

**Cognitive Metaphors in Political Discourse in Malta  
Malta and the Case of EU-Membership Debate**

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# *Cognitive Metaphors in Political Discourse in Malta*

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## **List of Abbreviations**

BT	Blending Theory
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
EU	European Union
EM	“European metaphor”
MLP	Malta Labour Party
PN	Nationalist Party (Partit Nazzjonalista)

**Part One:  
Theoretical Background**

# 1. Introduction

It was six wise men of Indostan  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant –  
(though all of them were blind),  
That each by observation –  
Might satisfy his mind.

John Godfrey Saxe

## 1.1. The Elephant in the European Union and the Blind Concretisation of the Abstract

The EU membership issue has caused indefatigable debates, innumerable arguments and raised existential national and axiological questions, which have still not completely been settled or answered. All of these controversial issues have aroused my interest.

In fact, all these endless debates can be interpreted as a reaction to a new and therefore relatively unknown phenomenon: even today people are perplexed by the intricacy of the EU mechanism. As is the case with new realities, people attempt to find explanations and names for them, and the new labels are often metaphorical. The attempts at elucidation are metaphorical, not only due to the general disposition of people to look for similarities between unknown entities and familiar and thereby palpable things, but also because they are inclined to couch abstractions in concrete terms.

Many attempts at elucidation have been made in Malta as well. To the dismay of the objectivists, it must be asserted that there are different views and that none is exhaustive or correct and that the Hindu approach as in the famous legend “The Blind Men and the Elephant” is helpful in explaining the metaphorical elucidatory mechanism applied to new phenomena. Each “blind” politician “grasps” a piece of the incomprehensible entity, in this case the union, and thinks that his experience of the “animal” is objective. The different experiences trigger different perspectives which, in turn, divide the (Maltese) political scene.

Such “competing” metaphors will be my main concern in the present thesis. Furthermore, creating awareness for the insidious potential of metaphors will also be relevant for my analysis of political discourse. As political language is a spawning ground for metaphors, it goes without saying that one is constantly confronted with metaphors when exploring this type of discourse.

The present dissertation investigates primarily the metaphors common in the political and journalistic discourse in Malta between 2000 and 2008 with regard to EU-membership and aims as well at pointing out potential culture-specific conceptual metaphors. Even though the years after Malta joined the EU have not been excluded, the period between 2000 and 2004 represents the major focus in the present analysis, especially because the fiercest debates on EU membership took place before 2004, i.e. before the year in which Malta became a member of the EU. As the analysis occasionally required a diachronic outlook, I decided to extend the said time span to both before 2000 and after 2008.

For various reasons, Malta is a very interesting example in the research on EU discourse. Politically speaking, the country constitutes a rare phenomenon, as Malta is characterised by a two-party system, also called “tribal duopoly” by a Maltese politician<sup>1</sup>. According to Cini (2002: 6–7), this polarisation has intensified to such a degree over the last 40 years that 98 per cent or more of the electorate now vote for one of the two main parties. What is more, during the EU membership debate the two parties, the Nationalist Party (PN, in Maltese: Partit Nazzjonalista) and the Malta Labour Party (MLP), tended to be defined in terms of their approval or disapproval of EU-membership: the Nationalist Party pursued EU membership as its major goal, while the Labour Party fiercely opposed membership from the very beginning of negotiations with the European Commission. Even after joining the European Union, the labels “pro-European” and “anti-European” remained in place. It is often asserted in the press that the Nationalist Party came to power due to its favourable EU bias:

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<sup>1</sup>Harry Vassallo, former Chairperson of the Maltese Green Party  
<http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=5490>.

If Alfred Sant had chosen to jump on the Europe bandwagon he, and his party, would be in power now. (...)The Nationalist party continues to believe that they elected themselves on their manifesto and track record. B\*\*\*\*\*. [...] This newspaper did not take a pro-Europe stance to keep the status quo. And perhaps this is also at the heart of many of the people who voted for the Nationalist party. They are not interested in the Nationalist party; they are interested in change.

*Malta Today*, 20 April 2003

The causes of the bitterness in the EU debate reside in Malta's history, which can be traced in the people's worldview. The long years of colonialism are embedded in the Maltese attitudes towards the European Union: on the one hand, the necessity of being part of a larger and stronger political union, which is manifest as a positive attitude towards the EU) and, on the other hand, the desire to stand on its own feet, which takes the form of resentment against the EU. The resentment is fuelled by the vision of the EU as a version of federalism or neo-colonialism.

It should be kept in mind that this is only a brief and simplified introduction to the issues at the heart of the EU debate, which was also a profoundly moral debate. Malta is a very religious country and the Catholic Church still plays a pivotal role. Thus, the view of assuming in full the role of EU member triggered the fear that Malta would have to consent to all EU rules and regulations, which are not compatible with the country's internal order and traditions. In this context, the abortion and the divorce issues came to dominate the debate. A further perceived threat was due to the small size of the island, which might easily be engulfed by the EU superstate. Although the present dissertation is a linguistic study, all these aspects will be touched upon at different points and to different extents, as they all impact on the Maltese mental landscape. They therefore ought to explain why certain metaphors (or, more precisely, certain source domains) are used, and also to enable the appropriate interpretation of the recurrent metaphors.

Studies on the usage of metaphors in political discourse currently abound, and the analysis of metaphors depicting the forging of the European Union and other EU-related issues has also appealed to linguists. Initially, these studies mainly focused on metaphorical political discourse in well-developed countries like Germany and Great Britain. Recently, however, this linguistic phenomenon in the discourse of less developed countries has also come under scrutiny. This is something I will return to

when surveying the research projects on the EU language (and in particular on the metaphor use) in Chapter 2, “The European Union: A Survey of the Research Projects (state-of-the-art)”.

My analysis is based on a small corpus (23,625 words) which includes metaphors that occurred in the English-language press of Malta between 2000 and 2008 (prevalently between 2000 and 2004). The corpus is available in electronic form and is attached to the dissertation (see accompanying CD (Euro.Malta.Corpus). Although the journalistic discourse in Maltese certainly is a rich source of metaphors, I wish to highlight the extended circulation of the press in the English language, which compensates for the lack of data pertaining to the newspapers in Maltese<sup>2</sup>. The Maltese press in English is very influential and, according to the European Journalism Center (EJC), the most widely read (EJC 1992-2007). Here again a comparison between metaphors of the EU employed in the Maltese press in Maltese and the ones current in the Maltese press in English has not been possible, due to the lack of research on similar topics in Maltese-language media.

The data suggest that while many of the conceptual metaphors overlap with those found in political discourse all over Europe, several specific metaphors can be detected as well. For example, the metaphorical conceptualisation of the European Union as a *spanker* or *sodomizer*, who is going to *spank/sodomize* Malta, seems to be specific to Maltese EU discourse. Chances are that such metaphors are scarce in the political discourse of countries like Germany, which is one of the founding members of the European Union and therefore ‘in control’ and not in the position of a putative victim.

Occasionally, it was useful to compare the metaphors recurrent in the Maltese discourse and the ones illustrative for the German or British discourse. The comparison was made possible by the data in the EUROMETA-corpus of Metaphors used in Euro-debates in Britain and Germany (available online) and by the interpretation of these data published in Andreas Musolff’s books (2000; 2004). However, the comparison plays a marginal role in the present paper and will not be an extensive part of my analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> A survey of the newspapers in Maltese was not possible due to a lack of competence in the Maltese language.

As previously mentioned, the corpus used relies mainly on a journal survey. An exclusive analysis of the political manifestos or politicians' speeches might lead to a distorted view, as the political field cannot be separated from the media. The media informs the public about the political policies and decisions, and also enables communication between politicians and the public inasmuch as, via mass media, politicians can reach larger audiences. Moreover, public opinion is structured by the media and the journalists' opinion, as the public tends more to read journals than the manifestos themselves. Therefore, I have not concentrated exclusively on interviews with politicians or politicians' speeches; equal importance has been given to journal coverage.

A very important aspect of my research has been to identify relevant source domains for EU metaphors that are specific to the Maltese discourse and thus distinctive. Distinctive source domains represent the main cause of variation. I will call this type of conspicuous variation *overt variation*<sup>3</sup>. However, my analysis has indicated there are also Maltese metaphors whose source domains are identical to metaphors known to be used in many other EU countries, but they are still special in that the source domains have specific significance in the sociocultural and physical environment of Malta. For example, the common metaphor for the EU as a family of nations conjures up specifically Maltese associations in a Maltese context, as they are determined by the cognitive model of the family prevalent in Maltese society. Metaphors of this type will be seen as involving *covert variation*. In order to check this hypothesis I distributed a questionnaire in October 2006 at the University of Malta. The analysis of the results will focus on the differences of seemingly identical source domains, with the purpose of demonstrating that metaphors are often filled with sociocultural knowledge.

This thesis is also meant to contribute to an "improvement" in the political discourse. Politicians are both intentional and unintentional metaphor producers. Therefore, a cognitive analysis of metaphors that also stresses cultural implications is intended to make politicians aware of the importance of all metaphors (and not only of

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<sup>3</sup> The terms "overt" and "covert" are widely used in all kinds of academic discourse. The phrase "overt variation" and its semantic opposite, "covert variation", are widely encountered as well. The distinction between "overt" and "covert variation" is also common in the area of linguistics. I have not come across these terms in the area of metaphor variation, but I decided to employ them in my analysis as they capture faithfully the dimensions of metaphor variation.

the intentional ones that function as rhetorical devices) in the political discourse and of the various cultural frameworks within which metaphors are used. The following section will offer a concise overview of the topics dealt with in the thesis.

## **1.2. Outline of the thesis**

Following the opening chapter that presents the motivation and outline of the present thesis, the second chapter aims to give a state-of-the-art review of the research that has been conducted to date on the use of language (especially, of metaphor) within the discourse of the European Union.

The third chapter introduces the aims and hypotheses of the thesis, while the fourth chapter outlines the method employed.

The fifth chapter is the first out of three, providing the theoretical framework of the metaphor analysis. It introduces the prototype model of categorisation and embraces a dynamic view of prototypes, which are subject to change according to the contextual perspective. The sixth chapter gives a brief introduction to metaphor as a “deceased” figure of speech and as a vivid conceptual phenomenon. Despite the priority that has been given metaphor during the last 60 years, the debate is far from over. Therefore, I will point out the differences between the traditionalist and the modern views on metaphor and simultaneously emphasise the far-reaching consequences that the modern view has in various areas of social science. The seventh chapter illustrates the importance of metaphor for the sphere of politics. This chapter will address issues involved with the conscious and unconscious use of metaphors in political speeches and give an account of the framing phenomenon. As will be shown, the usage of metaphors in politics is paramount, not only for aesthetic reasons, but also – or primarily – due to its persuasive effect. This chapter also provides a glimpse into the importance of metaphor for explaining new concepts and phenomena and, more precisely, the significance of metaphor usage in the documents, speeches and newspaper articles concerned with the European Union. A definition of the “European metaphor” (as opposed to the “universal metaphor”) will be introduced; further, the “European metaphor” (EU-triggered) will be contrasted with the “national metaphors” (culture-triggered). Finally, five stages of EU metaphor “life” will be outlined and discussed.



The eighth chapter explores the link between bodily movements and perception. It will be argued that not only similarities in the environment, but also environmental differences play a crucial role in concept formation.

In the ninth chapter the correlations between metaphor usage and issues of Maltese identity will be explored. Aspects such as insularity, colonisation and religion will be discussed as well as their significance in the EU context.

The tenth chapter provides an overview of the political constellation in Malta with special emphasis on the importance afforded to European issues. A historical outline of Malta's main political parties is also included in this chapter.

In the eleventh chapter I shall describe the design of the questionnaire, which was distributed at the University of Malta in October 2006, and explain the motivation behind the choice of questions. The questionnaire as such is provided in Appendix 1, the respondents are listed in Appendix 2 and the raw data is presented in Appendix 5. The twelfth chapter is devoted to the evaluation of the questionnaire data. For the sake of clarity, the results will be displayed in table format; two tables, which contain extensive information on the personification of the EU and Malta, will be made available in the Appendix 3 and 4, respectively. Furthermore, in this chapter the relevance of the results for my analysis of metaphors as well as for the research into political metaphor will also be emphasised.

