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**FROM THATCHER TO MAY: FRAMING THE EVOLUTION OF BRITISH  
EUROSCEPTICISM UNTIL BREXIT**

Bachelor's thesis

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## **ABSTRACT**

The British are a Eurosceptical nation as the Brexit referendum showed. This thesis offers an overview of some of the concepts of Euroscepticism and brings out the factors that constitute the British form of Euroscepticism. These are later used as backgrounds for conducting a discourse analysis on the speeches of three British prime ministers - Thatcher, Cameron and May, to offer a conceptual map of 30 years of Euroscepticism in Britain. The thesis looks for changes in the prime ministers' approaches to the UK-EU relationship to see how the Euroscepticism in Britain has evolved. The thesis concludes that the Euroscepticism in the British prime ministers' narratives has changed both in general towards a harder approach, and in how the elements of British Euroscepticism are used in the prime ministers' viewpoints on the UK-EU relationship. It is also reasoned that the evolvement of British Euroscepticism was a factor in the British saying 'yes' to Brexit. Further research could be made to look for new elements of British Euroscepticism not used in the thesis or to deepen the research by including multiple speeches from prime ministers or by constituting a continuous timeline of speeches of all British prime ministers from Thatcher onwards into the analysis.

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## INTRODUCTION

The basis for conducting the research is the idea that there exists a British Euroscepticism and the level of it could change with every new government and/or with every new prime minister. The British case of Euroscepticism is relevant and worth studying, because no other country in the European Union has held referenda pertaining to continuous membership of the EU, which shows a higher level of Euroscepticism by the British people and which is why the topic was chosen. The research is not only relevant, but also timely in the light of the Brexit referendum amongst British people about staying or leaving the EU in the sense that – has the level of Euroscepticism consistently evolved to the point where the referendum was needed or had the idea of conducting one come lately. The new referendum was promised by Cameron in 2013 (Cameron, 2013) and was carried out on 23.06.2016. Euroscepticism itself is a widely discussed topic, with UK being the key example of it, but academic works, where discourse comparisons of British prime ministers' - Thatcher's, Cameron's and May's - approaches to the EU would have been studied, have not yet been made.

The overall aim of the thesis is to give a conceptual map of British Euroscepticism over the last 30 years. In a narrower approach, the thesis looks to prove that the elements of British Euroscepticism, which are discussed in theory, are also prevalent in the approaches of the British prime ministers as the representatives of the British people. Based on the previous, the thesis will then look for an answer to the question of how has the British Euroscepticism evolved. More specifically, it considers the question if, in the case of evolvment, the different approaches factored in leading the Brits to saying 'yes' to Brexit. Building upon Usherwood's (2004) work, where Thatcher's approach is considered to be a key building block of Eurosceptical Britain (Ibid, 5), and the occurrence of the eventual Brexit referendum in 2016, the hypothesis of the thesis follows that the Euroscepticism in Britain has constantly evolved towards being 'harder' (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008, 247-248).

In order to achieve the goals set out before and to answer the research questions, there are several assignments to be fulfilled: 1) to build a framework for general Euroscepticism

and British Euroscepticism based on theoretical works; 2) conduct a discourse analysis of selected prime ministers' selected speeches to see how many and what kind of British Eurosceptical elements could be detected in them; 3) to link findings of the analysis to the theoretical framework to see which kind of approach of general Euroscepticism was used at different times; 4) to compare the findings of the previous two points to see if and how did the Euroscepticism in Britain change; and 5) to compare pre- and post-Brexit approaches to Euroscepticism to see whether the evolvement of Euroscepticism occurred and factored in leading to the Brits saying 'yes' to Brexit.

Following the order of the assignments, the thesis is divided into two chapters, the first of which contains the theory about and the framework of Euroscepticism in general. This is followed by a description of more specific elements, which constitute the British form of Euroscepticism. The aim of the first chapter is to give an overview of the theoretical efforts made in the field of general Euroscepticism and British Euroscepticism, and to create a framework for the analytical part of the thesis. The second chapter focuses on the analysis of the empirical materials and the discussion on outcomes, but also involves descriptions of the methodology used in the analysis and an overview of the empirical materials. The goal of the second chapter is to conduct the analysis part of the thesis based on the theoretical framework, answer research questions and prove or disprove the hypothesis.

The understanding of Euroscepticism is largely based on the works of Szczerbiak and Taggart (2000; 2003; 2008; Taggart, 1998; 2013; Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002), who offer a productive distinction (Gifford, 2014, 2) between hard and soft Euroscepticism. This distinction in a somewhat different form is also offered by Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese (2013) and used in the analysis part of the thesis. Other typologies of Euroscepticism (e.g. Kopecký and Mudde, 2002) are also considered, but not used in the analysis following the criticism of Szczerbiak and Taggart (2003, 10-11). The framework of the different elements of British Euroscepticism is derived from the works of Spiering (2004; 2015), Corner (2007), Daddow (2013; 2015) and Grant (2008), which are explained more in depth by using additional information by other authors (e.g. Bevir, Daddow and Schnapper, 2015).

The analysis of the thesis is conducted by using discourse analysis as the thesis is written as a qualitative research paper and as the research is carried out based on speeches. Discourse analysis enables to look for meanings behind the words and see the speeches in a specific context (Titscher et al., 2000, 25-27). Therefore it offers an opportunity to give a framework to each approach of the prime ministers under analysis. Thatcher's speech (1988) was chosen to be analysed because it has been considered as a building block of British Euroscepticism (Usherwood, 2004, 5). Cameron's narrative to British Euroscepticism was taken into the analysis because Cameron (2013) brought the topic of British Euroscepticism (back) into the limelight as he was the prime minister who called for the Brexit referendum and in doing so discussed the UK-EU relationship in depth (Cameron, 2013; 2015). May's approach to British Euroscepticism was chosen to be considered in the thesis because of May being the post-Brexit prime minister of the UK and therefore having to conceptualize a future relationship between the UK and EU, which was done in the 'Global Britain' speech (2017).

The empirical data that the thesis is built upon is transcriptions of prime ministers' speeches which are derived from various sources on the Internet. The transcription of Thatcher's (1988) Bruges speech is taken from Margaret Thatcher Foundation's website, where historical documents of the Thatcher period are found (Home page, 2016) and could therefore be considered as a trustworthy source. Cameron's speeches (2013; 2015) are available at the official webpage of the British government (Home page, 2017a), which is considered here as a trustworthy channel. The transcription of May's (2017) speech is derived from the website of the news outlet The Independent (Home page, 2017b). Although the trustworthiness of a news outlet in transcribing and forwarding a speech could be doubted, there is a video of Theresa May's (2017) speech offered at the beginning of the transcription, which alleviates the problem of the source not being trustworthy enough. No additional data analysis program is used in the thesis as the number of empirical samples is small.

## 1. CONCEPTUALIZING EUROSCEPTICISM

### 1.1 Defining Euroscepticism

When writing about Euroscepticism, one should understand first, what the term means. As it is argued that Euroscepticism depends on the context it is used in (e.g. Leconte, 2010) and as it has become a “generic, catch-all term” (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2003, 6) to capture various negative attitudes towards European integration and the European Union (EU), it would be perhaps reasonable to start with explaining the origin of the word.

As Leconte (2010, 3) notes, for the first decades of European integration, the people who opposed the integration were called, among other terms, nationalists, ‘anti-marketeers’ or Gaullists, as the terms Euroscepticism or Eurosceptic were not in use. Euroscepticism first entered the journalistic lexicon in the 1980s, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) citing an article in *The Times*, from June of 1986, noting its first usage (Harmsen and Spiering, 2004, 15), but as Spiering (2004, 127) points out, it had been used earlier in the same paper in an article from November of 1985, although it was then interchangeably used with the term ‘anti-marketeer’. Following this, it is quite complicated to pinpoint the term’s meaning, as it morphed relatively recently from journalese into an area of political science and academic research (Gifford, 2014, 2; Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2003, 6). As a consequence, it is recognized, that borrowing and adapting the term in order to research or analyse attitudes towards European integration, some conceptual difficulties may arise (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2003, 6). Harmsen and Spiering (2004, 18) similarly state, that the growing scholarly literature on Euroscepticism has been considerably focused on defining the term in order to understand it better and delimit the phenomenon.

