Depending on the aim, different strategies and linguistic, pragmatic, and rhetorical devices will be used to realize the intended meaning.

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<sup>3</sup> See Bakhtin’s definition of ‘voice’: The voice "is the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness. A voice always has a will or desire behind it, its own timbre and overtones." (Bakhtin 1981, 414).

There are several strategies that deserve special attention when analyzing a specific discourse and related texts in relation to the discursive construction and representation of “us” and “them”, a distinction which is salient in the case in point, i.e. the BS. Cameron makes repeated contrasts between Britain which he labels as the “island nation” and “Europe” (or “the EU” or “the continent”). This distinction implies that both are inherently different and – further presupposes – that Britain does not belong to Europe. This is why I analyze in some detail in section 6 the various nominations and collocations attributed to these foregrounded social actors in the text.

Heuristically, when analyzing the discursive construction of individual or collective, transnational, national or local identities, one could orient to five questions:

1. How are persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes, and actions named and referred to linguistically?
2. What characteristics, qualities, and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events, and processes?
3. What arguments are employed in the discourse in question?
4. From what perspective are these nominations, attributions, and arguments expressed?
5. Are the respective utterances articulated overtly? Are they intensified or mitigated?

According to these five questions, five types of discursive strategies can be distinguished. Discursive strategies are located at different levels of linguistic organization and complexity (Table 1 lists the important strategies and their related linguistic devices; Figure 1 summarizes the most important categories of the DHA). When analyzing the BS, it is of great interest and relevance to trace the construction of various in- and out-groups, of the self-presentation of the UK (and Cameron), and the presentation of others (Europe, the EU, and so forth). As already mentioned above, national and transnational identity constructions prove salient in this visionary and speculative speech.

**Table 1: A selection of discursive strategies (adapted from Reisigl & Wodak 2009, 104)**

Strategy	Objectives	Devices
referential / nomination	discursive construction of social actors, objects/phenomena/events, and processes/actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• membership categorization devices, deictics,</li> <li>• tropes such as metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches</li> <li>• verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions</li> </ul>
predication	discursive qualification of social actors, objects, phenomena/events/processes, and actions (more or less positively or negatively)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits (e.g., in the form of adjectives, appositions, prepositional phrases, relative clauses, conjunctive clauses, infinitive clauses and participial clauses or groups)</li> <li>• explicit predicates or predicative nouns/adjectives/ pronouns</li> <li>• collocations</li> <li>• explicit comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures (including metonymies, hyperboles, litotes, euphemisms)</li> <li>• allusions, evocations, and presuppositions/ implicatures</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
argumentation	justification and questioning of claims of truth and normative rightness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>topoi</i> (formal or more content-related)</li> <li>• fallacies</li> </ul>
Perspectivization/ framing or discourse representation	positioning speaker's or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deictics</li> <li>• direct, indirect or free indirect speech</li> <li>• quotation marks, discourse markers/particles</li> <li>• metaphors</li> <li>• animating prosody</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
intensification, mitigation	Modifying (intensifying or mitigating) the illocutionary force and thus the epistemic or deontic status of utterances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diminutives or augmentatives</li> <li>• (modal) particles, tag questions, use of the subjunctive, hesitations, vague expressions, etc.</li> <li>• hyperboles, litotes,</li> <li>• indirect speech acts (e.g., question instead of assertion)</li> <li>• verbs of saying, feeling, thinking</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>

"We have the character of an island nation". A discourse-historical analysis of David Cameron's "Bloomberg Speech"