The thirteenth chapter is dedicated to defining the two types of metaphor variation, *overt* vs. *covert*, and poses the question of the existence of unique metaphors. *Overt variation* and *covert variation* are concerned with different levels of metaphor variation: *overt variation* is manifest and striking, whereas *covert variation* cannot be recognized on the surface level, but becomes evident only at a deeper level. In other words, *overt variation* involves divergent domains (e.g. one target domain is understood in terms of completely different source domains); unlike *overt variation*, *covert variation* concerns only selected features of the source domain and not the domain as a whole. For example, the conceptual metaphor THE EU IS A SPANKER/SODOMIZER, which will be analysed in greater detail in section 13.1.1., "Intercultural overt variation", is striking first of all due to its vulgarity. Furthermore, the source domain RAPE embeds power relations. As power relations become decisive when the two entities involved are in radically different positions (advantageous vs. disadvantageous), it is fairly unlikely

that this source domain will be present in countries with an advantageous economic situation within the European Union (i.e. it is likely that this source domain will be absent in countries such as Germany, France and England). I consider this to be a case of *overt variation*, which is not to say that *overt variation* is necessarily highly conspicuous. In contrast to this obvious form of variation, *covert variation* is more subtle. A conceptual metaphor such as THE EU IS A HOUSE is not salient and therefore is regarded as shared by the discourses of almost all EU member countries (or aspiring members). Nevertheless, different features of the source domain may become activated (to the detriment of others), depending on the sociocultural context (this metaphor is extensively analysed in section 13.2.2, “Intracultural covert variation”).

It will be shown that a great range of metaphors are shared by all European member countries. Nevertheless, closer analysis reveals that even among the European metaphors what could be referred to as false friends can be identified. Two types of such *covert variation* can be distinguished. In the first, source domains are identical across countries and languages but are associated with different target domains. Secondly, there are cases of covert variance where metaphors only seem to share the same source and target domains while, on closer observation, one notices that the source domain is actually different. As suggested by Kövecses (2005: 118), such culture-specific construals of a fairly general source domain may lead to multiple variants of a conceptual metaphor that seem identical at a superficial glance.

The thirteenth chapter consists of two sections: the first section focuses on cases of intercultural overt variation, motivated by economic and sociocultural differences, but also on intracultural aspects of variation, justified by the existence of social layers and different worldviews and political affinities; the first section is further devoted to uncovering correlations between culturally-relevant source domains and their suitability as source domains in the discourse on the EU. In the same manner, intercultural and intracultural aspects of covert variation are dealt with in the second section. This section investigates cases of metaphors that seem to share both the source and the target domain, but whose variation resides in divergent cultural models.

The fourteenth chapter addresses issues associated with intracultural cases of divergent metaphors and the motivation behind the choice of metaphors made by

political parties. This chapter also offers an overview of the most prominent metaphors in the discourse on the EU in Malta.

Finally, the fifteenth chapter presents the conclusions and contains several recommendations for future work.

Before turning to the introduction of the theoretical framework of the thesis, it is important to give a short review of the research carried out on the discourse of the European Union.

## 2. The European Union: A survey of the Research Projects (state-of-the-art)

This chapter offers a brief overview of the research done in the field of linguistics with respect to the European Union, paying particular attention to the studies that focussed on the use of metaphor.

Among the best known studies is the ARC project carried out at the University of Durham in collaboration with the Institut für Deutsche Sprache, Mannheim under the Anglo-German Research Collaboration Programme (ARC) and funded by the British Council and the German Academic Exchange Service. The research team compiled a corpus called the EUROMETA-corpus that constitutes a particularly useful basis for the investigation of the public debate on the EU in Britain and Germany. This database is structured around 20 source domains shared by British and German discourses, such as Love and Family, Group/Class/Club, Games/Sports, Train, Life/Body/Health, Discipline/ Authority/School, House and Building, etc. The results of this project were published in the books *Mirror images of Europe: metaphors in the public debate about Europe in Britain and Germany* (Musolff 2000) and in *Attitudes towards 'Europe'* (Musolff et al. 2001). Research into the EU-related discourse in Eastern Europe has shown that many of these source domains are important there as well. For example, Šarić (2005) analysed metaphorical models in the Croatian Media and detected similar source domains, including Journey, House/ Building, Train, Path/Movement, Health/Disease, Sport/Race/Game.

Another example is the larger project funded by the Asko Europa-Foundation in Saarbrücken, called *Discourses on Europe in Germany, France and other EU member states*. Its results have been compiled in the book *Denkart Europa. Schriften zur Europäischen Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur* (Nomos-Verlag, 2006). I will now select some interesting contributions and offer a more detailed summary of their approach and their findings. Representative for the linguistic work on the European Union is the collection of articles<sup>4</sup> about the public EU discourse published in *Conceiving of Europe:*

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<sup>4</sup> Earlier versions of most of the chapters were presented at a conference “Conceiving of Europe – Diversity in Unity” in September 1994 (Musolff et. al. 1996: 11).

*Diversity in Unity* (Musolff et. al. 1996). The essays focused on how politicians conceived of the European Union and dealt both with the factors enabling communication and with the elements disturbing communication between members states.

Musolff (2000) analysed the use of metaphors in the public debate about European Union politics in Britain and Germany in the 1990s and identified seven main source domains: “*movement along a path or road in general; travel by specific means of transport; geometric and architectural structures of static nature; social groupings; life and death, strength and size; competition, sports and war; show and theatre*” (Musolff 2000: 5).

Anderson and Weymouth (1999) concentrated on the British press in the period preceding the General Election of 1997, and during the British EU presidency from January to June 1998. They observed that Euroscepticism in Britain is caused by a perceived threat from an external, meddling ‘Other’, namely continental Europe (1999: 5). The authors distinguished three kinds of European discourse: Pro-Europeanism, Cautious Pro-Europeanism and Euroscepticism. In the pro-European discourse, Europe is depicted as a provider and Britain’s economic future is seen to be within the European Union; in the Eurosceptic discourse Europe is pictured as corrupting, the single currency signifies the loss of sovereignty, Germany stands for expansionism, and thus Britain is better off on its own; cautious Pro-Europeanism considers the single currency to be “a strategic error of priority” and Britain should enter EMU but not in the first round (Anderson and Weymouth 1999:167). Interestingly, the Pro-European British discourse itself tends to be more cautious than idealistic. For example, regarding the single currency the authors argue that the difference between the Pro-European discourse and Euroscepticism appears to be only a matter of degree (Anderson and Weymouth 1999:93).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> As the examination of the Maltese coverage of the EU issue will indicate, the difference between Pro-Europeanism and Euroscepticism in Malta before the EU entry represented clear ideological positions, and the Pro-European discourse did not indicate any interference with the Eurosceptic discourse.

Mautner (2000) also focused on the British press and analysed the articles within the framework of critical linguistics<sup>6</sup>. The author sought to disclose the recurrent patterns in the pro-EU and anti-EU discourses and to point out how these two types of discourses pictured the relationship between Great Britain and the European Union and forged the British national identity in the context of European integration. The focus of the analysis was however on the Eurosceptic discourse, as the issue of national identity was given a prominent place in the anti-EU discourse. Among other arguments, the physical gap between the British Isles and the European mainland was used as a natural explanation for the political distance to the EU (Mautner 2000: 254). Mautner also concentrated on the issue of federalism and on prejudices against the German and the French.

Zinken and Bolotova (2006) dealt with the most frequent “metaphor models” (“Metaphernmodelle”) of the European Integration in the Russian and German discourse: the MM BUILDING, the MM MOVEMENT and the MM PERSONIFICATION<sup>7</sup>. The authors concluded that metaphors in discourse are not only motivated by semantic models, but they should be interpreted as embedded in their social context, which enables the meaningful selection of metaphoric scenarios (Zinken & Bolotova 2006: 309).

Hülse (2003) sought to demonstrate empirically how metaphors constructed reality. In order to answer the question: “Wie konstruieren Metaphern Wirklichkeit?”<sup>8</sup> (Hülse 2003: 9), Hülse analysed in this dissertation metaphors of the EU integration in the debates of the German Bundestag from 1990 to 2000. By means of the metaphor analysis, the author came to the conclusion that the EU integration was essentially

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<sup>6</sup> The critical linguistic approach consists in disclosing the mechanism by which beliefs and values are implanted in the discourse, without the awareness of the discourse participants who take the discourse for granted; these mechanisms are brought to light by means of linguistic analysis: “Critical linguistics seeks, by studying the minute details of linguistic structure in the light of social and historical situation of the text, to display to consciousness the patterns of belief and value which are encoded in the language – and which are below the threshold of notice for anyone who accepts the discourse as ‘natural’ (Fowler 1991: 67).

<sup>7</sup> In the original, “MM BAUWESEN”, “MM BEWEGUNG”, “MM PERSONIFIZIERUNG” (Zinken and Bolotova 2006: 303).

<sup>8</sup> “How do metaphors forge reality?” (my translation: MP)

perceived in terms of belonging to Europe, and thus the question about integration overlapped with the issue of defining or constructing the concept of identity, the European identity (Hülse 2003: 12). Hülse concentrated on four groups of metaphors, that were dominant in the debates on the EU integration: 1. the image field “house”; 2. the image field “journey”; 3. The image field “relations” and 4. the image field “organism”<sup>9</sup> and showed how these metaphors contributed to the construction of identity in contexts that apparently (or, more precisely, on the surface layer of the discourse) dealt with other topics and not with the issue of identity (Hülse 2003: 171ff.).

Brandstetter (2009) investigated the cognitive and communicative functions of metaphors in the French and German media of the 90s reporting about the European Economic and Monetary Union. The data comprised a set of 532 newspaper articles from the *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung*, *Neuen Zürcher Zeitung*, *Le Monde* and *Le Soir*, which were analysed both by means of quantitative and qualitative methods. The author found that most of the 59 identified source domains were used in both the German and French press (in all four journals) and concluded in the same vein with Weinrich that different languages share a set of images and form hereby “a community of image fields<sup>10</sup>” (“Bildfeldgemeinschaft”) (1976: 287). Among the dominant source domains detected were Journey (“Weg”), Building (“Bauwesen”), Military/ War (“Militär und Krieg”), Family (“Familie”), Sport (“Sport”) and Theatre (“Theater”). Brandstetter noted an overall tendency to use images that have negative connotations and provides examples such as: the introduction of the euro depicted as “forceps delivery” (“Zangengeburt”), the building of European and Monetary Union displays “construction flaws” (“Konstruktionsmängel”). Interestingly, the author observed that the negative images prevalently occurred in the media of the countries that are EU members: “Diese Ergebnisse treffen wohlgermerkt vor allem auf die Berichterstattung der Länder zu, die Mitglieder der EU sind und die eine Mitgliedschaft in der WWU von Beginn an anstreben – also Frankreich, Deutschland und Belgien. Die Schweizer

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<sup>9</sup> In the original, “Bildfeld Haus”, “Bildfeld Weg”; “Bildfeld Beziehungen”, “Bildfeld Organismus” (Hülse 2003: 64).

<sup>10</sup> Translated after Müller (2008: 87).

bedienen sich deutlich seltener negativ konnotierter Sprachbilder<sup>11</sup>.” (Brandstetter 2009: 238)

In her dissertation, Bärtsch (2004) analysed articles from the Swiss German-language press during the first round of bilateral negotiations between Switzerland and the European Union and focussed on topics such as EU/Europe, Switzerland, Switzerland’s rapprochement with the EU, arguments for and against the rapprochement with the EU. Bärtsch found that the EU supporters make use of the source domain ANIMATED LIFE (“LEBEWESEN”) (Bärtsch 2004: 171), whereas the opponents of EU integration tend to resort to “water metaphoric” (“die Wasser-Metaphorik”) and portray integration in terms of uncontrollable natural events (“unkontrollierbare Naturereignisse”) (Bärtsch 2004: 177).