Some insight for narrowing down the focus of the term might be given by breaking the word down into parts. According to Spiering (2004, 128) a clear agreement exists, that the prefix ‘Euro’ is used to refer to the EU and/or the EU’s precursors. On its own, the suffix ‘-ism’ is used to show a political ideology. The in between word ‘sceptic,’ which comes from an ancient-Greek philosophy school of ‘scepticism,’ originates from the fourth century BC when Pyrron outlined scepticism as a mindset where a belief’s or



opinion's validity is not accepted *a priori*, meaning that real knowledge of things is essentially not possible (Leconte, 2010, 5; Ultan and Ornek, 2015, 50), but according to Hooghe and Marks (2007, 119-120) the word's meaning has diffused from the classical scepticism and has now come to mean "an attitude of doubt or a disposition of disbelief" (Ibid, 119). In general, there is a consensus that 'sceptic' is defined as 'doubtful' in the term (Spiering 2004, 128).

The literature on Euroscepticism largely follows the meanings offered to the parts of the term when defining it as a whole, as it is explained similarly by various authors, although some differences remain. The change in the connotation of Euroscepticism can, for example, also be seen in the OED, where 'Eurosceptic' was defined as "a person who is not enthusiastic about increasing the powers of the European Union" (Harmsen and Spiering, 2004, 15), but where it has over time changed into "a person who is opposed to increasing the powers of the European Union" (Eurosceptic, 2017). Further discussion of the term is seen in the substantial literature and research on the topic, from what two main schools of Euroscepticism studies have emerged – Sussex and North-Carolina (Mudde, 2012). Although both of those concentrate on party-based Euroscepticism studies, which is not the focal point of this thesis, they try to give their own theoretical and conceptual framework to Euroscepticism to argue for their approaches (Ibid). The approach of the authors of the Sussex school, based on works of Taggart and Szczerbiak, is more concerned with defining Euroscepticism and giving it a framework from country-based study point (Mudde, 2012, 194-196), which is needed for this thesis.

One of the earliest academic definitions of Euroscepticism was offered by Paul Taggart, from the Sussex school, in an article from 1998, where he offered that the term "expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (Taggart, 1998, 366), which Taggart and Szczerbiak have in their later works redefined (2002; 2008). Almost ten years after the first attempt, Hooghe and Marks (2007, 120), who belong to the North-Carolina school, explain Euroscepticism as being doubtful or disbelieving of Europe and/or European integration in general and concur with various other authors that Euroscepticism involves a variety of critical positions, including outright opposition but not necessarily

a hostile attitude (Leconte, 2010, 5), on the subject of European integration, showing the diffused meaning of the term. Therefore a narrower framework is needed to conduct the analysis part of the thesis later.

One of the dimensions for a narrower conceptual frame was developed by Taggart and Szczerbiak as Szczerbiak argued that the term Euroscepticism needed to be clarified to understand what it encompasses and thus distinction between hard and soft Euroscepticism was proposed (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2000, 6). They discuss the meanings of the distinctions also in their later works, where hard Euroscepticism was at first defined as “principled opposition to the EU and European integration” (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002, 7) with the possibility of a withdrawalist approach and/or being opposed to the way European integration is being conceived at the time. Soft Euroscepticism was defined as a situation where there is no “principled objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU,” and where national interest may take a form of “being at odds with the EU’s trajectory” (Ibid). Following the definition, policy Euroscepticism – being against measures of planned political and economic integration expressed by opposition to specific EU policies; and national-interest Euroscepticism – using the national-interest rhetoric in debates of the EU, can be derived from soft Euroscepticism (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2000, 6-7). In their more extensive research of Euroscepticism a few years later, Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008), after considering the criticism made about their definitions, redefine hard Euroscepticism as “principled opposition to the project of European integration as embodied in the EU” and soft Euroscepticism as “opposition to the EU’s current or future planned trajectory based on the further extension of competencies that the EU is planning to make” (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008, 247–248), although they did not provide a clear distinction between them.

Another kind of distinction between the terms ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ has been made to study Euroscepticism. Following the work of Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese (2013, 689-690), hard and soft ‘factors,’ when referring to Euroscepticism’s explanation, have been distinguished in the research of public opinion on EU and European integration. According to Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese (2013, 690), the term

‘hard factors’ is, in the field of public opinion, conceptualized as utilitarian and economic aspects of Euroscepticism and ‘soft factors’ as identity and cultural aspects, both these approaches having been used to study Euroscepticism. The factors are framed and used by political actors and constructed also in political debate (Hooghe and Marks, 2007, 125) to argue for one’s approach. Although efforts have been made to see if the public opinion on the EU has been influenced more by either set of factors at different time points (e.g. Hooghe and Marks, 2005; Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese, 2013), it has yet to receive any empirical evidence of it (Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese, 2013, 689-690). Albeit the literature shows that the research of public opinion on the EU is mostly based on quantitative data and surveys, the definitions of the factors provided could still prove to be useful in this thesis to add to the framework of Euroscepticism rhetoric used by prime ministers.

Other concepts for theoretical framework of Euroscepticism have also been put forward. For example, Kopecký and Mudde (2002) proposed a categorisation, where four types of party-positions on European integration - Euroenthusiasts, Europragmatists, Eurosceptics and Eurorejects - are described along axes of EU pessimist/optimist and Europhobe/Europhile (Kopecký and Mudde, 2002, 300-303). The first axis describes a party’s support or opposition to European integration as an underlying idea of the EU, whereas the latter shows the support or opposition towards the EU’s present or future planned trajectory (Ibid). Euroenthusiasts are pro-integration and pro-trajectory; Europragmatists are anti-integration, pro-trajectory; Eurosceptics are pro-integration, anti-trajectory; and Eurorejects are anti-integration and anti-trajectory (Ibid). Harmsen and Spiering (2004, 19-20) and Szczerbiak and Taggart (2003, 10) also bring out a continuum that was offered by Flood (2002, 5; as seen in Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2003, 10), where positions towards EU and European integration were separated into six points – rejectionist, revisionist, minimalist, gradualist and reformist. These approaches will not be used in the thesis as Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008, 246; 2003, 10-11) have pointed out that the concepts face a generic problem of being more complex and fine-grained in their typology and therefore Euroscepticism actors are “more difficult to operationalise and categorise” (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2003, 10) in them, as it would take a lot of data, without imprecisions or second-guessing the given information, to precisely pin the actors to one category.

This thesis' goal is not to offer any new definitions or approaches to Euroscepticism, but to analyse the study material in the framework of already existing concepts described above, as they have proven to be applicable to the research in the field, the hard/soft distinction being considered as "particularly productive" (Gifford, 2014, 2). Therefore the thesis adopts the typologies of Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008) and Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese (2013) into the analysis and leaves out the concepts offered by Kopecký and Mudde (2002) and Flood (2002, 5; as seen in Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2003, 10) following Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2003, 10) criticism of these typologies needing a larger amount of data and the thesis using only a limited number of speeches in the analysis.

## 1.2 British Euroscepticism

To see how the approach of British Euroscepticism is used in the rhetoric under analysis, another layer will be added to the framework by looking into specific cultural and identity factors of British Euroscepticism, as the factors motivate Euroscepticism differently in each country (McLaren, 2002). The importance of the factors is to see where Euroscepticism stems from (Taggart, 1998), in this case, in Britain, and assess Euroscepticism in the country accordingly to understand it (Leconte, 2010, 5).

Following the academic works on the subject of British Euroscepticism, it is necessary to note that the EU is used interchangeably with 'Europe' (Daddow, 2013, 211) in the United Kingdom (UK)-EU discussion, making it a discourse of 'Britain and Europe' (Spiering, 2015, 8). The term 'Britain' is also acknowledged as a "problematic construction that excludes Northern Ireland" (Gifford, 2014, 1), but is used in order to contribute to the discussion.

Appearing at first as an English phenomenon, Euroscepticism has had a particular connotation in the British context, where it has been pointed to as a broader phenomenon called "cultural anti-Europeanism," (Harmsen and Spiering, 2004, 13) which is not just an opposition to European integration's institutional forms (Ibid, 13-16), but includes a deeper disconnect between Britain and the EU (Spiering, 2015, 8).