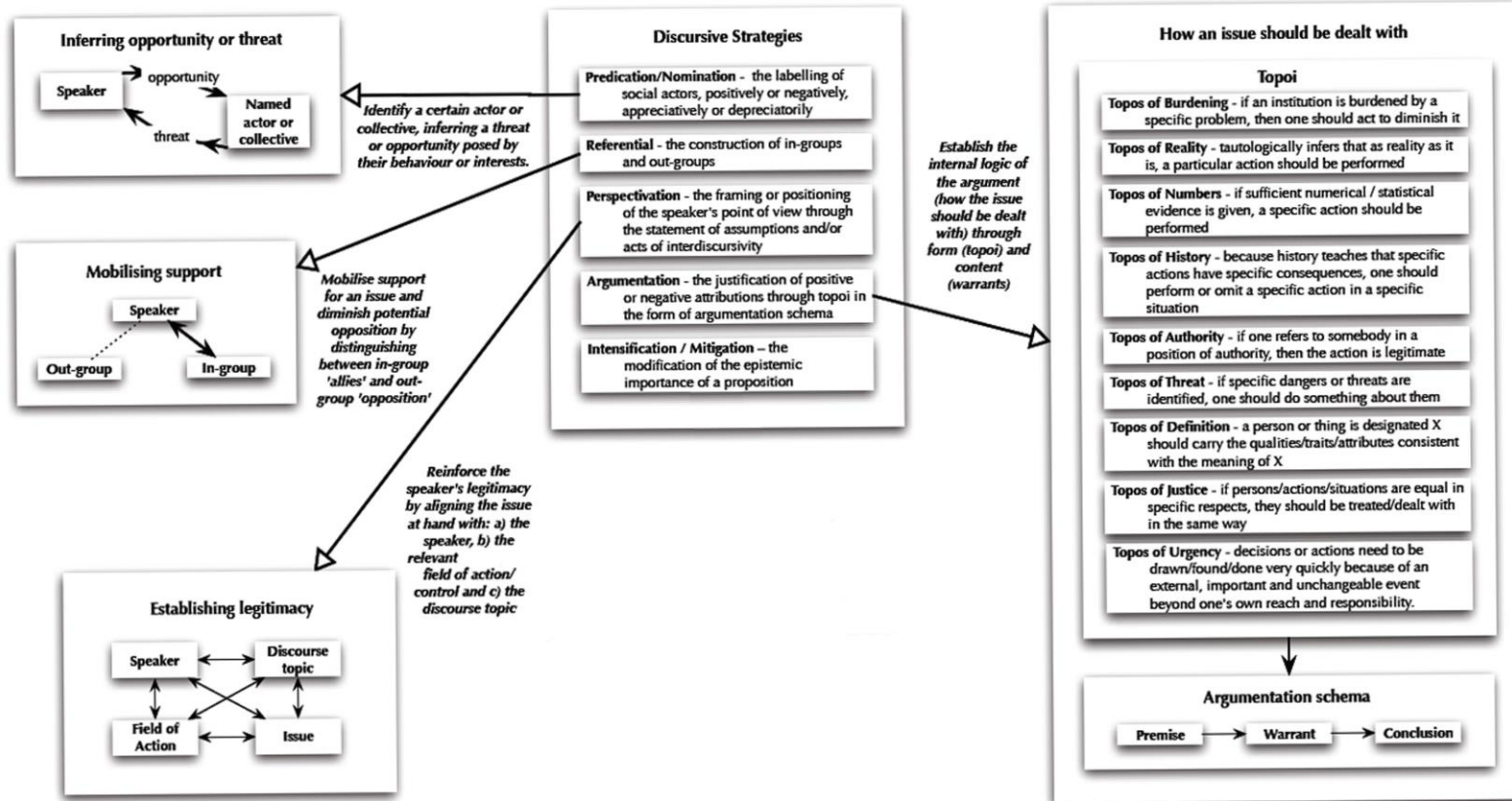


Figure 1

The concept of *topos* is also important for the analysis of the sometimes fallacious and sometimes reasonable arguments which are widely adopted in persuasive rhetoric. Following the Aristotelian tradition, I approach *topos* (pl. *topoi*) as a rhetorical and dialectical scheme that offers the opportunity for a systematic in-depth analysis of different arguments and statements that represent the accepted knowledge – *endoxon* – and which are usually employed by orators or opponents to persuade their audience of the validity of their opinions (Forchtner 2014). *Topoi* are thus defined as parts of argumentation which belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable, premises. As such they justify the transition from the argument or arguments to the conclusion (Kienpointner 1996, 562). Hence, a *topos* should be understood as a quasi “elliptic” argument (an *enthymeme*), where the premise is followed by the conclusion without giving any explicit evidence, while taking the conclusion to confirm, and relate back to, *endoxon*. The following Figure 2 illustrates the argumentation scheme:

**Figure 2: A simplified Model of Argumentation (adapted from Kienpointner 1996, 75)**



#### Warrant / conclusion rule

*Topoi* can be made explicit as conditional or causal paraphrases, such as “if x, then y” or “y, because x” (Reisigl & Wodak 2001, 69–80). Focusing on these conclusion rules and Aristotelian (rhetorical) *topoi* Kienpointner (1996) distinguishes between various content-abstract, i.e. formal, argumentation schemes which occur frequently in argumentation, such as the *topos of definition*, the *topos of the species and the genus*, the *topos of comparison (topos of similarity vs topos of difference)*, the *topos of the part and the whole*, the *topos of authority*, the *topos of example* and the *topos of analogy*. For example, the *topos of authority* can be deconstructed as follows:

Conclusion Rule: If authority X says that A is true, A is true

A: X says that A is true

C: Thus, A is true

## 2.2 Nationalism and Body politics

In the following, it is important to elaborate some dimensions of the discursive construction of national identity/identities as the national identities of Britain and the EU/Europe are focussed on and essentialized in the BS, following the research conducted by Wodak et al. (2009) on the construction of Austrian national identity/identities in public, semi-public and quasi-private discursive contexts. The key assumptions are:

- that nations are primarily mental constructs, in the sense that they exist as discrete political communities in the imagination of their members;
- that national identity includes a set of dispositions, attitudes and conventions that are largely internalised through socialisation and create a “national habitus”, drawing on Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital, and field (1990);
- and, lastly, that nationhood as a form of social identity is *produced, transformed, maintained and dismantled* through discourse (Wodak et al. 2009, 3-4).



The systematic qualitative and quantitative analysis of the discursive construction of national identities comprises the above-mentioned three DHA dimensions: content, strategies and realizations (linguistic and otherwise). It makes sense to investigate the following five content-related areas:

- the construction of the Homo Nationalis,
- the narration and construction of a shared political past,
- the discursive construction of a shared culture,
- the discursive construction of a shared political present and future,
- the discursive construction of a “national body“ (Wodak et al. 2009, 30).

In this way, *constructive discursive strategies*<sup>4</sup> encompass those linguistic acts which serve to establish a particular national identity. These are primarily linguistic utterances which constitute a national “we-group” through specific acts of reference, for example by using the pronoun *we* in connection with the toponymical label “The English”, in the phrase “we English”, which, directly or indirectly, appeals to solidarity and union. Expressions such as “to take on something together” or “to co-operate and stick together” frequently occur in these contexts. *Strategies of perpetuation and justification* maintain, support and reproduce a national identity perceived to be under threat. Justification and legitimization frequently refer to events of the past, which may influence the narratives of national history by employing the *topos of history* (see above and section 5 below). Of course, political decisions concerning the present and future have to be justified and legitimized, for example, through individual or collective, public or private, national narratives<sup>5</sup>.

*Strategies of transformation* transform a relatively well-established national identity or parts of it into another. Obviously, after having juxtaposed the British with a European identity, Cameron suggests various proposals to accommodate/transform the EU to perceived British needs. Finally, *destructive strategies* demolish existing national identities or elements of them.

National identities are continuously negotiated, co-constructed, and re-produced discursively. On the one hand, as an imagined community, they are stable enough to allow identification and cohesion of social groups. On the other, they are flexible and dynamic enough to be articulated by various actors in various contexts and for various audiences. Diachronically, they are subject to change (political, social, economic etc.). Institutional and material social structures influence the construction of national identity; however, institutional practices may also conflict with identity imaginaries. The *discourse of sameness*, for example, emphasizes national uniqueness and inward sameness, ignoring differences within. The *discourse of difference*, by contrast, emphasizes the strongest differences to other nations.