Thus, the supporters argue that Switzerland can only survive if it engages in social relations; in this context Switzerland is conceptualised as an “island” disconnected from the continent and thereby disconnected from oxygen: “Hierbei wird ein Konzept entwickelt, das die Schweiz als eine ‘Insel’ ohne Verbindungen zum ‘Festland’ darstellt - quasi abgekoppelt von ‘Nahrungs- und Sauerstoffzufuhr’” (Bärtsch 2004: 171)<sup>12</sup>. Given that the EU-debate in Malta is dominated by the comparison with Switzerland, I consider the conceptualisation of Switzerland as an island very relevant. One should also note that the Maltese pro-EU camp also employs images of threatening isolation from the rest of the continent, but it is only the anti-EU camp that depicts Malta as “Switzerland in the Mediterranean”<sup>13</sup>.

My approach, however, distinguishes itself from the research conducted to date for combining the research paradigm currently employed by cognitive linguists with the methodology exploited by sociolinguistics and by the emerging discipline of cultural linguistics. My analysis of political metaphors will not be based on the mental representations that people are believed to have. Rather, the presumed content will be probed on the basis of empirical data. In order to construct accurate cultural models as

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<sup>11</sup> “Note that these results apply first of all to the news coverage of countries that are EU members and that aspired to join the Economic and Monetary Union from the very beginning, i.e. France, Germany and Belgium. The Swiss resort significantly more seldom to the negatively loaded images.” (my translation)

<sup>12</sup> “Switzerland is hereby represented as an ‘island’ disconnected from the ‘continent’ – so to say, deprived of food- and oxygen supply.” (my translation)

<sup>13</sup> For a detailed analysis of this blend, see chapter 11.



far as possible, information provided by participants in a questionnaire study will be used.

The number of projects concentrating on the EU discourse is vast, this being only a very limited selection. In this chapter I have first of all aimed to point out that metaphor analysis is increasingly being used in the research on the EU; secondly, I have intended to show that despite the large range of approaches taken by researchers so far, my method suggests developments that may be stimulating for future research. To illustrate my methodology further, in the next chapter I shall focus on the central aims and hypotheses of the present study.

### 3. Aims and Hypotheses

The main aim of this thesis is to make a contribution to the study of the linguistic conceptualisation of the European Union. In my view, analysing metaphors – as linguistic, conceptual and sociocultural phenomena – in the political discourse on the EU can help us understand how the otherwise elusive political concepts are crafted and launched, on the one hand, and received and “consumed”, on the other.

The major hypothesis presumes that a new type of metaphor has emerged in the discourse on the EU, which can be classified as *European metaphors*. The European metaphors can also be referred to as *EU metaphors*, since the modifier “European” does not have a geographical referent here, but a political one. It is assumed that these metaphors have become dominant in the discourse on the EU of, first and foremost, member countries, but also in the discourse of other countries, such as aspiring members. According to this hypothesis, *European metaphors* are to be distinguished from *nation-specific metaphors*, which presuppose underlying (divergent) sociocultural models.

It will be argued subsequently that sociocultural models should not be regarded as surface frames, but as deep frames or as “lenses” through which people are likely to see the world<sup>14</sup>. Furthermore, sociocultural models will cover information on the whole experiential space of a person or nation: this holistic view is considered to include information on the geographical environment, which is capable of impinging on a nation’s deep frames. This hypothesis will be illustrated by employing the example of Malta. It will be investigated as to how and to what extent metaphors are replenished by sociocultural knowledge. Discourse metaphors, such as THE EU IS A HOUSE and THE EU IS A FAMILY will be intensively investigated as they particularly lend themselves to an analysis that is apt to disclose how metaphors and culture interact.

The present approach assumes that the cultural models (in a holistic sense) are emotionally loaded, even if in such a subtle way that people might be unaware of their

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<sup>14</sup> Lakoff (2006: 12) distinguishes between surface and deep frames. He argues that deep frames structure your moral system or your worldview, whereas surface frames are associated with modes of communication.

influence. In this respect, Malta is an interesting example *par excellence*: geographical characteristics, historical aspects, physical features, etc. integrate into an affective cultural nexus.

As I will indicate in my thesis, politicians strive to obtain a certain reaction from the audience, and therefore, a wise selection of metaphors or, more precisely, of the source domains, becomes compulsory. To attain the desired effect, politicians (or their spin-doctors) are prone to resorting to affect-laden source domains.

From this vantage point, I shall argue that a (novel) metaphor consists of both affective and explanatory mappings, whose degree of salience is likely to depend on various factors, such as individual exposure to particular sociocultural circumstances and encyclopaedic knowledge, co- and con-text, etc.

Starting from the conviction that European metaphors (and, implicitly, an EU type of discourse) are in place, it will be posited that they are not stable and immutable, but that they are – not unlike all other metaphors – subject to undergoing modifications and change from vividly illustrative to “fossilised” (and back again). In this respect, the high/low salience of affective mappings is considered to play an enormously important role: the fewer affective mappings active, the more explanatory mappings become manifest, and thereby the “feedback effect” (Lakoff & Johnson 2003:142) is only marginal or might cease altogether. The feedback effect refers to the power of metaphor to operate outside language, i.e. in real life, by influencing decision-making. Nevertheless, it can be asserted that dominant European metaphors have been – as conceptual metaphors – relatively stable across time.

Having introduced the main hypotheses, I shall next outline the methodology that will be employed to test my assumptions.

## 4. Method

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as proposed initially by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) will constitute the primary theoretical tool for the present analysis. However, when this model is not appropriate for the understanding of certain metaphorical expressions, I will resort to the Blending Theory (BT), as developed by Fauconnier and Turner, and whose framework allows a more flexible and complex analysis. Blending Theory will be employed particularly when the analysis of the selected metaphors depends on the speaker's dynamic on-line representations. Another advantage of this theory is that unlike Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which defines metaphor based on the unidirectionality from the source domain to the target domain, Blending Theory permits the fusion of source and target in the blend.

Furthermore, as my thesis aims to account for the manifestation of certain cultural models, it proved necessary to extend the theoretical framework in order to include the findings of cultural linguistics.

At various points pictures (political posters or cartoons) will be employed to illustrate ideas that are more effectively expressed via visual (or multimodal metaphors) than via verbal ones. I will not dwell on the theory of pictorial metaphors extensively because, firstly, this is not my main research focus, and, secondly, the analysis framework applied to non-verbal metaphors does not differ essentially from the framework used to analyse verbal metaphors.

Briefly, Charles Forceville (2009: 22-24) distinguishes between multimodal and monomodal metaphors. Monomodal metaphors are metaphors whose target and source are almost exclusively rendered in one mode (e.g. pictorial or written, to mention only two modes), whereas multimodal metaphors are metaphors whose target and source are represented in different modes. Consider, for example, the following picture and its caption:



**Figure 1:** Il-Partit Laburista isejjah konferenza generali biex jaghzel mexxej gdid ghall-bidu gdid iehor. (The labour party is calling a general conference to choose a new leader for yet another new beginning) (<http://daphnecaruanagalizia.com/2008/03/11/tuesday-11-march-0900hrs/>)

Obviously, the source of the metaphor is visually represented by the gathering at the poultry farm and the target is verbally represented in the caption<sup>15</sup> (*The Malta Labour Party's general conference*).

As will be shown in the following section, the corpus and the questionnaire are further relevant methodological tools for the present approach.

#### 4.1. Corpus

The term *corpus* can be defined as any (larger) collection of authentic language samples stored in machine-readable form. Geoffrey Leech (1997: 1) defines a corpus as a “body of language material which exists in electronic form, and which may be processed by computer for various purposes such as linguistic research and language engineering.”

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<sup>15</sup> This is an unofficial translation from Maltese into English made by a native speaker of Maltese.

Although not widely accepted from the onset, corpus-based analyses have been thriving lately and can be seen as proof of a shift from an introspective and intuitive manner of language investigation to a more objective approach made possible by the large amount of authentic data at the linguist's disposal. The notion of natural-occurring language is very important in corpus linguistics and suggests that data is not produced in order to test an hypothesis and confirm the original theory but rather to explore tentative hypotheses and develop new, usage-based models. It can therefore be said that corpus-based approaches combine a deductive with an inductive method of reasoning and thus have greater potential for making claims about language and for testing them against authentic data:

It is not to say that corpus linguists do not rely on their intuitions as much as in traditional approaches, but that their intuitions are measured against linguistic evidence. There is therefore a separation between data and intuition, and intuitions may be modified according to the extent to which the linguistic features identified recur in the corpus. (Charteris-Black 2004: 31-2)

Corpora can be classified according to various criteria, such as the genre of the texts (general vs. specialised corpora), the time span focused on (synchronic vs. diachronic corpora) and the communication channel (written, spoken or combined), etc.

I have focussed particularly on newspapers issued before and after three important events connected with the EU-membership in Malta: the 2003 Maltese European Union Referendum (8 March 2003), the 2003 General Election<sup>16</sup> (held on 12 April 2003) and Malta's EU accession (1 May 2004). In order to avoid bias, the newspaper research involved searching for metaphorical conceptualisations of the target domains EUROPE/ EUROPEAN UNION and MALTA, irrespective of the source domain. I refrained from searching for potential source domains not only because I did not want to use opportunistic methods and manipulate the results, but also because my aim was not to point out source domains that are present or absent in the Maltese discourse on the basis of the source domains already identified by other studies, but to extract and examine data found in the Maltese discourse.

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<sup>16</sup> The major issue in the general election in 2003 was Europe: the Nationalist Party campaigned for EU membership, whereas the Malta Labour Party presented a partnership proposal.

The corpus entries are arranged around 24 topics; approximately 20 represent major source domains that can be identified in the debate on the EU in Malta; the remaining topics are grouped under the section “Further Topics” and refer to important target domains (other than the EU or Malta, e.g. IMMIGRATION, DIVORCE, ABORTION) or are current blends, such as “Switzerland in the Mediterranean”). Mention should be made that not all metaphors analysed in my thesis conceptualise Europe, or Malta as a(n) (prospective) EU member. Topics such as *immigration, divorce, abortion, religion*, etc. concern major issues for the Maltese society that need to be reasserted within the EU context. Although the focus of my analysis was not extended in order to include these relevant topics, they should be touched upon as well as they all contribute to the holistic picture of Malta’s relationship to Europe. All of these areas are central to the understanding of Malta’s identity, which is deconstructed and then reconstructed under the given circumstances.

The corpus basically consists of language data from online newspapers (such as *Malta Today, The Malta Independent Online, The Times of Malta*). In addition to online data, the corpus contains data from printed journals that was collected during my one-week stay in Malta in October 2006. To round off my discussion of metaphors in the Maltese context a questionnaire survey was done as well. The precise reasons that made me resort to the questionnaire, which was distributed at the University of Malta, Msida, in October 2006, will be explained in the next section.

## **4.2. Questionnaire**

As mentioned in the previous section, the analysis relies mainly on the newspaper data included in the corpus. However, political discourse can only be analysed within a communicative context and thus the importance of the audience as message recipient cannot be disregarded. In order to reach an audience, the politician has to draw on shared perceptions intended to create a common communication context. But audience perceptions are impossible to assess on the basis of corpus data, and neither can cases of *covert variation* always be faithfully evaluated by means of co-textual information only. I therefore resorted to the questionnaire method in order to check whether there are any consistencies between the metaphors in the public discourse and the ones used by individual members of a society. In addition, it is useful to find out how certain political



and social concepts are understood by individuals, as this offers a glimpse into the decoding processes at the micro-level. The aim of the questionnaire was to prime different attitudes towards the relationship between Malta and Europe/ EU and retrieve personal assessments of concepts such as HOUSE and FAMILY.

The results of the questionnaire are included in Appendix 5 and will be evaluated in the twelfth chapter. Although the questionnaire is an essential tool in sociolinguistics, the method of the questionnaire seems to be in line with tenets of cognitive linguistics. Exactly as the cognitivists do not agree with the existence of the objective reality, which is clearly divorced from the subjective one, the use of questionnaire implies that objectivity does not exist per se, but that the reality is what subjects understand of the things encountering them. Reality is the mirror of our worldviews. Therefore, I resorted to questionnaire method as complementary to the corpus analysis. For this reasons, I believe that the questionnaire should play a significant role within the field of cognitive linguistics, and there are current research trends indicating that the questionnaire approach is a valuable one (e.g. cognitive anthropology, cognitive sociolinguistics, etc.)