The first of the cultural and identity factors that contribute to the disconnection between Britain and Europe can be called, after Daddow's (2013) work, a geography-psychology link. Britain is geographically separated from continental Europe, as it is an island, but that does not account for the psychological or emotional remoteness (Daddow, 2013, 212-213), which can be seen in the discourse of Britain and Europe, where Europe is thought of as another place (Grant, 2008, 2), as being "over there" (Daddow, 2013, 213), as an outland (Spiering, 2015), as being "abroad" (Spiering, 2004, 144) or an alien entity (Ibid), as well as Britain being thought of as an "outsider" (Daddow, 2015) in European politics throughout history. The distinction of Britain and Continental Europe is also seen throughout literature (e.g. Spiering, 2004). Furthermore, the British have thought of Europe as a choice for them to be in or out of, but mostly semi-detached from, and they have not perceived themselves as a truly European nation (Daddow, 2013, 214).

This psychological remoteness is argued to stem from the UK's history of being an Empire and losing this status, as well as having an ongoing attachment to the Commonwealth (Spiering, 2015, 7). According to Spiering (2004, 142), the loss of an empire constituted a national identity crisis, where the British did not know who they were anymore and their Euroscepticism is thus a reaction to a "traumatised national sense of being" (Spiering, 2004, 142). Having an empire and colonies in the past, the British also focused more on their maritime experience of trade and emigration-immigration taking place outside of Europe (Grant, 2008, 2) and still claim closer ties to the US, Canada, Australia and India, for example, (Daddow, 2013, 213) than Europe, which shows one of the reasons for British Euroscepticism. Bevir, Daddow and Schnapper (2015, 10) argue that the sentimental vision that the British have of the Commonwealth, and also the perceived common values, law and shared institutions within it, are a part of British Euroscepticism today, as the relationship is set above Europe and other countries because of the close links. The geographical-psychological link therefore greatly contributes to the discourse of British Euroscepticism.

Another factor contributing to Euroscepticism among the British is the British history, more specifically, the history relating to Britain's role in the Second World War. Spiering (2004, 137) notes, that Britain's international position after WWII was perceived to be

different to the countries of Continental Europe. This stems from the feelings of grandeur (Spiering, 2004, 140) that the British had as they saw themselves as saviours of Europe and putting on a (almost) single-handed effort to defeat Nazi-Germany (Corner, 2007, 466-467). The British still think of WWII as one of their finest hours and do not want to suppress the proudness or moral superiority coming from that (Grant, 2008, 2-3). Britain was not the place of war or the Holocaust, but Europe was, and this added to the feelings of detachment from the continent (Spiering, 2015, 12). Also, after being torn up in the war, other European countries wanted to move on and supported cooperation and integration to achieve it (Grant, 2008, 2). UK did not have to make that choice, as it had the options to continue and rely on its special relationships with the Commonwealth and the USA, but arguably having too much fate in them, as Britain not supporting the EU and integration has brought up the argument of “Britain having missed the bus in Europe” (Spiering, 2004, 137), which nourishes the Euroscepticism.

Correlating to the previous argument, another one is made for the British Euroscepticism stemming from history, which is coming from the viewpoint of the UK and Europe having “separate histories in general” (Shore, 2002, 228; as seen in Daddow, 2013, 215). Similar to the positions argued after WWII, earlier European history is also seen intertwined with dark periods of oppression and tyranny, but the UK has had history of increasing individual freedoms, which is now being interfered by undemocratic and intruding EU that encroaches on those British liberties (Daddow, 2013, 216).

British media makes for the third cultural factor in British Euroscepticism and is widely discussed amongst scholars. Lubbers and Scheepers (2010, 792-93) argue that country-specific attitudes towards EU are also caused by the knowledge passed on through media about the EU and in the countries that contribute to the EU budget substantially, what the UK does/did, Euroscepticism is increased through negative connotation of the EU in media. The British media has been described as ‘powerful’ (Grant, 2008, 3) and ‘hostile’ (Spiering, 2015, 7) or ‘negative’ (Daddow, 2015, 78) towards the EU and as having inflammatory stories increasing the Euroscepticism in Britain, especially by the coverage of EU budget disputes (Bevir, Daddow and Schnapper, 2015, 2). There are two main reasons for the Euroscepticism in the papers – papers identifying with a main political

party or papers' commercial considerations, of which the latter is more important because of the intense competition between daily-newspapers that are not sold by subscription and therefore look for sensational stories, which the EU makes a good base for (Spiering, 2004, 139, 146).

It could be argued, that the British being Eurosceptic (just) because consuming the Eurosceptic media is not reasonable (Spiering, 2004, 133), and that some of the best media concerns covering the topic of EU (Financial Times, The Economist, Reuters) are based in the UK (Grant, 2008, 3). The topic is here discussed because of the substantial consideration of it in literature about British Euroscepticism (e.g. Anderson, 2004; Lubbers and Scheepers, 2010).

One more cultural aspect of British Euroscepticism is briefly discussed in the works of Spiering (2004) and Grant (2008) and that is the British ruling classes – political, media and business leaders – being Eurosceptics themselves as their formative experiences while growing up have not been the same as their Continental counterparts' (Spiering, 2004, 140). This has resulted in their opinions being different from other EU member states' leaders and in most of them not having sought to lead or educate the public on the beneficial aspects of belonging to the EU (Grant, 2008, 5), contributing to Euroscepticism in the country. Political leaders, especially, have embraced the topic of Euroscepticism as it stirs emotions and offers for a rich rhetoric (Spiering, 2004, 145), which will be looked for in the analysis later in the thesis.

Some authors (Corner, 2007; Spiering, 2015; Taggart, 2013) also discuss the UK as being or feeling like it is itself an "EU in miniature" (Corner, 2007, 467), which factors in British Euroscepticism, because it is an integrated state, of what several nationalities with different identities are a part of, and where structural arrangement of institutional powers varies in competences and locations. This could lead to questioning if Euroscepticism is more of a English than British phenomenon, as the Irish, Scottish and Welsh are not that Eurosceptic (Corner, 2007; Spiering, 2015), but this is an another research topic not discussed here.

The economic factor for British Euroscepticism should also be briefly explained as it is a salient issue in British objection to European integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2007, 120) and offers another topic to the analysis later in the thesis. UK joined the precursor of EU, the European Economic Community (EEC), in 1973, as the economic Golden Age was ending, and unlike the first six members of the community, whose economies had prospered in the 1960s, in part thanks to the EEC, Britain had to deal with an oil crisis, rapidly increasing inflation and a stricken economy to be bailed out by IMF in the first few years after the entry (Corner, 2007, 466) resulting in the UK being called “the sick man of Europe” (Grant, 2008, 3). Also, two issues that were not addressed in the 1973 joining are argued to contribute to the semi-detachment from the EU, first of those being not knowing how the negotiated economical arrangements would function in practice and the second being the role of a net contributor to EEC budget that Britain took and it has since been a flashpoint in Britain-EU discourse (Bevir, Daddow and Schnapper, 2015, 2). So a national-level economical aspect of British Euroscepticism will be looked for in the analysis, not focusing on individual-level aspects accounting for economical opposition to the EU as that is a topic of research in the field of public opinion.

The five cultural and identity factors, plus one economic factor discussed above will serve as an additional framework for analysing rhetorics of British prime ministers as they have proven to be important to the discourse on Britain and Europe. The approach taken in this thesis is that Thatcher, Cameron and May personify the British Euroscepticism as the prime ministers of the UK. Therefore the research questions – which elements, if any at all, of British Euroscepticism are prevalent in the prime ministers’ approaches; how has the British Euroscepticism changed; did the different approaches, in the case of evolution, factor in leading the Brits to saying ‘yes’ to Brexit; and giving a conceptual map of the last 30 years of British Euroscepticism, are applied to their speeches.



## 2. ANALYSIS

In order to answer the abovementioned questions, an analysis on the speeches of the three British prime ministers is conducted in this chapter. Methodology of the analysis, overview of the speeches and a discussion on the results are also offered here.

### 2.1 Methodology

This thesis is written as a qualitative research paper. To conduct the research and frame the evolution of British Euroscepticism, four speeches of British prime ministers are subsequently analysed and compared by using discourse analysis. This research method is found the most useful in this case, because discourse analysis enables to look for specific content and words, but also meanings behind the words, and it allows to see the speeches, which are the basis for conducting the research, in a specific context (Titscher et al., 2000, 25-27; Nordquist, 2017; Tannen, 2012). Therefore, it offers a good base for later to follow through with the comparative aspect of the paper. No qualitative data analysis programme is used here as the quantity of the data is small. The aim is to develop a conceptual map of different components of 30 years of British Euroscepticism.