“Nation” as defined by many politicians, also from right-wing populist parties, is a limited and sovereign community that exists and persists through time and is tied to a specific *territory (space)*, inherently and essentially constructed through an in/out (member/non-member) opposition to its out-groups (Spiering 2015). Access to national identity/membership is defined via heritage and ancestry, also via “blood” (de Cleen 2012, 97).<sup>6</sup> Such a notion of nation and nationalism is closely tied to concepts underlying racism, i.e. body politics. Indeed, Spiering (2015, 17) mentions in much detail how essentialist ideas about British national identity go back several centuries, but most specifically to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Thus, he maintains that “[a]t the root of British Euroscepticism lies a long-established tradition of contrasting the British Own with the European Other. British Euroscepticism is to a large extent defined and inspired by cultural exceptionalism”. (ibid, 18) As I illustrate in the detailed analysis of the BS below, David Cameron continues the practice of placing Britain outside

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<sup>4</sup> See Wodak et al. (2009, 32ff.) for the definition of the various macro-strategies and sub-strategies which can be deconstructed when studying texts and talk about the discursive construction of national identities.

<sup>5</sup> See Stone 2002; Heer et al. 2008; de Cillia & Wodak 2009; Wodak & Auer-Boreo 2009; Wodak & Richardson 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Other scholars also use the terms ‘ethno-nationalism’ and ‘ultra-nationalism’ in this context (Rydgren 2005).

Europe, even if sometimes positively nominating Europe as “our geographical neighbourhood” which obviously implies that Europeans live close by, or near to the UK, but not *in* the UK. Does this, one could ask, mean that the British are not to be perceived as Europeans?

However, it is important to emphasise here that neither is racism necessarily nationalist, nor nationalism necessarily racist. For example, the connection to a territorial space must be perceived as a structural component of nationalism but not of racism. While racism as ideology and practice depends on the definition of groups and their fallaciously generalised negative and positive characteristics, linked to biological categories, nationalism need not. Nevertheless, the conceptual boundaries are certainly blurred (Wodak 2015; de Cleen 2012).

### 3. Broad and narrow contexts

Europe has throughout history been the UK’s biggest trading partner and – from time to time – a source of existential threat to the British nation (be this threat Napoleonic France or Nazi Germany). European issues have therefore never been too far from the top of the British political agenda (Todd 2014). The relationship has continued to trouble the political leaders of the UK even after the country joined the European Economic Community in 1973, specifically after the experience of having two previous British accession attempts (1963 and 1967) vetoed by the former French President Charles de Gaulle.<sup>7</sup> The UK has come to be regarded as an “awkward partner” in the project of European integration (Daddow 2006, 311) and the “home of the term Euroscepticism” (Spiering 2004, 127). UKIP leader Nigel Farage and his populist United Kingdom Independence Party are employing the issue of Europe to support their main agenda, namely restricting or even stopping any influx of migrants (wherever they might be coming from; i.e. both EU-migrants as well as migrants from non-EU countries); and secondly their vehement Euroscepticism. In the BS, David Cameron drew on his Labour predecessor Harold Wilson by announcing his intention to hold an in/out referendum on Europe in 2017 following a successful negotiation of “a new settlement with our European partners” (e.g., Peet 2016). Obviously, a referendum could result in a vote in favour of leaving the EU—a “Brexit”—and thus massive and fundamental changes to the way the UK relates to the EU<sup>8</sup>. The outcome of referenda is usually unpredictable and thus, referenda are perceived to be a dangerous political instrument – as already stated by the former British Prime Minister Clement Attlee who referred to the experiences in the Weimar Republic and the 1930s: “The referendum is a device of dictators and demagogues”.<sup>9</sup>

Before discussing the British and European contexts further, it seems important to define the very concept of “Euroscepticism” which has been used in many different meanings: Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008) distinguish between “soft and hard Euroscepticism”: *Hard Euroscepticism* “might be defined as principled opposition to the project of European integration as embodied in the EU, in other words, based on the ceding or transfer of powers to supranational institutions such as the EU”, whereas *soft Euroscepticism* implies that “there is not a principled objection to the European integration project of transferring powers to a supranational body such as the EU, but there is opposition to the EU’s current or future planned trajectory based on the future extension of competencies that the EU is planning to make” (Szczerbiak & Taggart 2008, 247-248). In the British case, Euroscepticism was often closely associated with the Conservative Party and Thatcherism in particular, though it also spread widely within the Labour Party (Forster 2002; Alexandre-Collier 2015, 2ff.).

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<sup>7</sup> See British reaction, for example, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/november/27/newsid\\_4187000/4187714.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/november/27/newsid_4187000/4187714.stm) (downloaded 20 June 2016)

<sup>8</sup> See the extensive discussion and analysis of the Eurosceptic debates in the UK during the past 30 years in Todd (2014).

<sup>9</sup> See [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/1714318.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/1714318.stm), downloaded June 23, 2016.

The recent Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition government took office in 2010, and the following five years up to the next election in 2015, which saw a small Conservative majority, witnessed an increasingly frenetic debate on the UK's membership of the EU. Eurosceptic Conservative Members of Parliament applied continuous pressure on Prime Minister Cameron with the aim of securing a referendum on EU membership. These backbench MPs had already been disappointed that Cameron had decided against holding a referendum on the Lisbon treaty. They were (and continue to be) very worried about UKIP's strong performance in the opinion polls. Nearly 100 Tory MPs put their names to a letter to the Prime Minister in summer 2012 urging him to hold a referendum (Montgomerie 2012).