The following three chapters will provide the theoretical foundation upon which the analysis and the dissertation itself rest.



## 5. Constructing Categories = The First Step in Meaning Construction?

### *Prototype Theory: Individual and Collective Aspects*

I shall begin with the prototype theory, as categorisation is an important feature of the human conceptual system. The focus of this chapter will be to outline briefly the findings of Eleanor Rosch, which had a great impact on the development of cognitive linguistics.

Unlike the traditional view, the world out there is not neatly organised in categories that have clearly defined boundaries. Many categories have fuzzy boundaries and not all members of a category can be considered “good” members. The “goodness” of example can be defined in terms of prototypicality. Prototypicality characterises the best or most typical examples, i.e. the centre of the category. For example, the best example of a table would be a table with four legs, whereas tables with one or three legs would not be typical examples. The prototype theory is associated with the figure of Eleanor Rosch and her colleagues and originated in the mid-1970s.

An important question for the present dissertation concerns the universality of prototypes. It has been shown that people belonging to different cultures do not categorise in the same way, although they are all endowed with the same cognitive apparatus. According to Rosch (and colleagues), categorisation does not entirely rely on our perceptory sense, but also on the environment we inhabit:

Basic objects for an individual, subculture, or culture must result from an interaction between the potential structure provided by the world and the particular emphases and state of knowledge of the people who are categorizing. However, the environment places constraints on categorization. (Rosch et al. 1976:430)

Thus, the environment determines categorisation to a certain extent. The categories are further determined by our interaction with the environment. Consider, for example, the category of *size*; concepts such as *small/ large* are acquired on the basis of the size of the objects in our environment with which we come into contact, but also on the basis of our own “embodied” characteristics: a book might be large for a small baby, but small

for an adult. Therefore, one can assert that concepts are formed as a result of physical motion within the environment and that these concepts are relative to features of our body. A child learns the categories *small / large* on the basis of the other's conceptualisation of *size*, i.e. on the basis of their parents' evaluation of size: "That is too big for you". If this is true about common objects found in our immediate environment, one is tempted to conclude that the same should also apply to evaluations on the size of any entity, including the size of a city or a town. Thus, it can be concluded that the category SIZE results from a combination of individual and collective experience of space. The same assumptions can be further applied to other categories as well. Obviously, categories will differ from individual to individual, but also from culture to culture or from community to community.

In other words, prototypes are activated within a particular context<sup>17</sup> and are thus not to be seen as constant and exemplary member of a category. Even if we can talk of a general category of a "house", the prototype is an instantiation in context and is liable to take different forms in different contexts.<sup>18</sup> For the sake of exemplification, consider the occurrence of "house(s)" in the four sentences below<sup>19</sup>:

1. We decided to buy a *house* from the company "Schwabenhau" and we aren't sorry: the components were assembled within a few weeks, which saved us a lot of hassle.
2. Last week we visited the Open-air Museum on Lake Constance and we were impressed by the *houses* built over the water.
3. One of my colleagues from the US said he literally loves his new *house* because he can own property and still stay flexible as his house can be easily relocated.
4. The children came back after a long day in the forest and said excitedly that they built a beautiful *house*.

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<sup>17</sup> Context is to be understood here as inclusive of the human, mental component and instantiated at a particular time and space. An appropriate definition of context as used in the present paper is provided by Langacker (2001:144) as part of "current discourse space" (shortly, CDS): "The CDS is defined as the mental space comprising those elements and relations construed as being shared by the speaker and hearer as a basis for communication at a given moment in the flow of discourse."

<sup>18</sup> See Ungerer & Schmid (2006: 45-58).

<sup>19</sup> The examples have been created in analogy to the "dog" illustration in Ungerer & Schmid (2006: 45-46).

The recipient of the message in the examples above will have generated a different image of what is referred to by the word *house* in each sentence. In example (1), the most likely mental representation is the one of a prefabricated house. If the reader/hearer lives in Germany, additional information will be likely triggered by the name “Schwabenhaus”; in any case, it is highly unlikely that the image of a “bricks and mortar” house would be activated. In the historical context of example (2) and prompted by the adverbial phrase “over the water”, the image of a stilt house will probably be retrieved from the reader’s mental lexicon. The adverb “probably” is not used here as a hedge, but is supposed to convey the meaning that the prototype is versatile even in the same co-text, i.e. if individual readers’ general knowledge about a concept differs, the mental image triggered will occasionally differ as well. Thus, in example (2), a putative reader could retrieve the image of a houseboat or float house. In a similar manner, the reader has probably imagined a mobile house in example (3) and depending on individual semantic memory, the mobile house could be a house on wheels or a house on a raft. Finally, in the example (4) the image of a tree house would probably come first to mind. It follows that what comes **first**<sup>20</sup> to mind is the most typical member of a category as activated by a particular context. Thus, the prototype generated in context (e.g. mobile house) could differ from the context-free<sup>21</sup> prototype of a house (e.g. most likely, a two-storey house, made of bricks and mortar).<sup>22</sup>

As Ungerer & Schmid indicate (2006: 46-47), shifting prototypes in context may impact on the non-contextualized category itself. The mechanism of category alterations could be described as follows: if we assume that a two-storey house, made of bricks and mortar, is a prototypical house based on a typicality test, then a prefabricated house or a mobile house can be automatically ranked as less prototypical members, for example, due to the material used as well as the method of construction. Yet, in none of the

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<sup>20</sup> To put it simply, the meaning of “proto-“ for the context-dependent prototype would be “first” from a temporal perspective while “proto-“ would mean “first” from a typicality perspective for the context-free prototype.

<sup>21</sup> It is important to keep in mind that a literally context-free prototype does not exist. Whenever a speaker is requested to retrieve a typical exemplar for a category from his semantic memory, the typical exemplar will be context-tainted as category members are stored in dependency of a context in the memory.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Ungerer & Schmid (2006: 45-46).

examples above can the house made of bricks and mortar be selected as a prototype and thus the context-dependent category receives a structure that differs from the one of the de-contextualized category. As the selection of the context-dependent prototype is cued by attributes that are essential features of that particular exemplar, it can be assumed that the de-contextualized prototype will be restored in the memory with either additional attributes (if applicable) or with differently rated attributes (e.g. an attribute with low ratings of typicality is re-stored as having an altered, possibly high, ratings). Based on the attribute pattern, a central category member could be pushed to the periphery of a particular category while a marginal category member could obtain a more central place. Let us assume that the speaker / message sender in example (1) compared features of different types of housing and finally bought a prefabricated house from the company Schwabenhaus. Prior to the house buying decision process, the speaker was not aware of the different attributes of a prefabricated house as opposed to the ones of a house made of bricks and mortar, but the house category was dominated by the bricks and mortar house. After the house buying decision process, the house category is stored in the memory enriched with new attributes (e.g. made of wooden frames). The same could apply to the reader / hearer and other putative message recipients that may undergo a restructuring of the house category. What is more, the re-evaluation of a particular category at an individual level could trigger a more far-reaching re-organization of the category for larger groups of people, which diachronically could lead to a complete change of the category structure (e.g. it can be speculated that the prefabricated house could become the de-contextualized prototype of the house category in about 100 years).

After outlining the prototype theory, whose implications will be explored for my analysis of the HOUSE metaphor (Sections 12.4., “Stony House or Sweet Home”, and 13.2.2., “Intracultural covert variation”), I shall illustrate the central claims of the traditional theory of metaphors and, subsequently, examine the main tenets of the conceptual metaphor theory.

## 6. Metaphor: Only Grace and Beauty?

The sugar bag is Malta.  
Switzerland is represented as a cigarette box.  
And the table cloth on which both lie, that is the European Union.

*Malta Today*  
(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2003/03/09/t2.html>)

Until the 1950s metaphors were associated with the enchanting language of poets. It was only with the rise of cognitive linguistics that the traditional view witnessed serious challenges. After a brief overview on the key assumptions made by the traditional view, the central cognitivist claims will be reviewed.

### 6.1. The Traditional View on Metaphor

Traditionally, it seemed natural to differentiate between literal language and figurative language. Briefly, literal language is denotative, clear and unambiguous, whereas figurative language is connotative, unclear, and ambiguous. The latter is adorned with figures of speech (in particular metaphors) and is mainly used by poets. As the term *figure of speech* suggests, metaphor was simply a decorative feature of language.

The traditional theory of metaphor focussed on novel metaphors and excluded the so-called “dead metaphors” from the scope of interest. The exclusive focus of attention on novel, “live” metaphors, leads to a biased and limited view that deals with metaphors primarily as pleasing linguistic ornaments.

Etymologically, the term metaphor is considered to come from the Greek *metapherein*, which means “to transfer, to carry over”. Applied to metaphors – as purely linguistic phenomena –, this implies that the working mechanism of metaphor consists in carrying over a name from one thing to another on the grounds of analogy.

## 6.2. From Antiquity to Modernity

The ancient Greeks recognised the metaphor's potential as a persuasive tool and dealt with this "master trope" within the discipline of rhetoric<sup>23</sup>. The rhetoricians, following Aristotle, took the position that both simile and metaphor were based on comparison, but that unlike simile, metaphor only alluded to the resemblance between the two terms involved:

The Simile also is a metaphor; the difference is but slight. When the poet says of Achilles that he leapt on the foe as a lion, this is a simile; when he says of him 'the lion leapt', it is a metaphor – here, since both are courageous, he has transferred to Achilles the name of 'lion'. (Aristotle 2004: 126)

Like Plato<sup>24</sup> and Aristotle, most modern philosophers see metaphors as deviant language use that can convey a confusing and even misleading message.

Thomas Hobbes is renowned for his vehement attack on metaphors. According to Hobbes, the communicative function of language is obstructed by the use of metaphors, which are enumerated together with senseless and ambiguous words and which are therefore not worth analysing:

[...] reason is the pace; increase of science, the way; and the benefit of mankind, the end. And on the contrary, metaphors, and senseless and ambiguous words, are like *ignes fatui* [a fool's fire] and reasoning upon them is wandering amongst innumerable absurdities; and their end, contention or sedition, or contempt. (Hobbes: 1994:26)

According to Hobbes, literal words, which carry the truth, are alone suitable for adequate communication, whereas metaphors are confusing and deceptive.

Nietzsche's view on metaphor is revolutionary. Unlike his predecessors, but also contrary to his contemporaries, Nietzsche sees metaphors as pervasive in human speech. He does not conceive of metaphors as rhetorical devices, but recognises their conceptual nature: "For a genuine poet, metaphor is not a rhetorical figure, but a

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<sup>23</sup> See Evans and Green 2006: 293.

<sup>24</sup> Plato is aware of the capability of metaphor to lead people away from truth. His criticism of poets (in *Phaedrus*, 267a-b) is based on their usage of figurative language (especially the use of metaphors), by which they "make trifles seem important and important points trifles by the force of their language." (cited according to Johnson (1981: 5)

representative image that he actually beholds in place of a concept.” (Nietzsche 1995: 40).

Interestingly, Nietzsche does not see truth as separated from language or from metaphors:

What therefore is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms: in short a sum of human relations which became poetically and rhetorically intensified, metamorphosed, adorned, and after long usage seem to a nation fixed, canonic and binding: truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they *are* illusions; worn-out metaphors which have become powerless to affect the senses. (Nietzsche 1995: 92, italics in the original)

Surprisingly, Nietzsche’s theory resembles the cognitive linguists’ view. Thus, metaphors which once used to be striking, have apparently lost their power due to excessive usage and have become accepted as truths or truisms. Thus, nobody questions them, as they are embedded in a nation’s culture and are therefore taken for granted. Thus, we can say that “worn-out” metaphors are illusive truths which everybody accepts as they have infiltrated people’s conceptual system.

As we shall see in the next section, cognitive linguists view metaphor as an essential conceptual phenomenon rather than a rhetoric device.

### **6.3. Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics: The Invisible, but Indelible Link between Language and Cognition**

This section will introduce some of the key tenets of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), the theory that has posed a serious challenge to the traditional theory of metaphor. The CMT theory was introduced in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s 1980 book *Metaphors We Live By* and has been influential in the cognitive linguistics enterprise ever since.