Prime ministers' speeches were chosen to be the basis for this thesis as it is assumed here that the prime ministers are the voice of the people in international politics conveying the feelings of the nation (Hennessy, 2011), and speeches are consistent sources of literature (Titscher et al., 2000, 25). The choice of speeches to be analysed is key to a successful analysis, because for an adequate comparison, the speeches would have to be structurally similar. The focus has been on finding speeches, where the prime ministers talk about Britain's relationship with the EU in depth. Also, the speeches should have not been presented to only party congresses, where the speeches could have been influenced more by the parties' viewpoints than the overall British opinion. For this research, public speeches of the prime ministers were found and one from each was picked, where the structure of the speech was most similar to the other – which does not mean that the contents were exactly the same, although the question of subjectivity still remains. The speeches could be seen in the empirical materials.

Choosing the speeches on which to base the thesis on and the timespan chosen for this thesis are interconnected. The first speech to analyse was chosen from Thatcher, as she was the prime minister who was in office from the late '70s, after the UK joined the EU (EEC back then) in 1973 and held a referendum on continued membership in 1975. The Bruges speech from Thatcher (Thatcher, 1988) was chosen as the starting point for this thesis and analysis, because according to Usherwood (2004, 5), the Bruges speech can be seen as a key building block in developing the British Euroscepticism. He adds that with this speech, Thatcher was the first European leader to clearly break from 1980s Europhoria and it had a long term impact (Ibid). It is also assumed here, that by the time of Thatcher's Bruges Speech British people had seen the benefits they had gotten from staying in the EU, and the doubts that still lingered, more clearly than around the time of the referendum in 1975.

The other end of the timeline chosen for this thesis was based on and around the subject of Brexit, as it is timely and brought the topic of the UK-EU relationship back into limelight, making the topic rich in opinions and rhetoric and also having a large-scale media coverage offering the opportunity to access and read speeches on the issue. To understand and frame British Euroscepticism around the time of Brexit, speeches from both, the pre-Brexit prime minister Cameron, and post-Brexit prime minister May, were chosen, as they account for the British approach to Euroscepticism in the last few years and also assumedly in the coming few years when the Brexit negotiations are taking place, making the timespan of the thesis about 30 years.

To study Cameron's approach, his speeches that had been made pre-Brexit and focused on the topic of UK-EU relationship in depth, were looked into, to get the most accurate point of view. In the light of this, the Prime Minister's Speech on Europe (2015), made in November, was chosen, but as it is in big part based on his Bloomberg speech (2013), the later has been taken as the main focus point, as Cameron explains his reasons for Euroscepticism more thoroughly in the Bloomberg speech.

In order to frame the British Euroscepticism post-Brexit, May's speeches after becoming

prime minister were looked into and similarly to Cameron and Thatcher, speeches focusing on the UK-EU relationship in depth were looked for. As at the beginning of her term, the prime minister did not offer substantially long speeches on the topic, the Global Britain speech made in January of 2017s in Lancaster House, where May outlines a 12-point Brexit plan, was chosen.

Using discourse analysis, i.e. studying the abovementioned speeches in the context of Euroscepticism, keywords taken from the theoretical part of the thesis are looked for in the speeches to analyse them and to understand and frame the evolution of British Euroscepticism. First of the keywords is the geographical-psychological link, where distancing Britain and Europe or the EU from each other or separating the two entities completely, and the reasons behind it, is analysed. How the prime ministers construe the relationship between the UK and the EU; how they call Europe/the EU; how they see the relationship with the rest of the European nations; which geographical words are mentioned in this respect; and referring to relationships with other international entities (e.g. countries, the Commonwealth) are here considered. The second factor looked for is speaking about British history and differentiating the British from Europe because or based on that. This follows in two directions, firstly in that sentences implying moral superiority stemming from the WWII; and secondly in that the prime ministers discussing the centralization of powers to Brussels or implying discontent with the EU encroaching on British liberties, are looked for. The third point in analysing the speeches is the issue of media and how it is mentioned, if at all, by the prime ministers. The fourth factor considered when conducting the analysis is of the ruling class approach to Euroscepticism, where rich rhetoric and emotion stirring is analysed. Under rich rhetoric colourful language and expressions are looked for; topics of security and migration and use of adjectives exalting the UK/the Brits is here considered as emotion stirring. The fifth consideration is the topic of Britain being the EU in miniature. Referring to different nationalities belonging under Britain or living in the UK and/or speaking about diversity and flexibility of the UK is looked for in the discourses. The sixth factor is the topic of economy, where it is analysed on which aspects of the economy the prime ministers (mainly) focus on and which aspects of economy they show support or opposition to.

To frame the wider approach to Euroscepticism of the prime ministers', an overall analysis of the speeches offers the differentiation of soft and hard Euroscepticism. The first differentiation which will be used is offered by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008, 247-248), where policy- and national-interest Euroscepticism under soft Euroscepticism are also considered as they add another layer of framework to the speeches and offer a slightly clearer distinction between the approaches. The second theoretical approach to hard and soft Euroscepticism under which the speeches are analysed, was made by Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and de Vreese (2013, 690), and where under hard factors utilitarian and economic, and under soft factors identity and cultural aspects are considered. This typology is used to provide an additional framework to the approaches and allows a comparison to be made between the concepts of soft and hard Euroscepticism from different authors, but to also see which could be considered more fruitful in the research of the UK-EU relationship. All of these topics looked for in the speeches should offer a conceptual map of evolution of British Euroscepticism.

## 2.2 Overview of the speeches

Margaret Thatcher's speech to the College of Europe, named "The Bruges Speech," was held in Bruges on the 20 September 1988, arguably with the background context of Thatcher being concerned about perceived Jacques Delors's power grab (Peters, 2013). It concentrates on outlining points to make European Community more effective and lays out key matters that it should follow, bringing forth the problems it should deal with as the Community wishes to improve itself and grow wider across Europe, as much as it was possible considering the iron curtain at the time (Thatcher, 1988).

David Cameron's "Bloomberg Speech", named after the venue of the speech, was held on the 23 January 2013. The impetus for the speech came from the increasing pressure of the Eurosceptics from The Conservative and the UK Independence Party on the prime minister, who had promised to answer the questions of discontentment of the UK-EU relationship and referendum-calls in a speech (Hunt, 2013). The speech is focused on the background of the UK-EU relationship and issues that Cameron feels need to be solved in order to lessen the discontentment on the subject, which leads up to a promise of an in-

out referendum (Cameron, 2013). Cameron's "Speech on Europe," held at the Chatham House on the 10 November 2015 is an extension of the "Bloomberg Speech," focusing mainly on the themes discussed in the "Bloomberg Speech" and adding the element of the crises occurring at the time, ending with a discussion about the referendum (Cameron, 2015).

Theresa May's "Brexit Speech" was held on the 17 January 2017, over half a year after the Brexit referendum, at the Lancaster House. The incentive for the speech was to answer the questions pertaining to how and when is Brexit supposed to be conducted. May touches on the subject of the UK-EU relationship and its background, and lays out a 12-point Brexit plan in the speech with an idea of the future relationship (May, 2017).

### 2.3 Analysis of the speeches

In order to compare the speeches and discuss if and how has the British Euroscepticism changed over time and to see if the hypothesis of British Euroscepticism constantly evolving towards hard Euroscepticism is valid and thus factoring in leading the Brits to saying 'yes' to Brexit, each prime minister's approach to the UK-EU topic is first described and analyzed.

#### 2.3.1 Thatcher's approach

Starting from Thatcher's Bruges Speech (1988), it could be said, that in the center of British Euroscepticism lies the perceived British superiority, both moral and economic. Thatcher also uses a rich rhetoric from the start of the speech, bringing out that her speaking on the topic of Europe may be perceived by some as Genghis Khan speaking "on the virtues of peaceful coexistence" (Thatcher, 1988). There are many compliments made to the venue of the speech, the College of Europe, as well, where words 'magnificent', 'glorious', 'vital' and 'distinguished' are used (Ibid), giving off a feeling of them being used (almost) ironically to the reader. This sets a Eurosceptical background, intended or not, for the whole speech.