The pressure was kept up through the rest of the year, with Cameron eventually making the BS in January 2013, after having had to postpone it twice due to foreign affairs issues. This speech involved two important commitments. First, to renegotiate the relationship between the UK and the EU; and second, should the Conservatives win the next general election in 2015, to hold an in/out referendum on the UK's continued membership of the EU. Unfortunately for Cameron, these commitments incited rather than appeased his backbenchers, and – as could be observed – UKIP continued to perform well in the polls. Indeed, the announcement of a referendum failed to satisfy the Eurosceptic wing of the Conservative Party, with 114 MPs voting on an amendment to the Queen's speech in 2013. This amendment expressed regret about the absence of a bill making provision for an in/out referendum (Wintour & Watt 2013). Following this unusual step, a Private Member's Bill calling for an in/out referendum was introduced by the Conservative backbencher James Wharton. His Bill received the support of the Conservative Party and was not strongly opposed by Labour and the Liberal Democrats during its passage through the Commons (e.g., Todd 2014 for more details).

Whilst more differentiated European economic or ecological issues rarely come top of the list of British voters' concerns, debates about immigration and the economy certainly make the British headlines. Two other relevant aspects of the broader sociopolitical context have to be emphasized: firstly, that at the start of 2014 the UK's restrictions on freedom of movement from Bulgaria and Romania came to an end. This had huge relevance for the heated immigration debate. Secondly, the financial crisis in the Eurozone was in full swing through much of 2013: this massively influenced the debates on the economic implications of EU membership.

## **4. Analysing the Bloomberg Speech**

### **4.1. Macro-topics**

In the BS, David Cameron first summarized the historical and future links between the UK and the EU, and then announced that the British people would be given the opportunity to decide about the nature of the future British relationship with the EU via a referendum (possibly by 2017). The speech was – as already mentioned – deliberately oriented to future policy and the promise of a referendum. He begins by taking a historical perspective on the origins of the EU after WWII, thus appealing to collective memories and the *topos of history*, and then defines Britain as a nation that is open to Europe, with himself as leader who has a "*positive vision for the future of the EU*".

He continues by listing the major problems of and challenges for Europe: *the euro; problems of global economic competitiveness; and democratic accountability*. Having framed the EU as problematic as is typical for such speculative speeches (see below); he presents five principles which have to be met and addressed in the near future, all linked to governance, the economy, and British identity: *competitiveness, flexibility, more autonomy for national governments, democratic accountability, and fairness*. As Spiering (2015, 18-19) ironically states, quite a few British speeches about the EU seem to have proposed five points (for example, Hugh Gaitskell in 1966, Harold Wilson in 1974, Margaret Thatcher in 1988, and Gordon Brown in 1997):

“Apparently, British politicians are hard wired to measure their relationship with the European institutions in units of five. This might be a conscious rhetorical figure [...], or this is a nice instance of intertextuality. Consciously or unconsciously, speech writer C copies speech writer B, who copies speech writer A.”

The speech was basically an appeal for a return to defining the EU as primarily an economic rather than a political union – with the possibility of a British withdrawal should the political overtake the economic (e.g., Charteris-Black 2014, 240).

In the following, I list the sequence of macro-topics in the speech (see also Daddow 2015, 159-160):

- **Historical links** between UK and EU after WWII – “EU as peace project”
- **Defining** Britain
- **Defining** (Cameron’s) leadership
- **Major problems** of the EU/Challenges to the EU:
  - The Euro
  - Global economic competitiveness
  - Democratic accountability
- **Cameron’s solutions** (“Vision” of the EU):
  - Global competitiveness in the global race
  - Flexibility
  - More autonomy for nation states (“EU as federal union”)
  - Referendum 2017
- **Appeal to “Inside” and “Outside”**: Britain as “the core/heart” of EU

The structure of the speech relates well to a similar outline emerging the corpus of 28 speeches given by a range of prominent European politicians in the context of the Millennium (e.g., Weiss 2002; Wodak & Weiss 2004). There, we detected analogous sections to those in the BS; for example, all 28 speeches started out with an overview of the EU’s history and a reference to the founding fathers, thus *temporalizing the EU* via its creation and the expectations raised by this new transnational entity. Furthermore, all speeches also defined Europe as a *territory*, a geographical space, albeit in different ways (for example, including or excluding Turkey). Another similar element consists of a fundamental dualism created between so-called experts and “the people” (i.e., the citizens). Whereas the experts are believed to be guided by rationality, the people are perceived as irrational, uninformed, and full of fear and uncertainty.

After having listed the manifold challenges the new millennium would be posing to the EU, all the speeches delved into a competitiveness and globalization rhetoric, part of proposals to solve problems and master the mentioned challenges. Europe should thus strive to be a “global player”, economically speaking. Of course, the sociopolitical context in 1999/2000 differed to that in 2013; thus most speeches also emphasized the necessity of enlargement and integration. The latter two propositions do not form part of the BS anymore; quite to the contrary, Cameron rejects an “*ever closer Union*” and more integration. Enlarging the single market, however, would, according to Cameron, still make sense. Because there are so many overlaps, both in structure and content, between the BS and the Millennium corpus there seems to be little doubt that the BS Speech also belongs to the *genre of visionary and speculative speeches*.

#### 4.2 Argumentative Structure

In the first part of the speech, the British Prime Minister emphasized two tipping points in recent European history, the Second World War and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989:

Seventy years ago, Europe was being torn apart by its second catastrophic conflict in a generation. A war which saw the streets of European cities strewn with rubble. The skies of London lit by flames night after night. And millions dead across the world in the battle for peace and liberty.

As we remember their sacrifice, so we should also remember how the shift in Europe from war to sustained peace came about. It did not happen like a change in the weather. It happened because of determined work over generations. A commitment to friendship and a resolve never to re-visit that dark past – a commitment epitomised by the Elysee Treaty signed 50 years ago this week.

After the Berlin Wall came down I visited that city and I will never forget it. The abandoned checkpoints. The sense of excitement about the future. The knowledge that a great continent was coming together. Healing those wounds of our history is the central story of the EU.