The central claim of this theory is that metaphor is not merely a literary device, but that thought itself is inherently metaphorical in nature. According to cognitive linguists, metaphor is a set of mappings from one domain (source) to another domain (target). The mappings are motivated by a shared frame of experience in which sensorimotor patterns play a structural role.

In contrast to the traditional view, cognitive linguists argue that metaphors are not simply ornaments; they act as shortcuts to and reflections of our perception of the

world, i.e. they are cognitive tools: by covert comparison between (apparently) similar entities, metaphors sort and sift our knowledge of the world. Furthermore, if metaphors are so useful to our understanding, it follows that they will not only be the apanage of literary geniuses, but pervade the speech of common speakers. The most relevant argument for the present analysis is the revolutionary cognitivist view that metaphor is a property of concepts and not of words (Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 3ff; Kövecses 2002: viii).

Cognitive linguists have shown that metaphors pervade our everyday speech, even if we are not aware of it, and even if we cannot provide a basic definition of the term metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson's assumptions that thought is predominantly metaphoric (1987, 1999) and that most of our thinking is unconscious (1999) have serious implications for the understanding of the human unconscious. If these assumptions are true, it follows that conceptual metaphors provide the foundation of our unconscious, which in its turn regulates the functioning of our conscious thought. This further implies that conceptual metaphors vicariously influence our conscious thought.

Congruent with the current distinction in the field of cognitive linguistics, the present analysis will be based on the dichotomy between *conceptual metaphors* and *metaphorical expressions*. This distinction relies on the different locus of action of these two interdependent phenomena; whereas metaphorical expressions occur at the linguistic level, conceptual metaphors are 'alive' in our thoughts, although conceptual metaphors rarely occur in speech as such. According to Lakoff and Johnson's influential theory, conceptual metaphors are part of a speaker's conceptual set-up and it is precisely the existence of metaphorical concepts in human cognitive processes that makes possible and that mediates the instantiation of metaphors as linguistic expressions (Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 6).

Nevertheless, the speaker is hardly aware of this conceptual input, which only acts as a decoder (or sometimes encoder) of metaphorical expressions. The function of this input knowledge of conceptual metaphors becomes especially evident when the speakers must decode novel or ad-hoc metaphoric expressions.

Cognitive linguists define conceptual metaphors as consisting of two conceptual domains, a source domain and a target domain. The target domain is understood in terms of the source domain on the basis of a unidirectional relation



from source to target, which resides in a set of correspondences (or mappings, in linguists' parlance) between the constituents of the two conceptual fields (Kövecses 2002: 6). This definition of metaphor is central to Lakoff and Johnson's approach, which postulates that "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 5).

In the view of conceptual metaphor theory, speakers invoke a metaphor whenever they refer to one domain, such as JOINING THE EUROPEAN UNION, with vocabulary from another domain, e.g. the JOURNEY. Conceptual metaphor theory is motivated by the existence of linguistic data in which, for example, the process of adjusting to EU standards, in the view of joining the EU, is expressed in terms that are used to refer to journeys:

JOINING THE EU IS A JOURNEY<sup>25</sup>

[...] the road has only just begun.

*Malta Today*, 9 May 2004

Malta's EU accession being referred as a serious mistake, akin to the country being driven into a dead end alley.

*Malta Today*, 9 May 2004

The crossroads in this nation's history, over whether it should join the EU or stay out.

*The Times*, 6 March 2003

The point of arrival is the beginning, not the end.

*The Times*, 2 January 2004

Do you believe we should go down the membership road or are we prepared to let Malta drift aimlessly along an unknown route?

*The Times*, 4 March 2003

In the JOINING THE EU IS A JOURNEY metaphor, JOINING THE EU (the target domain) is conceptualised in terms of the JOURNEY (source domain) such that the *physical road* in the source corresponds to the *political road* in the target. As in the above example, nominal concepts like ROAD (with its variant ALLEY), CROSSROADS, POINT OF ARRIVAL, ROUTE, etc., and verbal concepts like DRIVING INTO (allowing the passive

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<sup>25</sup> It is common practice in the field of cognitive linguistics to use small capitals to denote conceptual metaphors (like JOINING THE EU IS A JOURNEY), and italics in order to highlight the metaphorical expressions as they occur in the text. These conventions will be applied in the present dissertation.

construction BEING DRIVEN INTO), DRIFT AIMLESSLY, etc., pertaining to the source domain, JOURNEY, are mapped onto the target domain, JOINING THE EU. It should be pointed out that the discussion of accession in terms of a journey is not limited to a few isolated expressions, but can be noticed in numerous examples. It seems to be normal to talk about political changes and processes in terms of journeys. For instance, if we encounter obstacles or we get lost and cannot find the way out, we can speak of being *at a crossroads* or *in a dead end alley* to refer to both a real and a metaphorical “journey”. It is therefore not surprising that the anti-EU camp resorts to such impeded journeys to refer to the infelicitous situation in which the country would be after joining the EU.

The JOURNEY metaphor<sup>26</sup> is especially productive as it permits focussing on different stages of a journey. The position on the road corresponds to the position within the political process of the EU accession, or the assessed position, depending on the speakers’ point of view. It can be concluded that we not only use the same terms to talk about EU entry and journey, but the two domains also share the same logical structure, or the target domain inherits the logical structure of the source domain. This is to say that, while the objective features remain different, the two domains share or begin to share (in the case of novel metaphors) abstract analogies.

This mechanism of transposing schemas (metaphorical mapping) from concrete source domains in order to structure an abstract and less transparent target domain is very common and can be recognised both in everyday language and in professional jargons. Remarkably, even if most people are not aware of their power, metaphors are inescapable: they are lurking in the office, in the hospital, at the psychiatrist’s or in the computer shop. Yet, if one were challenged to reflect upon their professional jargon, professionals with no knowledge of linguistics would

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<sup>26</sup> The suitability of the source domain of JOURNEY to structure abstract domains is supported by its applicability to essential areas of existence, such as LIFE and LOVE. The conceptual metaphors LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff 1994: 62ff; Kövecses 2002: 31, etc.) and LOVE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 45; Kövecses 2002: 7f, etc. ) are very well-known in the literature and, therefore, they shall not be included in my account of metaphor.

probably detect no metaphors at all. Nevertheless, a linguist is likely to generate endless lists of such examples<sup>27</sup>.

When I started working as a patent administrator, I was astounded by the large number of metaphors used within the intellectual property field. Despite professionals' unawareness of metaphors, it is a fact that one cannot work without them. For example, few recognise the metaphor in expressions such as *patent family*, *parent application*, *child application* or those expressions employed when a decision concerning maintenance is made: *to revive an application*, *the patent is dead* or *keep the patent alive*, but effective communication would be impeded if such metaphors were not used.

Thus, metaphors are ubiquitous in language and thought. Metaphor is not only pervasive in common speech, but also in specialised discourses such as politics (Wilson 1990, Lakoff 2006), economics (McCloskey 1985), advertising (Forceville 1996), emotions (Lakoff and Kövecses 1987; Kövecses 2000), morality (Johnson 1993) and many more. However, as we shall see in the next section, conceptual metaphors are not only ubiquitous, but also imperishable.

### 6.3.1. On the immortality of (conceptual) metaphors

Following the introduction to the metaphor from a cognitive point of view, the aim of this section is to round off the survey on metaphoricity with an account of the “life and death” struggle between traditional and cognitive linguists. The bone of contention is the perishable life of metaphors and their unavoidable death.

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<sup>27</sup> Admittedly, there are also linguists who consider metaphors in professional jargons to have lost their “metaphoricity”. Partington points to examples such as MONEY AS A LIQUID (instantiated in linguistic metaphors like *cash-flow* and claims that they are no longer metaphors, inasmuch as they are void of “figurative content” and become “genre-specific technical language” (1998:119). Indeed, for their users such metaphors have no emotional connotations, but only serve as a communicative tool, and thus remain unobserved. It is not only the emotional content that is suppressed, but also the role that they initially played in structuring the more abstract domains has become marginal, as the meaning of the jargon terms is already established. Nevertheless, the metaphoricity would undoubtedly come to the surface if someone who is a novice in a certain field of activity is confronted with a specific terminus. The metaphoricity is validated if the novice reacts in an unexpected way (e.g. a novice in the intellectual property field would find the denomination “child application” quite cute and impressive).

As a consequence of the cognitive linguists' commitment to the idea that metaphors have an impact on the human conceptual system, the traditional distinction between 'live' and 'dead' metaphors has also been challenged. Within the traditional framework, 'dead' metaphors have lost their metaphoricity and are, therefore, no longer worth analysing. In contradiction to this widespread view, cognitive linguists consider precisely these "conventionalised" metaphors of extreme relevance. Thus, they argue that the presumably 'dead' metaphors are more 'alive' in our perceptual system since it is these 'dead' metaphors that give clues about our cognition (Kövecses, 2002: iv).

According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 54-55), metaphorical expressions such as *wasting time*, *attacking positions* constitute part of a whole system of metaphorical concepts that provides the foundation of our conceptual system. They also distinguish cases of metaphorical expressions that are isolated and do not form part of a metaphorical system, e.g. *the foot of the mountain*, *the leg of a table*, etc., which are the only ones that might be called 'dead' due to their lack of interaction with other metaphors. Notwithstanding their latent potential to generate novel metaphors based on the unexplored parts of their source domains (e.g. A MOUNTAIN IS A PERSON), the authors assume that they do not play a major role in the human conceptual system. This distinction and the great impact associated with the conceptual metaphors, which function as cognitive tools, as the name suggests, is crucial for the cognitive linguists due to their concept-building potential:

It is important to distinguish these isolated and unsystematic cases from the systematic metaphorical expressions we have been discussing. Expressions like *wasting time*, *attacking positions*, *going our separate ways*, etc., are reflections of systematic metaphorical concepts that structure our actions and thoughts. They are 'alive' in the most fundamental sense: they are metaphors we live by. The fact that

they are conventionally fixed within the lexicon of English makes them no less alive.<sup>28</sup> (Lakoff and Johnsons, 2003: 55; italics in the original)

The conceptual metaphor functions as a schematic cognitive structure (a ‘mould’) that can theoretically produce infinite instances of metaphorical expressions. The former are long-lived, whereas the latter lead an organic life: immediately after birth, metaphors are live and fresh, but in time they undergo a maturing process or, in the linguistic jargon, they become conventional or lexicalised, while the language users may still perceive them as metaphoric, and finally they die out.

Another important concept that looms large in cognitive linguistics is the embodiment concept, which will be discussed in the next section.

### **6.3.2. Embodiment – “Being in the Body”**

One of the most prominent commitments to which cognitive linguists have adhered is the belief that conceptual structure relies on embodied cognition. It follows that the basic conceptual structure derives from our experience of the world or, to put it more concretely, from the environment-human experiencer interaction. Thus, in line with cognitive scientists, cognitive linguists argue that conceptual structure reflects embodied experience.