The economic factor is extensively discussed in Thatcher's speech, as it is seen that the British have taken a lead-position in open markets, market services, air transport, in free movement of capital and also in being the biggest financial center in Europe (Thatcher, 1988). The rest of Europe had yet to catch up in economic policies and the reforms done thus far in the EC were not substantial enough to ease the Euroscepticism stemming from economic point of view. This led to Thatcher bringing out 'requirements' (Ibid) – a word strongly indicating that something needs to be done in order to not have an unfavourable outcome, arguably for both parties – for economic reform.

Historical aspect of British Euroscepticism in Thatcher's speech comes from the British role in preventing Europe falling under a single power over the centuries, but more importantly from the role played in the World Wars, where the Brits fought and died for Europe's freedom, keeping alive 'the flame of liberty', also being noted that the 'liberation of Europe' was 'mounted' from their island (Thatcher, 1988). The second form of historical British Euroscepticism, where discontent with regulation coming from Brussels is looked for, is prominent in Thatcher's speech in that it is said that decisions need not to be taken by bureaucracy nor is it necessary to centralize power (Ibid), which also ties into the topic of Brits feeling like the EU in miniature, in wanting their own power-structures to make most decisions. In addition, the Community itself should not be 'ossified' by excessive regulation nor be constantly modified following 'abstract intellectual concepts' (Ibid).

The geographical form of British Euroscepticism is not prevalent in the speech, but the word 'island' is used once in the context described above, and Britain having looked 'to wider horizons' is also mentioned (Thatcher, 1988). Although, psychological link to Euroscepticism is seen in Thatcher's approach. Britain is described as a place where sanctuary from tyranny, which had spread in the rest of Europe, was offered (Ibid), adding to the moral superiority of the British. Also prevalent in the psychology field is the topic of the British approach, which is found the best and comes forth in having 'plain common sense' to have frontier controls; Thatcher finding it 'folly' to have a European identikit; not looking towards 'utopian goals' like the rest; and finding it important to focus on Atlantic community, which is seen as the 'noblest inheritance' and 'greatest strength' of

the British (and Europeans) (Thatcher, 1988), thus distancing the British from the rest of Europe.

Leveling the Euroscepticism in the speech are the sentences, where it is said that belonging to the European Community and the future in it is a positive feature, although it should be a community of different nations not of one European nation (Thatcher, 1988). Furthermore, there are aspects brought out, that imply a strong connection between the UK and Europe both historically and culturally. The cultural aspect is seen in parts where it is said that the British culture is a legacy of European culture like any other European nation's culture, as British architecture – churches and cathedrals, literature and language stem from Europe; European legacy of political ideas was used whilst working on the Magna Charta; the rule of law from European thought was implemented; and most importantly the idea of Christendom, which was prevalent in the rest of Europe and on which the ideas of personal liberty and human rights are still based in today's British mentality, was taken over (Ibid). The historical closeness comes from Britain being a part of Roman Empire; British ancestors – Saxons, Celts, Danes – originating from continental Europe; and the nation's restructuring by Normans and Angevins (Ibid).

Other counterarguments for Euroscepticism are also seen as Thatcher uses the word 'we', meaning the Europeans with the British or the Community; the expressions 'family of nations' and 'facing the world as Europe' to imply close bond to other European nations and signifying the British belonging to Europe; and stresses economic and defence co-operation, especially belonging to the Single Market (Thatcher, 1988). The last argument could be seen as a pro-Euroscepticism factor too, because the co-operation should occur between nations, not as a unified front.

Thatcher's approach is therefore mainly economically, historically and ruling class based Eurosceptical, with a focus on policy- and national-interest Euroscepticism, making it in Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2000; 2008) typology soft Euroscepticism. Some hard Euroscepticism in that interpretation could be noted as well as it is brought out that the EC in only one means to the end, not an end in itself, nor could the British prosper in an 'inward-looking narrow-minded' club (Thatcher, 1988), which the EC had a probability to turn

into. In Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese's (2013) typology, Thatcher's approach is both hard and soft as it includes both economic and cultural-identity factors, with more emphasis on the first.

### 2.3.2 Cameron's narrative

It could be said based on the fact that Cameron promised to conduct a referendum on British membership in the EU in his Bloomberg speech (2013) that the former prime minister's approach to the EU was a form of hard Euroscepticism (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008) in that the promised referendum constituted as an objection to the EU and integration. At the same time, Cameron's view could also be considered pragmatic as with the calling out of a referendum he answered the pressures from the society (Hunt, 2013) but it was not his personal viewpoint on the UK-EU relationship. Concurring with that, the analysis of the speech brings out that there are several aspects of soft Euroscepticism (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008) used in Cameron's approach and which make up for most of the Euroscepticism used in the speech.

The first form of soft Euroscepticism comes from the geographical-psychological link of British Euroscepticism. Cameron expresses that the British have a character of an island nation, which was shaped by their geography and therefore psychology, making the British independent, forthright, passionate about their sovereignty and therefore having a British sensibility to look at the EU practically, not emotionally (Cameron, 2013). Distancing the British further from the Europeans, the expression 'European partners', not a more familiar term, is used; it is said that there does not exist a single European demos; and it is brought out that the Brits are proud of the connections to the rest of the world (Ibid). Cameron (2015) has later repeated the notion of the British being a proud independent nation, which has its own history and traditions; and has emphasised the UK's geographical status as an island. In addition, Cameron sees belonging to the EU and being an independent state as two different worlds, in saying that the best of both is wanted (Cameron, 2015). Geographical-psychological link to British Euroscepticism is therefore represented in Cameron's approach, but it is not the most prevalent one.



The most prominent feature of Cameron's speeches is the historical aspect of British Euroscepticism. From the start of the Bloomberg speech (2013) Cameron approaches the topic of Britain having played an important role in the European history - separating British history from the continent's at the same time; and especially in the WWII by keeping 'the flame of liberty alight' and later on in tearing down communism. Britain was also seen as a 'haven' to people fleeing tyranny and prosecution (Cameron, 2013). This rhetoric is continued in Cameron's 2015 speech, where the expressions 'Great War' – it has not been specified whether the word 'great' refers to the number of people or countries involved in the war or the war being 'great' because the British won – and throwing off a 'tyrant's yoke' in Europe are used to show British (moral) superiority. In general it is seen that Britain has contributed significantly for Europe's nations being able to enjoy freedom (Ibid) adding to the point of Britain being Eurosceptical because of their historical individual effort to help the rest of the continent.

Making British Euroscepticism more history based in Cameron's approach is the focus on the second explanation of history's link to Euroscepticism. Cameron describes in the Bloomberg speech (2013) how there is an 'acutely' felt lack of democratic accountability in Britain, where democratic consent for the EU is 'wafer thin' as well, and people are never given a say about the treaties that are implemented in the Union. That lays the base for the opinion that the EU is something that is done to people, not on their behalf, and it interferes with the national life (Ibid). In addition, less bureaucracy with its excessive 'spurious' regulation – described as an external plague - and centralization is needed, as Cameron insists on some power being brought back to the parliaments of the member states to better the 'sclerotic ineffective' decision making (Ibid). Cameron continues with the same rhetoric later as well, saying that the existing regulations bring too high of a burden, the migration policy is not sustainable for the British and that the EU's acting-speed is like the rigidity of a bloc, constituting to a great disillusionment felt by the British towards the EU (Cameron, 2015). All these factors are seen as the EU encroaching on British liberties and being undemocratic, which is why Cameron also agreed to call an in-out referendum.

Economical factor of British Euroscepticism is the second focal point in Cameron's approach. Both of the speeches cover the topic extensively. Cameron is strongly Eurosceptical in this aspect as, first of all it is made clear that Britain has always looked beyond Europe for economic reasons and that the future holds global trade of nation states (Cameron, 2013) so being a part of the EU's economic system is not enough nor perspective. Eurozone crisis, objecting the single currency use in Britain and considering weakness in economic competitiveness to be self-inflicted are described in both speeches (Cameron, 2013; 2015) and are the main reasons for Euroscepticism in economy. It is also brought out that the principal motive for the Brits to be in the EU is the participation and ability to set the rules in the Single Market, but the previous reasons, European institutions being illogically expensive and Britain being forced into austerity measures in order to be a part of the bailout mechanism (Ibid), although of which they were relieved by the 2015 speech, add to the Euroscepticism. Adding to the previous, it is said in the speeches that Europe will be in a 'no-man's land' (Cameron, 2013) and risks being left behind (2015) if the EU's economic policies will not be reformed.