Cameron refers to the destructive consequences of war by employing hyperbole and the metaphor that “Europe was being torn apart”, which highlights a new unification of Europe. He also employs a metonymy, “the battle for peace and liberty”, and in this way legitimizes the attempts of the Allied Forces to defend themselves against the attacks of the Berlin-Rome axis during WWII. Thereafter, the British Prime Minister emphasizes the shift in Europe from war to peace and uses a *simile*, “it did not happen like a change in the weather”, in order to stress the difficult unification of Europe: a unification that was only finally achieved, as Cameron explains, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War in 1989. Intertextual rhetorical references come to mind, such as phrases from Winston Churchill’s speech in May 1940, which seems to be David Cameron’s favourite “Churchill quote”<sup>10</sup>:

“We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight them on the beaches, we shall fight them on the landing grounds, we shall fight them on the streets and in our fields, we shall fight them in the hills. We shall never surrender”.

These rhetorical tropes and other linguistic devices (*simile*, *hyperbole*) describe the successful transformation of Europe from a divided and hostile continent into a union of different European states; the macro-strategy of transformation underlying this passage is further substantiated via the *topos of history*: “because history teaches that specific actions have specific consequences, one should perform or omit a specific action in a specific situation comparable with the historical example referred to” (Reisigl & Wodak 2001, 80; Forchtner 2014). Indeed, Cameron anthropomorphizes the EU (as a human body) as part of the already mentioned “body politic” and employs the *metaphorical scenario* of healing a sick body by stating “healing those wounds of our history is the central story of the EU”. However, in the next rhetorical step, the comparison between the divided past of Europe and its contemporary fights leads to mentioning new threats; here a rhetoric of competitiveness and globalization (“a new global race”; “a race for the wealth and jobs of the future”) become evident:

But today, the main, over-riding purpose of the EU is different: not to win peace, but to secure prosperity. The challenges come not from within this continent but outside it. From the surging economies in the East and South. Of course a growing world economy benefits us all, but we should be in no doubt that a new global race of nations is underway today.

A race for the wealth and jobs of the future. The map of global influence is changing before our eyes. And these changes are already being felt by the entrepreneur in the Netherlands, the worker in Germany, the family in Britain.

Thus, the new European fight is not for peace but for prosperity in a global competition and race to the top of the ladder; the new enemy is not within Europe but outside it, i.e., other regional blocs in the global economy; hence, Cameron employs the constructive macro-strategy, appealing to necessary change. He refers to the danger (competition) from “the surging economies in the East and South” and indirectly to the common interest of the EU in “the global race for the wealth and jobs of European identities and the revival of nationalism in the EU in the future”. This argument is clearly based on the *topos of threat* condensed in the conditional: “if the world economy creates a specific threat against

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<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.exeterexpressandecho.co.uk/s-favourite-churchill-quote/story-25917661-detail/story.html>; downloaded 20 June 2016.

European economies, then the EU should fight against it". Moreover, the reference to citizens of EU member states (the Netherlands, Britain, and Germany) that are considered to be both financially powerful and the host countries of many non-European migrants, might also be understood as linking the financial threat with the presupposed dangers caused by migration. Not by coincidence, probably, Cameron chooses 3 economically dynamic Germanic nations as opposed to the Latin ones. . Here, Cameron accommodates to the rhetoric of UKIP and explicitly adopts the far-right populist mantra, albeit in a more indirect way than other politicians such as the Dutch politician and leader of the right-wing populist Party PVV, Geert Wilders, in his speech in Rome (see Wodak & Boukala 2015) or the Austrian right-wing populist politician and leader of the Freedom Party, H. C. Strache, in various posters and speeches (Wodak 2015, 2016).

Thereafter, the Prime Minister describes the relationship between the UK and the EU. Once again he bases his argument on history and historical knowledge (*topos of history*) and creates a mythical British narrative which supports the discursive construction of a hegemonic British national identity. Intertextual references abound. Apart from some rhetorical intertextuality already mentioned above, Cameron alludes to Shakespeare's Henry V. The famous phrase therein "Never King of England had nobles richer and more loyal subjects whose hearts have left their bodies here in England and lie pavilion'd in the fields of France" (Act 1, Scene 2, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*) is referred to below:

From Caesar's legions to the Napoleonic Wars. From the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution to the defeat of Nazism. We have helped to write European history, and Europe has helped write ours.

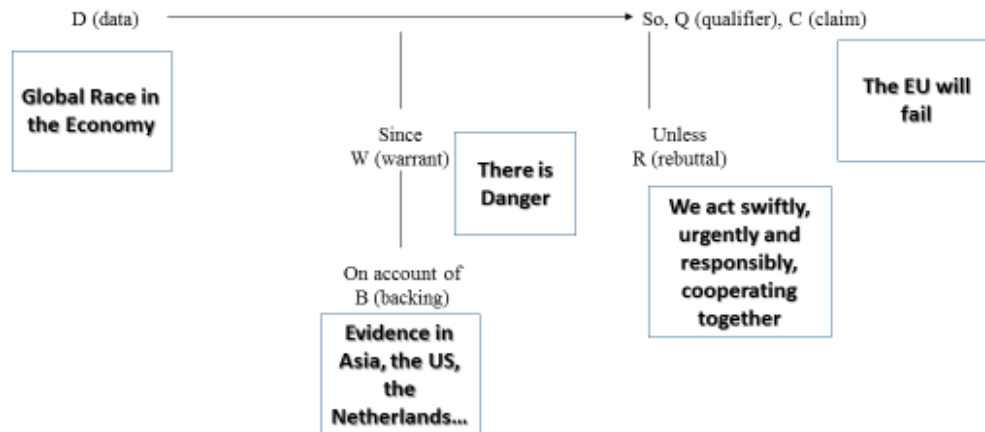
Over the years, Britain has made her own, unique contribution to Europe. We have provided a haven to those fleeing tyranny and persecution. And in Europe's darkest hour, we helped keep the flame of liberty alight. Across the continent, in silent cemeteries, lie the hundreds of thousands of British servicemen who gave their lives for Europe's freedom.