In his book *The Body in the Mind* (1987), Mark Johnson introduces the thesis that embodied experience gives rise to image schemas within our conceptual system. Image schemas are thus the result of our sensory and perceptual experience that we gain from the interaction with the world: “These patterns [image schemas] emerge as meaningful structures for us chiefly at the level of our bodily movements through space, our manipulation of objects, and our perceptual interactions.” (1987: 29)

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<sup>28</sup> Müller (2008) also refutes the dichotomy dead vs. alive metaphors and proposed a dynamic view on metaphoricity. Müller considers that distinction dead vs. alive metaphors might be relevant on the level of the linguistic system, but not for the language in use, as during speaking or writing the source domain of a dead metaphor may become cognitively active. Therefore, she proposes the category “sleeping-waking”, depending on the degree of activation within their context of use: “[...] A sleeping metaphor is a metaphor whose metaphoricity is potentially available to an average speaker/listener, writer/reader because it is transparent, but there are no empirical indications of activated metaphoricity. [...] In contrast, waking metaphors are surrounded by metaphoricity indicators, such as verbal elaboration, specification, semantic opposition, syntactic integration [...]” (2008: 198)

The Cartesian dualist view of a human being as divided into body and mind is questioned and rejected by the cognitivists. The cognitivist hypothesis is that the human body-mind apparatus constitutes a whole that cannot be dismantled. In short, Cartesian dualism refers to Descartes' dichotomy between *res cogitans* ("thinking thing") and *res extensa* ("extended thing"), which are the two distinct parts of a human being: *res cogitans* is the thinking substance or the mind, whereas *res extensa* is the extended material substance, i.e. the body. The "thinking thing" is clearly separated from the "corporeal thing" and is not tainted by the material substance. It can be concluded that language is a privilege of the "thinking thing" and that it has no connection with the corporeal substance:

Thus, simply by knowing that I exist and seeing at the same time that absolutely nothing else belongs to my nature or essence except that I am a thinking thing, I can infer correctly that my essence consists solely in the fact that I am a thinking thing. It is true that I may have [...] a body that is very closely joined to me. But nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non-extended thing; and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body, in so far as this is simply an extended, non-thinking thing. And accordingly, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it. (Descartes, 1996: 54)<sup>29</sup>

The findings of cognitive science cast strong doubts on the accuracy of the Cartesian argument. In his book *Descartes' Error* from 1994, Antonio Damasio presents his findings from case studies in neuropsychology, which prove that the mind and the body cannot be separated and that rationality without emotion is impaired rationality. Similarly, cognitive linguists claim that the human physical embodiment grounds our conceptual and linguistic systems. Lakoff and Johnson's concept of the "embodied mind", developed in their revolutionary work *Philosophy in the Flesh*, summarizes this position: "There is no such fully autonomous faculty of reason separate from and independent of bodily capacities such as perception and movement" (1999: 17).

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<sup>29</sup> "(...) ac proinde, ex hoc ipso quod sciam me existere, quodque interim nihil plane aliud ad naturam sive essentiam meam pertinere animadvertam, praeter hoc solum quod sim res cogitans, recte concludo meam essentiam in hoc uno consistere, quod sim res cogitans. Et quamvis fortasse (...) habeam corpus, quod mihi valde arcte conjunctum est, quia tamen ex una parte claram & distinctam habeo ideam mei ipsius, quatenus sum tantum res cogitans, non extensa, & ex alia parte distinctam ideam corporis, quatenus est tantum res extensa, non cogitans, certum est me a corpore meo revera esse distinctum, & absque illo posse existere." (Descartes 2008: 158; original text)

Thus, in contrast to the Cartesian view, the embodiment theory affirms that reason stems from bodily capacities. Lakoff and Johnson praise the role of the body and comment on what they call the “disquieting findings” of cognitive science (1999: 17). These tenets are summarised here as they constitute the cornerstone of cognitive linguistics. The first idea supports the evolutionary view and considers human reason to be a form of animal reason and to be incorporated in the body and governed by the special features of the brain as a physical entity. The second finding indicates that our bodies, brains and interactions with the physical environment provide the basis (even though in an unconscious way) of our metaphysics; that is, they forge our sense of reality. It follows that the way we experience the world is predetermined by our human biological makeup, although we tend to think that we organise and categorise reality and the experience of reality in a conscious manner:

Our sense of what is real begins with and depends crucially upon our bodies, especially our sensorimotor apparatus, which enables us to perceive, move, and manipulate, and the detailed structures of our brains, which have been shaped by both evolution and experience. (Lakoff and Johnson 1999:17)

The above quotation also explains how our concepts become embodied. The embodiment theory is extremely disquieting as this also implies a secularisation of reality and reason and thereby the whole sense of the world. The embodiment of human concepts asserts that our concepts are related to our perception, which itself is limited by our physiological makeup. To quote Lakoff and Johnson (1999:21) again “...human concepts are not just reflections of an external reality, but they are crucially shaped by our bodies and brains, especially by our sensorimotor system.”

The Cartesian chasm between mind and body is closed, and this new view of epistemology gives rise to a new paradigm called “embodied realism”:

Embodied realism, rejecting the Cartesian separation, is, rather, a realism grounded in our capacity to function successfully in our physical environments. It is therefore an evolution-based realism. Evolution has provided us with adapted bodies and brains that allow us to accommodate to, and even transform our surroundings. (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 95)

This form of embodied realism is a form of relativism. Pure truth does not exist; rather what people consider to be true depends on factors such as sensory capacities, interaction with the environment, cultural milieu. In short, truth depends on our



perception of the external world, on our understanding (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 106). Taking into account that people belong to different cultures and social milieus, it makes sense to speak about social truths (truth is a social artefact, the product of influential social groups or institutions); or, more precisely, sociocultural truths as truth can be seen as a construct, the product of sociocultural institutions. Our encounter with the world via our sensorimotor apparatus is an encounter with a socioculturally biased world. The implications of this encounter with the world ‘around’ the body will be explored in Chapter 8, “Man and Island: Being ‘In’ and ‘Around’ the Body”.

#### **6.4. Blending Theory**

Blending Theory has its origins in the works of Turner and Fauconnier. As shown in the previous section, in the Conceptual Metaphor Theory a metaphor is defined as a set of mappings from one conceptual domain (a source or vehicle) to another conceptual domain (the target or topic). In Blending Theory, the metaphor is not limited to two domains only, but is based on the integration of four (or even more) mental spaces, i.e. on at least two ‘input’ mental spaces (source and target), a generic space, and a ‘blended’ space, which engage in a conceptual integration network. Mental spaces are defined as “small conceptual packets constructed as we think or talk, for purposes of local understanding and action. They are interconnected, and can be modified as thought and discourse unfold” (Fauconnier & Turner, 2006: 307). The generic space shares basic information with the input spaces and presents it in an abstract form. The blended space borrows structure from the input spaces, but also displays emergent, new meaning of its own.

Blending is treated as an “operation that takes place over conceptual integration networks” (Fauconnier & Turner, 2006: 307). It should be noted that not all, but only a selection of properties are projected from the input spaces to the blend.

Consider the following quotation from an article in *Malta Today*, which provides the context leading up to the metaphorical expression “the EU Father Christmas”: "However you need to have a party in government who has the political will and courage to take the necessary measures and not one which depends solely on the EU Father Christmas" (<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2002/0609/people.html>).



If the conceptual blending approach is applied, the reader conjures two mental input spaces: One space will assemble the reader's knowledge of the CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS and of the figure of FATHER CHRISTMAS with his bag full of presents (especially for children); in this space, children assume the role of receiver, whereas the adults take the role of Santa Claus. A second input space focuses on the EUROPEAN UNION as an institution that invests funds in order to help less developed countries reach an acceptable economic level (according to EU standards). The generic space will contain data relating to generic roles, such as GIVER, RECIPIENT, as well as further abstract information common to both input spaces: GIFT, PURPOSE and EXPECTED RESPONSE. As we shall see, the blend will contain features common to both input spaces, but will also include additional information of its own.

In the blend, the EU becomes Father Christmas and Malta becomes a "child". The EU grants funds and this act is construed metaphorically as "bringing presents for children". In the EU space this act is conceptualised as investing funds to assure a successful integration. In the blend, however, this is construed as bestowing presents. Although in the EU space funding schemes are binding, in the blend the same is construed as being free of obligations, as Christmas presents are not given together with a set of conditions, although these also have an implicit disciplining function ("only good children receive presents"). Nevertheless, the funding scheme, which is supposed to help weaker members to develop and become equal in status as an EU member, creates dependency and leads to a lack of action in the blend (the children rely on the presents and usually know that they are supposed to receive them even if they do not change their behaviour). This indicates that the emergent notion in the EU Father Christmas blend differs utterly from its counterpart in the EU space: EU funding is seen as assured and can be taken for granted and the conditions for funding are not regarded as binding. By virtue of the mismatch between the symbolic figure of Father Christmas (and the spiritual context of harmony and generosity) and the EU as a political and economic system, sarcastic connotations arise in the blended space.

Fauconnier & Turner distinguish three operations involved in the blend space construction: composition, completion and elaboration (Fauconnier & Turner, 2006: 114).

Composition is performed when conceptual information from one input space is applied to an element from another input space; for example in “island mentality” conceptual content from the island space, i.e. isolated or remote, is applied to the mentality in the blended space. Completion is a necessary process that enables an appropriate comprehension of the blend. The information on “island” and “mentality” alone does not offer a complete understanding of the phrase “island mentality”. Thus, this pattern has to be completed with information that is available in the form of encyclopaedic knowledge. For example, knowledge on Malta’s small size and resource poverty completes the basic information offered by the adjective “insular” and the noun “mentality”. Additionally, general knowledge of the unfavourable position of islands in comparison to mainland territories, which is due primarily to their vulnerability to natural disasters, leads to the appropriate interpretation, i.e. negative.

Elaboration is understood as a dynamic and individual form of completion. Dynamism refers to the online unpacking of information contained in the blend which involves complex processing until meaning is constructed. During the process of meaning construction, new items of information are added to the unpacked information. The new items can differ contextually, temporally or may depend on the encyclopaedic knowledge that the individual (acting as decoder) possesses. For instance, a speaker might activate the stony character of the island and thus the “insular mentality” can be comprehended as “inflexible”, whereas another speaker might focus upon the exoticism (and attraction) of the island, which would trigger the interpretation of an “insular mentality” as something desirable.<sup>30</sup>

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Blending Theory (BT) both regard metaphor as a conceptual and not as a purely linguistic phenomenon. One of the important differences resides in the directionality of the mappings: while the CMT sees mapping as a unidirectional process, from source to target, BT allows for bidirectional mappings, called cross-space mappings. A further major difference concerns the availability of the conceptual relations in one’s mental repository. The

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. W. Kirk, “The same empirical data may arrange itself into different patterns and have different meanings to people of different cultures, just as a landscape may differ in the eyes of different observers.” (Kirk 1963: 366)

CMT conceives of the conceptual mappings as readily available or entrenched<sup>31</sup>, whereas the BT focuses on the online integration of entrenched conceptualisations with novel and temporary structures. To put it briefly, BT does not regard conceptual mappings as being entrenched or immutable, but incidental and context-dependent.

As will be illustrated in what follows, the Blending Theory also emphasises that metaphors can have an emergent meaning as well, i.e. implications that do not seem to be explained by either source or target domain.

Blending is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but also a pictorial one. Consider, for example, the map of Malta below blended upon the EU flag:



**Figure 2:** <http://www.chetcuticauchi.com/jpc/images/photos/malta-eu.jpg>

In the picture above, it becomes obvious at first sight that Malta's map is blended upon the EU flag. This seems to be a very simple form of superimposing a map (a drawing) upon a flag (a piece of cloth). Yet, the elements in the input space do not

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<sup>31</sup> *Entrenchment* is a current concept in cognitive linguistics and is very influential in cognitive grammar. It refers to the establishment of a linguistic unit in the mental lexicon. Entrenchment is the consequence of usage: the more frequently a linguistic unit is used, the more entrenched it is likely to become. Langacker explains the relation between entrenchment and usage as follows: "Every use of a structure has a positive impact on its degree of entrenchment, whereas extended periods of disuse have a negative impact. With repeated use, a cognitive novel structure becomes progressively entrenched, to the point of becoming a unit (...)" (Langacker 1987: 59)."

only combine, but also fuse in the blended space. This integration in the blended space is not explained by the information contained in the input spaces: 1. the EU flag and 2. Malta's map. It is only encyclopaedic knowledge of Malta's geographic position in the Mediterranean that allows fusion in the blended space; further, due to the blue colour that the sea and the EU flag share, the EU flag and Malta's map become integrated in the blend. Moreover, this visual blend creates a natural effect: Malta as represented on the EU flag seems to belong there.

Blending has a special effect in cartoons, especially political cartoons, as the integration of elements from different input spaces is likely to carry hilarious or ludicrous connotations. The cartoon below visualises an important problem Malta has to cope with and which is considered to be a consequence of the EU membership:



Figure 3: "Beware of the dog"

(<http://archive.maltatoday.com.mt/2005/08/07/editorial.html>)

Illegal immigration has been a problem for small countries like Malta ever since the 1990s. However, the number of illegal immigrants has increased since 2004, the year Malta joined the EU. As Malta cannot cope with this difficult situation alone, urgent calls for help are addressed to the EU.