The EU in miniature aspect of British Euroscepticism is not largely touched up on, but it is said that the UK takes the lead in being one of the most cosmopolitan and open countries in the world (Cameron, 2015). The EU at the same time is not capable of accommodating its member state's diversity (Cameron, 2013), which brings forth some Euroscepticism on the topic.

Leading up to the promise of referendum is emotion stirring use of language and rhetoric. Emotion stirring could be seen when describing the British nation as 'rigorously practical', 'obstinately down to earth', 'natural debunkers', and Britain being one of the strongest powers of Europe, also having its capital city as a global icon (Cameron, 2013; 2015). Emotional topics of migration, climate, energy supplies, fairness, security and terrorism are also prevalent in Cameron's speeches (Ibid). To show British superiority economically as well, Cameron (2013) uses rhetoric of the British almost single-handedly inventing the Single Market; that the UK is a force of liberal economic reform and adds heft to Europe's influence in the world. It is later added that the UK is a "far cry from the sick man of Europe" (Cameron, 2015) as it was at the time of joining the EC, showing what

is achieved economically on national level.

All the previous aspects of British Euroscepticism served as the basis for Cameron to promise an in-out referendum from the EU. At the same time, Cameron (2013; 2015) also advises caution in both of the speeches in deciding how to vote in the referendum as the choice made at the ballot box would perhaps be the most important decision for the British in our lifetimes and it should be clear that the choice which is made would be a real one.

Some counterarguments to Euroscepticism in Cameron's approach could be brought out. First of all, there is a distinction made that the Europeans are a 'family' of nations, but that there are 'friends' around the world, and the British island is geographically tied to the continent (Cameron, 2013, 2015). From economic point of view it is also said that there should be a spirit of co-operation between the Brits and Europeans; belonging to Single Market is greatly beneficial; and that to maintain economic security the Brits should stay in the EU (Ibid). Cameron stated in his later speech (2015) that he will be campaigning for staying in the EU with 'all his heart and soul' as well, as there was some progress already made since the Bloomberg, which was considered to show the possibility of reforming the EU according to the UK's wishes.

Cameron's approach can, based on the previous discussion, be considered as soft Euroscepticism, where most of the discontent lies in policies of migration, economy and centralized power, making it a mainly policy-Eurosceptical view. The emphasis on reforms and changes, but not leaving the EU, supports that view. It might be looked at as Cameron himself being soft Eurosceptical, but the pressures from the society added a hard Eurosceptical element to the speeches. Hard Euroscepticism could also be seen in Cameron's (2013) statement that the EU is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, and in the British people seeing the level of integration in the EU moving out of their comfort zone. In comparison to Van Klingeren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese's (2013) theory, Cameron's approach is both hard and soft, with them being equally present and intertwined.

### 2.3.3 May's approach

May's narrative is greatly focused on discussing the deal of leaving the EU, what it should contain and how the future of the UK is seen outside of the EU. The basis for the speech – that the UK has chosen to leave the EU, serves as a main point to argue for May's approach being hard Euroscepticism in Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2008) typology, as there is clear objection to the UK belonging in the EU. Adding to the hard Euroscepticism is May's point that what matters are the ends, not the means, like the EU, and the view that the choice to leave has a great prize in constituting to 'opportunities ahead' (May, 2017), which shows the support for Brexit and hard Euroscepticism. There are also aspects of soft Euroscepticism (Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008) seen in May's speech, which are used as the reasoning behind the hard Euroscepticism.

The first aspect of soft Euroscepticism in the speech is the title of the speech – 'Global Britain', and the multiple time usage of the expression 'great, global nation', which shows the Brits changing their focus away from Europe towards global politics, using the expression 'embracing the world' (May, 2017). It is also said, that belonging to the EU came at the expense of the global ties that the UK had before (Ibid). Adding to the geographical-psychological link in British Euroscepticism are the descriptions of British mindset, history and culture being internationalist; seeing the EU as something that is abroad; the British being out-ward looking, independent and an island nation (May, 2017). Commonwealth is also mentioned in the speech, constituting a unique and global relationship for the British (Ibid). Distancing the British from the rest of Europe psychologically is also seen, as the other European nations are called friends, allies, partners, neighbours, but never a family; the word relatives is used in connection with a list of countries across the world (Ibid). It was also important to May to restore the national self-determination (Ibid), bringing together the geographical-psychological Euroscepticism and the part of Euroscepticism stemming from British history, where the liberties of the British have been corrupted.

This kind of historical aspect of British Euroscepticism is prevalent in May's speech as it

is emphasised on multiple occasions that the British have a strong attachment to democratic government; want to restore parliamentary democracy; account the governments directly; decide on changes themselves and have the control over laws, especially in the aspect concerning immigration; and that there is no need for too strong supranational institutions, which the EU is considered as (May, 2017). Behind all these statements is the view that the EU is undemocratic, intrusive and has encroached on British liberties, coming from the aspect of British history being separate from the rest of Europe's. The aspect of British Euroscepticism stemming from the history of WWII is not used in May's speech.

In connection with the EU being considered undemocratic and wanting to bring back powers to the UK, the British approach to Euroscepticism coming from them seeing themselves as the EU in miniature is evident. It is expressed that future laws being made in Westminster, Cardiff, Edinburgh, and Belfast, and having devolved administrations is important to the British (May, 2017). The same aspect is seen as well in parts where expressions of 'every nation and area'; 'all parts of the UK'; 'one great union of nations and people'; and 'precious union between four nations' (Ibid) are used. May also emphasises that the UK is one of the most racially diverse countries with multicultural population and that as the EU bends toward uniformity and not flexibility it cannot deal with the diversity of nations as well as the British do (Ibid), adding to the Euroscepticism in this field.

One of the most important elements of May's speech is the economic aspect of the new deal that will be negotiated. May's approach is economically Eurosceptical in that there is veiled blame put on the EU not investing into British economic infrastructure, stagnating British trade, bringing up deficit that now has to be reduced, and in the British not agreeing to pay huge sums to the EU budget anymore (May, 2017). Trade is also a widely discussed topic in the economic part of the speech, where it is said that new free trade agreements will be made with countries outside of the EU, going as far as creating a new Department of International Trade for the cause, and removing barriers to trade (Ibid). This shows that the British were not satisfied with the trade policy in the EU and therefore they will not be joining/remaining in the European Single Market in any way nor be a

part of the Common Commercial Policy (May, 2017). The new deal that will be negotiated with the EU will be 'better' and 'right' (Ibid), showing that the economic aspect is a major contributor to British Euroscepticism.

May's speech is also rich in emotion stirring language, as words 'brighter', 'stronger', 'fairer' are used multiple times, as well as having described the UK with expressions 'more united' and 'open and tolerant' (May, 2017). The UK and/or the British are also seen as the best in a number of fields, such as having the brightest students, intelligence capabilities, cutting-edge research, being 'the best place' for science and innovation, businesses being world-beaters, and the UK being one of the largest and strongest economies in the world (Ibid), which all constitute for the mentality of British superiority. The words 'we' and 'our' are mainly used to indicate the people living in Britain, not the British with the EU, further showing the distancing of themselves from Europeans. Emotion stirring in the deal-making topic could be seen in expressions 'permanent political purgatory' when speaking about transition stage out of the EU; 'disruptive cliff-edge' when speaking about having enough time to phase in new arrangements; and a 'punitive' deal doing 'calamitous self-harm' to those who wish it (Ibid). Touching on the topics of terrorism and security in the speech can also be considered emotional, making May's speech as a whole quite emotion-based, adding the element of strong ruling class based British Euroscepticism to May's approach.

May also touches on the subject of British media playing a part in referendum campaigns and making it harder to negotiate the right deal for Britain because of its 'hyped up' reports and 'stray words' (May, 2017). This could be seen as the prime minister herself being Eurosceptical of British media, as it is said in the speech that it is not the prime minister's job to fill the columns of newspapers (Ibid) and therefore it can be deducted from the statements that the British media is Eurosceptical and adds to the overall Euroscepticism in the country.

Some counterarguments of the British being Eurosceptical could be seen in the speech, as topics of co-operation in several fields and promoting Europe's security are touched upon (May, 2017). It is said that the UK is a European country, which shares European

heritage and values and will convert existing EU law into British law as well, levelling the Euroscepticism in the speech, but the main point of the UK supporting the EU and its 27 member states outside of the EU remains.