He explicitly lists the British contributions to the history of Europe. At this point, the British hegemonic discourse could thus be considered as an example of "*inclusive nationalism*". Cameron continues by referring to the "Other" Europe holds in common, the "surging economies of the East and South" that threaten European prosperity; in this way he cultivates a sense of belonging to a superior British nation, in the tradition of the British Empire. He thus defines European identity as primarily based on nation states and as supra-national. In this way, the sense of belonging to Britain first and then to the EU dominates Cameron's rhetoric; Britain is not part of Europe, they have a special relationship *with* each other, depicted as separate entities. Moreover, *topoi of threat and urgency* are explicitly used to make everybody aware of the imminent danger and the necessity of successful renegotiations:

The danger is that Europe will fail and the British people will drift towards the exit. I do not want that to happen. I want the EU to be a success. And I want a relationship between Britain and the EU that keeps us in it.

Figure 3 summarizes the macro-argumentation scheme which structures this speech, following Toulmin's approach (Toulmin 2003; Wodak 2014b):

**Figure 3: Macro-Argumentation Scheme underlying the Bloomberg Speech**



### 4.3 Us and Them

At this point, it is important to explore the various constructions of “Britain, UK and England (Us) in contrast to Europe (EU, Brussels), and their range of related collocations. This allows the tracing of the discursive construction of Cameron’s self- and other presentation, the characterization of “Us” and “Them” as constitutive of his argumentation. Table 3 lists the range of nominations for “Us”, the “island nation” (see more about the characterization of the British mentality below), Table 4 summarises the opinions and feelings which the British people are said to have in relationship to European authorities and various decisions. Most people are referred to vaguely, there are “some” and “others”, unspecified quantities of people. Moreover, these people mostly rely on impressions and intuitions, they are basically irrational: British people *feel, resent and reject*; they *wonder* and *are surprised*, they *feel uncomfortable*, even if authorities have their say. Table 5, finally, presents the various ways British people label and depict the EU and what they (and Cameron) believe the EU should or could or has to do; thus a range of modalities become relevant. The left side of the table elaborates the problems of the EU and the danger of failure as well as the necessity of transformation and reform. The right side presents the British (i.e. Cameron’s) redefinition and reformulation - integrating constructive and transformative strategies - of the EU’s agenda: a new and positive framing, condensed in:

“(we believe in) a flexible union of free member states who share treaties and institutions and pursue together the ideal of co-operation. To represent and promote the values of European civilisation in the world. To advance our shared interests by using our collective power to open markets. And to build a strong economic base across the whole of Europe.”

“For us, the European Union is a means to an end –prosperity, stability, the anchor of freedom and democracy both within Europe and beyond her shores –not an end in itself.”

The choice of verbs and related actions (transitivity) in self- and other representation illustrates the effect of both the referential and predicational strategies. Mental verbs characterize the EU and the people, material verbs the British government. Thus, it is – the speech implies – high time to act (see the use of adverbs such as “*urgently, essential, quickly, carefully*”, and so forth). Otherwise, - and

here the *topoi of threat and urgency* become relevant – it might be too late, and the EU might fail. In most cases, the EU is constructed as outside of the reach of European citizens, it is “something which is done to them”, uncontrollable and imposed. Moreover, the EU is anthropomorphized, seeming to be, on the one hand, an abstract, homogenous entity; on the other, a human being, which should carry out specific activities and is changing (the EU is “*in flux*”, “*will emerge*”). Never is it specified what the EU actually consists of; and who takes the decisions. And, of course, it is never stated that no decisions are being taken in any EU organization, at least at the level of the Council, where the UK would not have been part and parcel of the decision-making.

**Table 3: Definitions of The British, i.e. “Us”**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “we have the <b>character of an island nation</b>”</li> <li>• “we have always been a <b>European power</b> – and we always will be”</li> <li>• “we have always been a <b>country that reaches out</b>”</li> <li>• “we are a <b>family of democratic nations</b>”</li> <li>• “we believe in our nations <b>working together</b>”</li> <li>• “Britain has made her <b>own, unique contribution to Europe.</b>”</li> <li>• “<b>This is Britain today, as it's always been</b>”</li> <li>• “<b>Britain is at the heart [...] and must remain so.</b>”</li> <li>• “a new settlement in which <b>Britain is at the forefront [...]</b>”</li> <li>• “<b>Britain is leading European efforts to address this.</b>”</li> <li>• “a new settlement in which <b>Britain shapes and respects the rules [...]</b>”</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We <b>understand and respect the right</b> of others to maintain their commitment to this goal”</li> <li>• “we <b>insistently ask</b>”</li> <li>• “if we don't <b>address these challenges</b>”</li> <li>• “and so we <b>urgently need to address</b>”</li> <li>• “but its <b>essential [...] that we do [ask the difficult questions]</b>”</li> <li>• “we need to be able to <b>respond quickly</b>”</li> <li>• “we are <b>starting to see</b>”</li> <li>• “we are <b>seeing it</b>”</li> <li>• “we are <b>seeing</b> this frustration with the EU</li> <li>• “we should think very <b>carefully</b>”</li> <li>• “<b>those of us outside the euro recognise that</b>”</li> <li>• “we would have to <b>think carefully</b>”</li> <li>• “the challenges we <b>face</b>”</li> <li>• “we <b>understand and respect</b>”</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