In this cartoon, the Maltese politician Tony Abela is represented as a *fierce dog*. *Prima facie*, it seems legitimate to analyse the cartoon as a pictorial metaphor: the pictorial variant of the conceptual metaphor HUMAN BEINGS ARE ANIMALS. Yet, it

is common knowledge that the *raison d'être* of political cartoons is not primarily explanatory, but rhetorical. It follows that the purpose of the bestial image should not be reduced to the conceptualisation of the domain of the humans in terms borrowed from the animal realm. The cartoon can be best understood as a blend of two mental spaces: one in which a dog is protecting his bone and growling to scare off his approaching enemies, and one in which a politician is trying to protect his country from illegal immigrants by using violence-inciting speech. These two spaces are distinct, but they share the following information, which connects them and makes up the generic space: there is a *guardian*, a *precious asset* (that needs protection) and a *threatening enemy*, who desires to take possession of the asset. The blend is realised in the fourth mental space, reflected in the cartoon itself, and which merges information structure from the *dog space*, but also input from the *politician space*; in the blended space we see the half-man, half-dog politician, Tony Abela, who is protecting his bone(-country) from the threatening illegal immigrants. The exacerbated and distorted size of the dog as compared to the boat with illegal immigrants trivialises the danger, on the one hand, and also shows the futility of the political plan of action, on the other. Thus, when scrutinised, it becomes evident that the fierce “dog” in the blended space of the cartoon acquires a ludicrous effect, which cannot be explained by the information contained in the two domains. Even the few examples, which have been discussed so far, illustrate that the area of metaphor/blending analysis cannot be separated from cultural knowledge. As I will show in the next section, cultural linguistics successfully combines the findings of cognitive linguistics with a cultural analysis of the discourse in order to reconstruct the cultural understandings underlying the language of ordinary speakers.

## **6.5. From Cognitive Linguistics to Cultural Linguistics**

The present analysis of metaphors in the public discourse of Malta is meant to play a role in understanding the Maltese culture. In order to place more emphasis on culture

and on authenticity, an attempt to retrieve genuine aspects of a people's cognitive environment<sup>32</sup> was seen as compulsory.

As to confine the analysis to the widely deployed methods of cognitive linguistics would mean to rely largely on introspection and on second-hand information (e.g. books about history, culture, society, etc.), it was helpful to move towards a broader methodology that combines methods from other fields, such as sociolinguistics or cultural studies. Such a synthesis has emerged not as a revolutionary upheaval but as a smooth process under the name of cultural linguistics, and its framework is introduced by Gary B. Palmer in *Toward a Theory of Cultural Linguistics* (1996).

Cultural linguistics is not easy to define as this is a young, emerging branch of research. In order to emphasise its emerging status, Palmer defines cultural linguistics as a synthesis and not as a new theory: "If the theory of cognitive linguistics can be combined with that of ES [the ethnography of speaking – my addition, MP], the result should be a useful new synthesis that merges linguistic theory, culture theory and sociolinguistic theory" (Palmer 1996: 10). The ethnography of speaking (ES) was put forth by Hymes in an eponymous essay in 1962. His assumptions, especially that language should be studied within its social context and in relation to the ethnic identity of the speakers, have gained currency and are very influential in today's linguistics (especially in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis). In a similar manner to the ethnography of speaking, cultural linguistics is committed to the study of language use in its social and cultural context and follows one of the major tenets of cognitive linguistics. This new research direction deals with models in the minds of the speakers: "Cultural linguistics is primarily concerned not with how people talk about some objective reality, but with how they talk about the world that they themselves imagine" (Palmer 1996: 36). The word *imagine* should be understood as a synonym for (mentally) *represent*: cultural linguistics is thus primarily concerned with how people represent or construe reality with the help of their perceptual and conceptual systems.

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<sup>32</sup>Sperber and Wilson (1995: 38-39) define cognitive environment as the adjacent physical environment perceived according to our cognitive abilities. The "content" of the physical environment is altered and limited by our senses, which thus perform a "configuring" function.



The difficulty in defining cultural linguistics, which should not be an argument against its usefulness, is also obvious in the tentative definition below:

Cultural linguistics draws on, but is not limited to the theoretical notions and analytical tools of cognitive anthropology and cognitive linguistics. Through these, it explores the relationship between language, culture and conceptualisation [...]. (Sharifian, Palmer 2007: 1)

It is nevertheless extremely helpful to consider the cultural linguistic view of meaning. Meaning is not seen as stable, but as a whole discursive formation. This is not to say that conventional meaning does not exist, but that meaning as a whole is rooted, situated in the sociocultural context: "...there must be a middle ground, a nexus where consensual conventional meanings interact with conventional situations to frame meanings that are both conventional and relative to various discourse situations. This is what is meant by situated meaning" (Palmer 1996: 39). This definition is in full agreement with Fauconnier's (and that of other experts<sup>33</sup> on the blending theory) theory of meaning construction. Meaning is the product of a dynamic process of meaning construction which takes place during ongoing discourse. The cultural linguistics approach to meaning constructions is very similar. The only difference is that the ongoing discourse is seen and specifically defined within a sociocultural frame.

From this perspective, metaphors whose meaning is assembled within the ongoing discourse and that undergo changes in time can be referred to as discourse metaphors. In the next section, I shall look in more detail at the characteristics of discourse metaphors as introduced by Zinken, Hellsten and Nerlich (2008).

## **6.6. Discourse Metaphors**

In their paper called "Discourse metaphors", Zinken, Hellsten and Nerlich argue that discourse metaphors are not derived from the experientially-grounded primary metaphors, but that they are congenial with the cultures in which they are employed. The authors define discourse metaphor as "a relatively stable metaphorical projection that functions as a key framing device within a particular discourse over a certain

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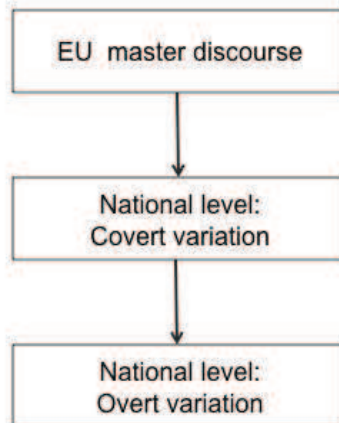
<sup>33</sup> Among the best-known blending theorists, one should mention Coulson (2000) and Coulson/Oakley (2000).

period of time” (Zinken et. al. 2008: 363). Essentially, discourse metaphors are considered as emerging in a sociocultural context and as being prone to diachronic change, i.e. they are socioculturally situated.

The notion of the situatedness of metaphors, introduced by Zinken, Hellsten and Nerlich, is helpful when explaining the propagation of metaphors across discourses and the degree of sharedness. In order to explain how the mechanism of sharedness and variation works, I distinguish between two types of European discourse: a “master“, or pan-European discourse, and individual European discourses. I shall use the term *master or pan-European discourse* interchangeably to refer to a discourse that has its origins in the documents on the EU that constituted the beginnings of this institution (e.g. Churchill’s metaphor “European family of nations”). This discourse serves as a defining framework and as a medium of communication at a supranational level. It has been referred to as EU jargon or Euro-speak.

The pan-European discourse as employed in the supranational institutions of the EU (European Commission, The European Council, The European Parliament, etc.) is instantiated in different ways according to the geopolitical and cultural environment. Thus, the main difference is that the pan-EU discourse is (ideally) transnational and transcultural, whereas the EU discourses are socially and culturally situated. The pan-European discourse defined as unbound by national frontiers is an abstraction used for definitional purposes. The existence of the EU master discourse explains the occurrence of shared metaphors, which I call “European metaphors”. Conversely, if one acknowledges the existence of culturally situated and locally adapted EU discourses, metaphor variance can be explained by means of variant cultural models. Nonetheless, even within the category of local EU discourses, overlapping cannot be entirely excluded, as core elements (values, convictions, etc.) might be a component of several cultures or histories and, therefore, not unique (for example, colonialism, island, etc.). The figure below roughly indicates the positioning of the EU master discourse in relation to the national (EU) discourses:





**Figure 4:** Overt vs. Covert Variation

As indicated in the figure above, the national level is the site where both types of variation (*overt* and *covert*) occur. Let us start with the mechanism of *covert variation*: apparently the same metaphors (same source, same target) as in the master EU discourse are used, but they are decoded via cultural schemata or exemplars, so that misunderstandings might arise. This will be referred to as *covert variation*; this type of variation becomes evident at the decoding level. For the sake of clarity, consider the example of a politician, delivering a speech in a foreign country. The politician might make use of source domains that are neutral in his country and thus the metaphors are likely to be neutral in his own national discourse, but might constitute a source of conflict and may lead to misunderstandings when intended for a foreign audience (see also Mikhail Gorbachev’s legendary example of the “common European house”, discussed in section 13.2.2., under THE EU IS A HOUSE).

In contrast, if at the national level cultural schemas that do not coincide with the ones in the master discourse are used, they tend to serve as source domains for novel metaphors, which are likely to occur in specific national discourse. Such cases will be referred to as *overt variation*; this type of variation is manifest both at the encoding level (production) and at the decoding level (reception). Let us take the politician’s example again: a clever politician might select certain domains that are of national interest for his particular foreign audience in order to make his metaphors more appealing and his speech more persuasive in that country; in other words, *overt variation* is activated at the level of production. Obviously, if the same metaphors are

employed in a speech intended for a different audience, variation at the level of reception is most likely to occur. A local politician is also likely to select topics of national interest for this country in order to render his metaphors more persuasive to his target audience. Unlike the foreign politician, he/she is supposed to share the conceptual mind-map of the target audience and thus to be able to keep misunderstandings to a minimum. These cases of variation will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 13, “Overt and covert variation – European vs. nation-specific metaphors”.

In this chapter I have reviewed the main tenets of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and introduced some new, emerging perspective on the study of metaphor. It is important to recapitulate the main arguments that will be also guiding the analysis undertaken in the empirical part:

- Metaphor is not simply a linguistic phenomenon, but a conceptual one.
- As language, thought and culture are intertwined, metaphors are most genuinely analysed within a cultural framework.
- The role of metaphors is powerful in carving concepts and thus shaping our thoughts.

It is especially the third argument that will be further elaborated in the next chapter, dedicated to the conceptual metaphor from the perspective of political discourse.

## 7. Metaphor and Politics: Between Epistemology and Ideology

Dr Sant believes in what, in the business, we call  
rigger messages –  
repeat ad nauseam and it will stick.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2001/0202/editorial.html>)

In line with the cognitive linguists' argument that metaphors enable the understanding of abstract concepts via mappings from the source domain to the target domain, one could say that one of the reasons why politicians, economists and journalists make extended use of metaphors is to render complex issues comprehensible for large masses of the population, i.e. to turn expert knowledge into lay knowledge. This potential of conceptual metaphors to recast complex issues as seemingly simple ideas is indeed a great advantage. However, paradoxically, metaphors (novel ones) allow a certain amount of liberty in the decoding process and thus, according to Musolff (2000), do not compel the users to assume responsibility or commitment for what has been asserted or for the particular course of action the assertion might imply:

It is the uncertainty and unpredictability of political developments that makes metaphors useful for public debate: they can indicate possible or probable future events and practical solutions, cast a new light on events that have happened but are undergoing reinterpretation, and help test new ideas and concepts, without committing their users to a definite course of action. (Musolff 2000: 7)

As we have seen, the cognitive function of metaphors, i.e. their potentiality in explaining the world, can hardly be overestimated. As a sub-function of the cognitive function, one can, however, detect the metaphors' potential to construct worldviews and form opinion. That is why, it is not surprising that scholars from various fields (e.g. psychology, politology, sociology, religion etc.) use the term 'organising metaphors' to stress metaphors' aptness of organising human thought: "Organizing metaphors are overarching worldviews that shape a person's everyday action – for instance 'Business is war'" (Mills 2008: 39).

In what follows, I will focus particularly on the influence that metaphors are apt to exert on the perception of the world of language users. That the power of metaphor to influence conviction has been acknowledged ever since Antiquity is proved by Plato's criticism of the poet, whose misuse of language distorts the truth. According to Plato, metaphors "make trifles seem important and important points trifles" (quoted in Johnson 1981: 8).