In Van Klingerren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese's (2013) typology, May's approach is both hard and soft as it includes economic and cultural-identity factors, with strong emphasis on both.

#### 2.4 Discussion

Overall, it can be said that the concepts of Euroscepticism and the empirical literature were compatible in that the typologies discussed at the beginning of the thesis can be used to search for Eurosceptical elements in speeches and approaches. Concurring with Gifford (2014) it is notable that the hard-soft differentiation of Euroscepticism is productive when using Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2008) typology, but Van Klingerren, Boomgaarden and De Vreese's (2013) theory did not offer as much of a differentiation in approaches as both factors were notably present in all of the speeches.

In order to give a framework to the evolvement of British Euroscepticism from Thatcher to May a comparison of the approaches has to be made. All of the factors which were considered to make up the British Euroscepticism and which were analysed earlier on in prime ministers' speeches are compared and an element of usage of key words or phrases, which corroborate the discussion, is added. A summary of the comparisons of the approaches could be seen in Table 1 at the end of this discussion.

Thatcher and Cameron both use the British moral superiority approach stemming from the British role in the WWII and from earlier European politics as an argument for one of the history-based factors of British Euroscepticism. The phrase 'the Brits keeping alive the flame of liberty' is employed by Thatcher (1988) as well as Cameron (2013) in this regard. May has not used this point of history Euroscepticism to argue for her approach, but has used the thought of the UK and Europe having separate histories and therefore the EU encroaching on British liberties heavily in the speech when talking about bringing

back legislature to the UK and deciding themselves on how to manage their country (May, 2017). Cameron has also employed this approach, but not as widely as May, mainly in regard to economic and migration policies (Cameron, 2013; 2015), and Thatcher used it slightly to forewarn and prevent the centralization of powers to Brussels (1988). Thus it could be concluded that the history aspect of British Euroscepticism has shifted from the strong usage of moral superiority and slight legislative concerns to some moral superiority and concentrated legislative concerns to no moral superiority and wide consideration of legislative concerns.

Although May might not have used historical moral superiority in her approach, other factors of the British or the UK being the best were applied throughout the speech, for example in ‘unique intelligence capabilities’ and in ‘science and innovation’ (May, 2017). This ties into the use of emotional rhetoric applied in the speeches. Cameron also employs this approach when describing the UK as one of the ‘strongest powers of Europe’ and London as a ‘global icon’ (Cameron, 2013; 2015). Thatcher’s way of using rich rhetoric was seen in colourful language, for example in implying herself talking about matters of Europe being seen as Genghis Khan speaking about peace, and ironic use of adjectives (Thatcher, 1988). The ruling political class’ rich rhetoric has therefore not changed in that it has been used in every speech, although in slightly different ways. Some change in the rhetorics could be seen in Thatcher wanting the EC to employ the ‘British approach’ to its operation (Ibid), Cameron (2015) emphasising the ‘British model of membership’ of the EU, and May (2017) speaking about ‘new partnership to the EU’. The narrowing focus of the British approach being applied to the whole of the EC/EU, then to the British just having a special model of relationship in the EU, to focusing on the British relationship with the EU outside of the Union shows the increasing hard Euroscepticism. Emotion stirring topic of movement of people and how open the country’s should be were also more implied in Cameron’s (2015) and May’s (2017) approaches, where the key word of ‘migration’ appeared respectively 15 and 13 times, Thatcher (1998) used the word only once. Threats to security is also a touched upon subject by all of the prime ministers, but the word ‘terrorism’ is applied most by May (2017) – 6 times, once by Cameron (2013) and twice by Thatcher (1988). Therefore it can be concluded that May’s and Cameron’s



approaches to Euroscepticism rest more on migration-policy issues and British superiority in a number of fields than Thatcher's. The most Euroscepticism displayed in regards to threats to security is in May's speech, implying the emotion stirring in that field. All in all the rhetorics have changed from overall colourful use of language to emotion stirring with specific topics.

May (2017) was the only prime minister who touched on the subject of British media with a Eurosceptical approach, and as the other prime ministers have not used this feature in their speeches it could be said, that May's approach to British Euroscepticism was based on an extra factor and therefore more Eurosceptical.

May's approach was also the one which was most focused on the UK being the EU in miniature as the rhetoric of the UK comprising several nations is brought up on multiple occasions (May, 2017). This aspect was also lightly seen in Cameron's Bloomberg speech (2013), when talking about diversity, but not in Thatcher's speech (1988). British Euroscepticism has therefore evolved to include to wider use of the EU in miniature factor.

The most discussed Eurosceptical element of the speeches is the economy. Although it could be said that all of the prime ministers were Eurosceptical from the economic aspect, some differences in the approaches could be noted. The first point here is the pro-Single Market approach by Cameron (2013) and Thatcher (1998), who promote the UK belonging to the Single Market and the idea itself. May (2017) however is opposed to the idea of belonging to the Single Market and sees no future in it for the UK, which accounts to May's approach being hard Eurosceptical in the economic aspect, but Thatcher and Cameron being soft Eurosceptical as they both see the need for reforms being done on the policy, but not removing the British from it (Cameron, 2013; 2015; Thatcher, 1988). Some topical changes in the economic aspect could be noted as May is more concentrated on trade and trading, including how to reach new trade-agreements as the British are leaving the EU, and the trade being free with countries outside of the EU (May, 2017). Cameron (2013; 2015) on the other hand expressed clear objection of the UK belonging to the Eurozone. Thatcher (1988) discusses economic policies, some progresses that had been made at the time in those, and discusses how the EC's economic policies should move

forward. Thatcher is, therefore, the least Eurosceptical in the topical aspect of economic British Euroscepticism, as she sees the UK's economy being tied to the EC's economy in the future as well. May does not see the economy of the UK being tied to the EU's other than by some kind of trade-partnership, being thus the most Eurosceptical in this element. Cameron objects to one facet of the EU's economy, but otherwise sees the UK's future in reformed EU's economic field, which constitutes to his approach being some kind of middle-ground between Thatcher's and May's.

All of the approaches also have the element of geographical-psychological link of British Euroscepticism in them, and all use the psychology part of the link to distance the British from the rest of the Europeans. Although, a shift of the speeches towards being more centred on Britain is seen in the usage of words such as 'union/community' (referring to the EU or the EC), 'global', and 'Britain'. The first of those is used 29 times by Thatcher (1988), 45 and 61 times by Cameron (2013; 2015), and 33 times by May (2017). Cameron has therefore considered the EU in his speeches more often, showing greater concern about the EU and its future, than Thatcher and later May. The usage of the word 'global' appeared most in May's speech, 17 times (Ibid), considerably less in Cameron's speeches (2013; 2015), 8 and 2 times respectively, and not at all in Thatcher's speech (1988). This shows May focusing on Britain and its ties with the rest of the world to a greater extent than the other prime ministers. At the same time the word 'Britain' is used respectively 16, 49, 71 and 90 (Thatcher, 1988; Cameron 2013; 2015; May, 2017) times by the prime ministers, complying with the previous analysis in that May, in comparison to others, has put the most emphasis in her rhetoric on Britain. Perhaps another factor showing the turn of the approaches towards being more Eurosceptical or showing greater commitment to the British nation is the geographical locations of where the speeches were held – increasingly closer to the Buckingham Palace. Whether this is a conscious symbolic gesture or just a coincidence is unclear but a fact nonetheless.

It could be said that principles, which were given by Thatcher (1988) and were meant to be guidance points for the future evolvement of the EC/EU, were ignored and done inversely, and therefore the British Euroscepticism was not diminished but became deeper.

This could be seen in Cameron's emphasis on reforming the EU, the word 'reform' coming up 11 times in his approach (Cameron, 2015), but only three times in rest of the speeches (Thatcher, 1988; May, 2017). Similarly, Cameron (2015) sees the 'big prize' being a new kind of EU, but May (2017) uses the words 'big prize' when referring to opportunities that lie ahead now that the UK has left the EU.