**Table 4: Contrasting specific “Us” with vague “Others”**

<p><b>Authorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<b>Churchill</b> described”</li> <li>• “as <b>Chancellor Merkel</b> has said ”</li> <li>• “as the <b>Dutch Prime Minister</b> has recently suggested, to examine... ”</li> <li>• “It is to the Bundestag that <b>Angela Merkel</b> has to answer.”</li> <li>• “It is through the Greek Parliament that <b>Antonis Samaras</b> has to pass [...]”</li> <li>• “But I agree too with what <b>President Barroso</b> and others have said”</li> </ul> <p><b>People</b></p> <p>“Simply asking the British people to <b>carry on accepting</b> [...] over which they <b>have had little choice</b> [...]”</p> <p>“it is much more likely that the British people <b>will reject the EU</b>”</p> <p>“It is time for the British people <b>to have their say</b>.”</p> <p>“you, the British people, <b>will decide</b>. People are <b>increasingly frustrated</b> that decisions taken ...”</p> <p>“People <b>feel</b> that the EU is heading in a direction that they never signed up to. They <b>resent</b> the interference in our national life by what they see as unnecessary rules and regulation. And they <b>wonder</b> what the point of it all is.”</p>	<p><b>Vague references</b> (preemptive argumentation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Some</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “some of whom are <b>contemplating</b>”</li> <li>• “some <b>say</b> this will unravel the principle of the EU”</li> <li>• “some <b>argue</b> that”</li> <li>• “some <b>might then ask</b>”</li> <li>• “some <b>will claim</b>”</li> <li>• “there are some who <b>suggest</b> we could turn”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Those</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Those who <b>say</b> we have no vision for Europe”</li> <li>• “Those who <b>refuse</b> to contemplate consulting the British people [...]”</li> <li>• “And those who say [...]”</li> <li>• “I add my voice to those who are already <b>calling</b> for this”</li> <li>• “There will be those who <b>say</b> the vision I have outlined will be impossible to achieve”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Others</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “others are <b>uncomfortable</b>”</li> <li>• “many others, including Britain, who <b>would never embrace</b> the goal”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>There</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “there are always <b>voices saying</b>”; “there are <b>some serious questions</b>”; “there is <b>growing frustration</b> that the EU”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Table 5: Characterizing/Defining the “old” and “new” EU**

<p>“<b>The EU is seen as something that is done to people</b>”</p> <p>“The EU <b>must</b> be able to act with”</p> <p>“as the Dutch Prime Minister has recently suggested, to examine thoroughly, what the <b>EU as a whole should do and should stop doing</b>”</p> <p>“it is hard to argue that the <b>EU would not be greatly diminished</b>”</p> <p>“The European Union that emerges from the Eurozone crisis is going to be ... <b>It will be transformed</b>”</p> <p>“the way the <b>EU does business</b>”</p> <p>“<b>(But people also feel that) the EU is now heading</b> [...]”</p> <p>“<b>while the EU is in flux</b>”</p> <p>“<b>what sort of EU will emerge</b>”</p> <p>“if Europe today accounts for... produces .... and has to finance .. <b>it will have to work very hard to sustain...</b>”</p> <p>“<b>Europe will fail</b>”</p>	<p>“to set out how I believe the European Union <b>should</b> respond to them”</p> <p>“the <b>EU will need to agree</b>”</p> <p>“And just as I believe that Britain should want to remain in the EU so the EU <b>should want</b> us to stay.”</p> <p>“We are a family of democratic nations, all members of one <b>European Union, whose essential function is the single market</b>”</p> <p>“I want the European Union <b>to be</b> a success.”</p> <p>“[...] the European Union and how it <b>must</b> change – both to <b>deliver prosperity and to retain the support of its peoples.</b>”</p> <p>“(we believe in) a <b>flexible union of free member states who share treaties and institutions and pursue together the ideal of co-operation</b>”</p> <p>“to advance <b>our shared interests</b>”</p>
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#### 4.4 Body Politics – “The island nation”

David Cameron also repeatedly points to the very special character of the British and Britishness in substantiating the difference between “Us” and “Them”, between the UK and the “continent”. The uniqueness of the British (people or body) consists of, he claims, their “island mentality” (i.e., “*independent, forthright, passionate*”, “*more practical than emotional*”), the geographical space, and their historical experience with democracy. Intertextual references to Henry V become manifest also in this section, for example, to the utterance characterizing England and the British as “*That island of England breeds very valiant creatures*” (Act 3, Scene 7, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*). In this way, he addresses issues of sovereignty and democracy in detail during the BS. He makes an explicit causal link between national identity and “character/mentality” (*British sensibility; the anchor of freedom and democracy*), ‘in describing the European nations and their respective approaches to foreign policy. The underlying conceptual metaphor is A NATION IS A PERSON:

“I know that the United Kingdom is sometimes seen as an argumentative and rather strong-minded member of the family of European nations. And it’s true that our geography has shaped our psychology. We have the character of an island nation –independent, forthright, passionate in defence of our sovereignty. We can no more change this British sensibility than we can drain the English Channel. And because of this sensibility, we come to the European Union with a frame of mind that is more practical than emotional. For us, the European Union is a means to an end – prosperity, stability, the anchor of freedom and democracy both within Europe and beyond her shores –not an end in itself. “

Cameron continues and emphasizes:

“[t]here is a gap between the EU and its citizens which has grown dramatically in recent years. And which represents a lack of democratic accountability and consent that is –yes –felt particularly acutely in Britain.” [...] “There is a growing frustration that the EU is seen as something that is done to people rather than acting on their behalf.” [...] “Democratic consent for the EU in Britain is now wafer thin.”

This evidence seems to imply that

“[w]e need to have a bigger and more significant role for national parliaments. There is not, in my view, a single European demos. It is national parliaments, which are, and will remain, the true source of real democratic legitimacy and accountability in the EU.”

Body politics, an essentialised British character and the conceptual metaphors of THE NATION IS A BODY (with limbs, organs, a heart, healthy or diseased) and THE NATION IS A PERSON (with will, determination and other psychological characteristics) are conflated here (Musolff 2004; 2010; Wodak 2015), and thus serve as a causal argument for Cameron’s proposals and indeed requests for urgent change of the EU. The above quoted excerpts from the BS advocate “British exceptionalism” by referring to an “independent” and “forthright” country that is an “island nation”. The reference to an “island nation” is – again – clearly intertextual and relates to Churchill’s wartime speeches (see above).