In conclusion, to answer the research questions, based on the comparison of the speeches, it could be said that British Euroscepticism has been prevalent in British prime ministers' narratives since Thatcher's speech and it is not a new phenomenon; that the Euroscepticism has changed in Britain, moving from nation- and policy-based soft Euroscepticism to reformist-attitudinal policy-based middle-ground Euroscepticism to hard Euroscepticism reasoned on the basis of soft Eurosceptical elements. The hypothesis of the thesis – the British Euroscepticism having constantly evolved towards a harder approach, is therefore also confirmed. Thus it could be reasoned, that the evolvement of British Euroscepticism is one of the factors that led the Brits to saying 'yes' to Brexit as the prime ministers – representatives of the British people – moved towards a harder approach, so did the public.

Table 1. Summary of comparisons between prime ministers

Prime minister	Factors of Euroscepticism						
	General	Economy	Geography- psychology link	History	EU in miniature	Rhetoric	Media
Thatcher (1988)	Soft national- and policy- based Euro- scepticism	Pro-Single Market, Brit- ish economy tied to the EC, eco- nomic re- forms needed in the EC	Mostly psy- chological approach, folly to have a European identikit	Strong moral supe- riority from WWII, light legislative concerns	In regard to the need of own power- structures	Colourful language, British ap- proach to the EC's operation, some re- gard to frontiers	Not used
Cameron (2013; 2015)	Reformist-atti- tudinal Euro- scepticism	Pro-Single Market, need for eco- nomic re- forms in the EU, opposi- tion to the Eurozone	Most men- tions of the EU, the Brits are an island nation with its character- istics	Some moral superiority from WWII, some legis- lative con- cerns	Topic of diversity in the UK	British model of member- ship of the EU, some exalting of the UK, topics of migration, climate	Not used
May (2017)	Hard Euro- scepticism based on fac- tors of soft Eu- roscepticism	Focused on trade deals outside of the EU, opposi- tion to the Single Mar- ket	'Global Brit- ain', greatest focus on Britain as a separate en- tity	No moral superiority, wide legis- lative con- cerns	Repeated use of the UK com- prising of several nations rhetoric	New part- nership to the EU, ex- alting the UK, topics of migra- tion and terrorism	Re- garded briefly

## **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the use of British Eurosceptical elements in British prime ministers' approaches to the UK-EU relationship and offer a conceptual map of 30 years of Euroscepticism in Britain based on the comparison of Thatcher's, Cameron's and May's speeches.

A theoretical framework for both, general Euroscepticism and British Euroscepticism, was put together based on works of multiple authors and were used as backgrounds on which the analytical aspect of the thesis was conducted. Geographical-psychological links, history, media, rich rhetoric, being the EU in miniature, and economy were the elements looked for in analysing the British prime ministers' approaches of British Euroscepticism. A distinction between hard and soft Euroscepticism was also used to give each prime minister a general standpoint in their approach towards the EU.

An overall conclusion, following the results of the analysis and discussion, was that each prime minister used the factors of British Euroscepticism in their speeches, and even though there were similarities in the approaches, each of them had a different viewpoint on the UK-EU relationship. The analysis also showed that British Euroscepticism is not a new phenomenon but has been prevalent since Thatcher's Bruges speech. Another conclusion was that as the approaches to the EU changed with the prime ministers, the Euroscepticism became more ingrained into their speeches, constituting a shift from Thatcher's soft Euroscepticism to Cameron's middle-ground Euroscepticism to May's hard Euroscepticism. Therefore the hypothesis posted at the beginning of the thesis, that British Euroscepticism constantly evolved towards a harder approach was also proven. The reasoning that the evolvement of British Euroscepticism was a factor in saying 'yes' to Brexit was brought out as well.

This work is meant to be an addition to the discourse on the UK-EU relationship and does not thus strive for being an all-inclusive research on the topic, but could be used as a basis for an argument in the field. Further research could follow several paths. Firstly, it would be possible to look for new elements of British Euroscepticism not used in the thesis and

widen the research in that way. Another approach for further studies would be to deepen the research by including multiple speeches from prime ministers or by constituting a continuous timeline of speeches of all British prime ministers from Thatcher onwards into the analysis to get a more specific and detailed account on the topic. It would also be useful to theorize a clearer distinction between hard and soft Euroscepticism as they get slightly muddled when applied to empirical material. At the same time, further research on how much, or if actually at all, the prime ministers' evolving hard Euroscepticism influenced the British in saying 'yes' to Brexit, could be made as well.

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# THATCHERIST MAYNI: BRITI EUROSKEPTITSISMI ARENGU RAAMISTAMINE BREXITINI

Eliise Merila

## Resümee

Euroskeptitsism on laialdaselt uuritud valdkond, ning selle peamiseks näiteks on Suurbritannia. Briti euroskeptitsism on väärt uurimist, kuna ükski teine Euroopa Liidu liige ei ole läbi viinud referendumeid liitu jäämise kohta, mis näitab briti inimeste kõrgemat euroskeptitsismi taset ning sel põhjusel valiti ka antud uurimisteema. Uurimus on nii asjakui ajakohane Brexiti referendumi tõttu selles mõttes, et kas euroskeptitsismi tase arenes järjepidevalt punktini, kus referendum läbiviimine oli vajalik, või tuli läbiviimise idee hiljuti.

Käesoleva töö eesmärk oli analüüsida briti euroskeptiliste elementide kasutust Suurbritannia peaministrite käsitlustes Euroopa Liidu (EL) ja Ühendkuningriikide (ÜK) vahelistes suhetes, ning luua kontseptuaalne kaardistik 30 aastast briti euroskeptitsismist, võrreldes Thatcheri, Cameroni ja May avalikke kõnesid diskursuseanalüüsi meetodil.

Loodi teoreetiline raamistik nii üldisele euroskeptitsismile kui ka briti euroskeptitsismile, mis põhinesid mitmete autorite töödele, ning neid raamistike kasutati alustena, millel teesi analüütiline pool läbi viidi. Briti peaministrite lähenemiste analüüsimises briti euroskeptitsismile otsiti järgmiseid elemente: geograafilised-psühholoogilised seosed, ajalugu, meedia, rikkalik retoorika, nägemus Suurbritanniast kui miniatuursest EList, ning majandus. Lisaks kasutati 'kõva' ja 'pehme' euroskeptitsismi eristamist, et anda igale peaministrile üldine seisukoht oma ELi käsitluses.

Analüüsi ja diskussiooni põhjal tehtud üleüldiseks järelduseks oli, et iga peaminister kasutas oma kõnes briti euroskeptitsismi tegureid, ning kuigi nende käsitlustes leidis sarnasusi, oli igaühel neist erinev vaatepunkt ELi ja ÜK vahelisele suhtele. Analüüs näitas ka, et briti euroskeptitsism ei ole uus nähtus, vaid on olnud valdav alates Margaret

Thatcheri Brugge kõnest. Lisaks järeltati, et käsitlused ELi muutusid iga peaministriga ning euroskeptitsism juurdus kõnedes järjest sügavamale, mis kujutab muutust Thatcheri pehmet euroskeptitsismist Cameroni kesktee euroskeptitsismini ning edasi May kõva euroskeptitsismini. Seega leidis töö alguses püstitatud hüpotees, et briti euroskeptitsism arenes pidevalt kõvema käsitluse poole, tõestust. Samuti toodi välja arutluskäik, et briti euroskeptitsismi areng oli üheks teguriks Brexitile 'jah' ütlemisses.

Käesolev töö on mõeldud lisana ELi ja ÜK vahelise suhte diskursusesse ega taotle positsiooni selle teema kõikehõlmava uurimusena, kuid seda tööd on võimalik kasutada argumentatsiooni alusena antud alal. Järgnevad uurimused võivad jaotuda mitmes suunas. Esiteks on võimalik uurida briti euroskeptitsismi uusi elemente, mida töös ei käsitleta, ning seekaudu uurimust laiendada. Üheks tulevase uurimise lähenemiseks võib olla uurimuse süvendamine, kui hõlmata analüüsi mitmeid peaministrite kõnesid või moodustada järjepidev ajaliin kõikide Suurbritannia peaministrite kõnedest alates Thatcherist, et saada teemast spetsiifilisem ja täpsem ülevaade. Lisaks oleks kasulik teoretiseerida selgema vahe üle kõva ja pehme euroskeptitsismi käsitlustes, kuna see piir kipub empiirilisel materjalil kasutades hägustuma. Samal ajal oleks võimalik läbi viia ka järgnev uurimus sellest, kuidas, või kas üldse, mõjutab peaministrite kõva euroskeptitsismi areng britte Brexitile 'jah' ütlema.

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