The Prime Minister rejects the notion of a “single European demos” and foregrounds national parliaments, thereby privileging the national “self” and rejecting a shared sense of European identity, i.e. the important focus on the “ever closer union”. As Marcussen et al. (1999, 628) maintain, “Classical *Anglo-Saxon* notions of political order emphasize parliamentary democracy and external sovereignty. [...] Thus, there is not much space for “Europe” or “Europeanness” in this particular British political discourse.” (e.g., Todd 2014). Apart from the spatial and body frames, Cameron also relies on the conceptual metaphor of “England as a fortress”, with a drawbridge which could be pulled up, if necessary. Although he himself would not want this to happen: “I never want us to pull up the drawbridge and retreat from the world. I am not a British isolationist”. Importantly, Cameron defines Britain as “the heart of Europe and must remain so”, in spite of its obvious location in the West of the continent. This metaphor implies that Britain is salient for Europe and the EU; indeed, it should play a/the leading role in the EU (see Table 3 above). Table 6 summarizes some utterances in the BS which integrate body politics and various territorial representations, i.e., the inside and outside (of Europe,

the continent, and the UK), various borders (Schengen, Eurozone, the single market, Europe, the world, and the comfort zone...), North and South, East and West, old and new, the Aegean and other seas:

**Table 6: Inside and outside the UK and Europe – spatial and bodily distinctions and metaphors**

- “The knowledge that a **great continent** was coming together”
- “Today, hundreds of millions dwell in freedom, **from the Baltic to the Adriatic, from the Western approaches to the Aegean.**”
- “We need a structure that can accommodate the diversity of its members – **North, South, East, West**, large, small, old and new.”
- “The challenges come not from **within** this continent but **outside** it. From the surging economies **in the East and South.**”
- “I never want us to **pull up the drawbridge** and retreat from the world. **I am not a British isolationist.**”
- “And I want a **relationship** between the EU that **keeps us in it**”
- “Those of us **outside** the Euro recognise that those **in it** are likely to need to make some big institutional changes.”
- “But there is no overwhelming economic reason why the single currency and the single market should share the same **boundary**, any more than the **single market and Schengen.**”
- “Whatever new arrangements are enacted for the **Eurozone**, they must work fairly for those **inside** it and **out.**”
- “There is, indeed, much more that needs to be done on this **front**. But people also feel that the EU is now heading for a level of political integration that is far outside Britain’s **comfort zone.**”

#### 4.5 Coda

At the end of the speech, Cameron presents his vision for the future of the EU, Europe, and the UK, in the 21st century (I underline the salient elements which indicate characteristics and the related linguistic tokens of his vision):

We believe in a flexible union of free member states who share treaties and institutions and pursue together the ideal of co-operation. To represent and promote the values of European civilisation in the world. To advance our shared interests by using our collective power to open markets. And to build a strong economic base across the whole of Europe [...] we need to have a bigger and more significant role for national parliaments. There is not, in my view, a single European demos. It is national parliaments, which are, and will remain, the true source of real democratic legitimacy and accountability in the EU. It is to the Bundestag that Angela Merkel has to answer. It is through the Greek Parliament that Antonis Samaras has to pass his Government’s austerity measures. It is to the British Parliament that I must account on the EU budget negotiations, or on the safeguarding of our place in the single market. Those are the Parliaments which instill proper respect – even fear – into national leaders. We need to recognise that in the way the EU does business.

Many discourses are appealed to and merge in this quote: the discourse on European values, alluding to the Copenhagen Declaration of 1973; the neoliberal discourse characterized by flexibility and an open single market; this in contrast to a discourse about accountability and democracy. And finally the emphasis on “the EU doing business” (and not “doing politics”!). Cameron highlights a Union based on strong nation states with strong national parliaments. This argument is elaborated by the *topos of national responsibility* that can be paraphrased by the conditional: “if a national government is responsible for the people of a nation then it has to transfer any political measures to national parliaments”.

There is evidence of some relevant *topoi* in the speech – though with a significant variation in their frequency. The EU is represented as the cause of many negative social outcomes broadly characterized as burdens, while culture and history are used to mark Britain as different and distinct from the rest of Europe. Responsibility and justice are defined as important – as is to be expected in a speech that relies heavily on an appeal to ethos: Cameron constructs himself very positively, as a truly responsible politician who is constructive, but can also air anti-European sentiments and proposes, and proposes a more democratically accountable system of governance. However, the tone of the speech overall is not divisive; a salient rhetorical objective is to establish consensus while appealing to positive emotions. He concludes:

[...] I believe something very deeply. That Britain's national interest is best served in a flexible, adaptable and open EU and that such a EU is best with Britain in it.

The above brief extract manifests the dialectical relationship between the EU and Britain: he predicts potential negative results if Britain were to leave the EU by employing the fallacious Aristotelian *topos of the aftermath*, based on the conditional: “if Britain leaves the EU, then the Union will suffer deeply because of this loss”. However, no negative consequences for Britain seem to arise in this case!

Thus, in the BS, Cameron highlights the economic/financial character of the EU and defines the role of the UK within the Union in economic terms. He develops his rhetoric via stressing the common threat to Europe of “surging economies” elsewhere (overseas). Peet (2016) summarises this perspective succinctly:

“[A]most all of the other member countries see the EU in emotional terms as an important part of their identity and often, also, as an underpinning of their security and prosperity. Britain is different: it considers the EU on an essentially pragmatic and transactional basis. If membership seems to be desirable because it boosts trade and employment, fosters the success of British companies and protects the interests of the financial industry in the City of London, then Britons will support it.”

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On June 23, 2016, the referendum ended with a tiny majority for “Brexit”.<sup>11</sup> David Cameron resigned as British Prime Minister as soon as the results were announced officially. Further research will be needed to analyse the details of the polarized “In-Out” campaign and the – currently unpredictable – political and social as well as global, national and regional consequences for the United Kingdom and, simultaneously, for the future of the European Union and its member states.

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<sup>11</sup> See [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu\\_referendum/results](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu_referendum/results) for details of the results of the referendum.

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