In short, metaphors structure our cognitive system, i.e. our knowledge of the world, which as a direct consequence is far from being raw (and implicitly 'pure') experience of the world. What is more, in their function of giving structure to the human conceptual system, metaphors highlight a certain facet of a concept while concealing another facet(s) (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 10).

The explanatory potential, but first and foremost the capacity to disguise particular aspects and thus to shape reality according to the whim of its creator, has appealed to politicians. If metaphors can be employed to mould reality to suit the interests of politicians or organisations, it follows that, similar to ideology, metaphors are apt to address a subliminal message and thereby manipulate. Their force primarily resides in the creation of images that are emotionally marked. In a similar manner to visual images, mental images are liable to function as a mnemonic device inasmuch as they will inhabit the mind of the listener much longer than a literal expression<sup>34</sup>. A similar line of argument can be pursued in order to indicate how metaphors, like visual images, are able to convey a cluster of information in one shot, which makes them effective communication tools. If the comparison with the visual images is feasible, an assumption to which many cognitivists are committed, it follows that exactly like a picture, which puts forward an integral

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<sup>34</sup> Research has shown that visual images are primarily processed by the right hemisphere of the human brain, which is also considered to be the locus of emotion: "The right hemisphere operates in a *gestalthaft*, holistic processing mode. [...] In the right hemisphere, the visual object images are perceived and stored as included within situations (visual scenes). [...]The right hemispheric representation includes not only the visual picture as such but also emotions and affects [...]. (Glezerman, Balkovski 1999:47) If one compares mental images (e.g. created by metaphors) to visual images, this finding illuminates why metaphors are effective mnemonic devices.

scene, *a pictorial gestalt*, a metaphor maps a whole set of correspondences from the source domain to the target domain in an holistic scene, *a metaphorical gestalt*<sup>35</sup>.

And, in fact, the metaphors favoured by politicians are characterised by a high affect heuristic potential. The following section will offer an overview of the criteria that metaphors have to fulfil in order to qualify as affect heuristic tools.

### 7.1. Metaphor and Affect Heuristic<sup>36</sup>

Briefly, *heuristics* can be defined as the study of heuristic methods. Heuristic methods bring together under one heading various formulas and algorithms meant to facilitate solution-finding, decision-making and learning. *Affect* is a current concept in psychology and is used in relation to emotions and emotional states, either negative or positive. Richards defines *affect* as “a more neutral and objective sounding synonym for ‘**emotion**’.” (Richards 2009: 6, bold characters in the original) *Affect heuristic* methods aim to remove the dichotomy reason – emotion and to put to use the combination of these two apparently opposite human capacities. As this overview concerns metaphors in political speech, it is decision-making aspects that will be focused on in this section.

In order to make use of metaphors as affect heuristic tools, the choice of source domains is not random. The source domains are carefully chosen because a reaction is expected from the recipient of the metaphor. It is especially in the field of politics that the affect potential of source domains is explored and exploited in order to attain the desired effect and to trigger an intended action process.

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Hester’s theory of “metaphorical seeing”: “Since metaphorical seeing as functions between the parts of the metaphor, one or both of which must be image-laden, the metaphor means not just the literal words on the page but the metaphor realized in its imagistic fullness while being read. The metaphor includes imagery.” (1966: 207) And again: “Metaphorical language, in being image-laden, carries with itself a wealth of implicative fullness [...]” (1966: 207-8) Admittedly, the observation about the imagery contained in metaphors is trite; yet, the insight that good metaphors trigger via imagistic reasoning the formation of “full” images, gestalt-like images. (for an account of the Hester’s view, see Johnson 1981: 29ff) If this is true about novel metaphors, it follows that conventional metaphors provide the ready-made gestalt.

<sup>36</sup> Note that the notion of *heuristic* (without –s) was used as such by Slovic et. al. Thus, I will also employ “*affect heuristic*” and not “affect heuristics” throughout the chapter.

Metaphors are used as affect heuristic tools in order to focus on the target domains from the perspective of a source domain that constitutes a positive or negative stimulus. In their chapter on “Affect Heuristic” (2002: 397-420), Paul Slovic, Melissa Finucane, Ellen Peters and Donald G. MacGregor use the term *affect* to refer to the specific quality of “goodness” and “badness” (1) experienced as a feeling state (with or without consciousness) and (2) demarcating a positive or negative quality of a stimulus (2002: 397). Slovic et al. indicate that affect has not been given enough attention as a component of human judgement and decision-making. The main focus has been on the rational and not on the affective.

In this context, the good or bad quality of a source domain would depend on the capacity to trigger expected feelings. In view of the cognitivists’ findings that metaphors are a conceptual phenomenon (which is realised at the linguistic level, but not only), it becomes plausible that source domains are stored as images in peoples’ conceptual system and that these images become “tagged” by positive or negative feelings linked directly or indirectly to somatic or bodily states.

The basic tenet is that by resorting to images tagged by negative or positive affective feelings, politicians are likely to direct judgements and influence decision-making. An apt metaphor will function as a cue that activates a series of positive or negative images consciously or unconsciously associated with that particular source domain. The advantage of using a metaphor in order to steer the process of making judgements or decisions relies on the fact that source domains are stored as mental images that are already marked by feelings, and hence retrieving these representations is much easier and more effective than merely outlining rational arguments.

Metaphors are thus not only useful in acting as mental short-cuts, but are also very important for their persuasive effect. Therefore, politicians (and not only they) have the choice of using persuasive argumentation in order to manipulate, although this effort might be recognized as an attempt to influence decision-making. They also have the choice of resorting to well-designed metaphors and of manipulating opinion in a more insidious way, by appealing directly to people’s affect. The latter possibility, which can be called soft or warm persuasiveness, is often more effective than the former.

## 7.2. Affective Manipulation

But how does affective manipulation function in practice? Consider, for example, the title of an article in *The Times of Malta* which reads “Aborting the future”:

“Aborting the Future” – Harry Vassallo

In 2004 the PN will conduct a campaign of slow political abortion to prevent AD from giving Malta a more complete representation in the European parliament. The abortions that are going on are of pluralism in Malta and of the birth of a truly European culture in these islands.

*The Times of Malta*, Friday, 2 January 2004

Notwithstanding the polysemic relationship that connects the verb *to abort* with the meaning of ‘to terminate (a procedure)’ or ‘stop (a process)’ to the verb *to abort* with its primary meaning *to ‘terminate a pregnancy’*, it becomes obvious that in the above context the primary meaning is selected along with its negative connotations, which are apt to trigger emotional reactions. First of all, the use of the noun *birth* determines the selection of the meaning *to terminate a pregnancy*, but also the use of the noun *abortion*. If it has currently become commonplace to use *abort* with a similar meaning to *cancel*, the noun *abortion* is not typically used in this latter sense. I claim that the set of mappings between the source and the target domain can be classified as explanatory and affective mappings (or both). If the verb *to abort* with the general meaning ‘to terminate, to stop’ is selected, only explanatory mappings will be activated. If, on the contrary, the verb *to abort* with the meaning ‘to terminate a pregnancy’ is elected, then both explanatory and affective mappings will become vital. It is evident that the intention of the communicator is to persuade and not only to explain and that therefore the metaphor can be seen as an affect heuristic tool.

It can be argued that the efficacy of fresh metaphorical expressions resides in their power to actively involve the hearers in decoding the meaning, since they have to detect the mappings from the source domain to the target domain. As we shall see, many of the (conceptual) metaphors recurrent in political discourse are well-embedded in linguistic competence. Others, however, are quite novel – like the ‘spanker/ sodomiser’ discussed in the introduction – and require a more complex analysis.

To conclude, metaphors are an essential ingredient of public discourse for various reasons: firstly, they act as catalysts for understanding complex issues; secondly, metaphors are able to highlight certain components of the cognitive domain while concealing others, and, thereby, facilitate the promotion of a particular standpoint or even put forward a particular course of action<sup>37</sup>. Due to their affect-inducing capacity, metaphors are not only “enlightening”, but are also manipulative.

Another cognitive tool that politicians take advantage of is the “framing” method, a method they might carry out in the same surreptitious way as they put metaphors to use. In the following section I will present the approach to framing as explained by Charles Fillmore and also indicate why cognitive linguists consider framing relevant for our cognitive processes.

### **7.3. Framing**

The concept of “frame” became popular among linguists with the advent of Fillmore’s frame semantics theory. Fillmore defines the term *frame* as “any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits; when one of the things in such a structure is introduced into a text, or into a conversation, all of the others are automatically made available” (Fillmore 1982: 111).

However, the notion was introduced in sociology by Erving Goffman (1974). Erving Goffman distinguishes between natural and social frames and defines social frameworks (as opposed to natural frameworks) as a knowledge structure that provides “background understanding for events that incorporate the will, aim, and controlling effort of an intelligence, a live agency, the chief one being the human being. Such an agency is anything but implacable; it can be coaxed, flattered, affronted, and threatened. What it does can be described as ‘guided doings’. These doings subject the doer to ‘standards’, to social appraisal of his actions based on its honesty, efficiency, economy, safety, elegance, tactfulness, good taste, and so forth.” (1974: 22)

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<sup>37</sup>Cf. Klein (1991: 61ff). Klein argues that political slogans often contain not only a “descriptive meaning” (“deskriptive Bedeutung”), but also a “deontic component” (“deontische Bedeutungskomponente”) (1991: 61).



George Lakoff is convinced that framing has a tremendous impact in politics. The way politicians frame political and social issues can influence one's views and determine decision-making. Lakoff distinguishes between "deep frames", which are stable and structure our moral system, and "surface frames", which are associated with words and with modes of communication:

The deep frames are the ones that structure how you view the world. They characterize moral and political principles that are so deep they are part of your very identity. Deep framing is the conceptual infrastructure of the mind: the foundation, walls, and beams of that edifice. Without the deep frames, there is nothing for the surface message frames to hang on. (Lakoff 2006: 12)

But frames are not innate. Deep frames, which are rooted in our thoughts and values, are acquired or rather implanted by the social group we live in and are normally taken for granted. Yet, they are as much a construct as the surface frames employed by politicians. As Lakoff observes, without deep frames, the surface frames cannot achieve their framing effect. As we shall see in the next section, new phenomena need to be identified: they need, first of all, names, but also a frame to 'assist' reasoning and understanding. This is to frame frames in a positive way...

#### **7.4. Metaphor and the EU**

It is commonplace knowledge that the European Union is a new concept for lay people, i.e. the majority of the (potential) voters, so that a 'metaphorical translation' of the concept is seen as necessary. A metaphoricization of the concept presupposes couching expert knowledge in concrete terms. But like every new policy, Europe began with a vision and thus metaphors were used from the very beginning in order to translate this vision into words. The documents that constitute the beginning of the United Europe abound in metaphors. The pan-European political entity was initially an idea that needed a name and a framework. Such situations best explain the usefulness of metaphors in introducing new concepts. Eloquent speakers, zealous politicians, spin-doctors and theoreticians see it as a demand to find new names for a new, unknown entity, and it is exactly this idea that is expressed by the title of Risse-Kappen's (1996) article "Exploring the Nature of the Beast: International Relations Theory and Comparative Policy Analysis Meet the European Union". Using the metaphor "beast" to refer to the EU reflects the unknown character of this institution

that, precisely like an unknown animal or plant, has to be classified (by means of comparison and analogies).

Consider the following quotation, in which the EU is conceptualized as a bogeyman:

EU as a bogeyman

Labour candidates have often hit back at Nationalists for being ‘yes men’. The general impression conveyed is that Labour’s eight are best suited to defend Malta from the EU bogeyman. I ask Grech whether this is the correct attitude to adopt now that Malta is part of the EU’s decision-making process.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/30/interview.html>)

The *bogeyman* symbol reflects people’s capacity to mentally represent things that are not physically visible or palpable. However, the connotations of the *bogeyman* symbol are negative: the EU becomes corporeal, but it is represented as a scary “beast”. One of the advantages of this source domain is that the concept of “bogeyman” allows visualisation flexibility: everybody can have a more or less different image of a bogeyman. The common element is the fear that it arouses. It follows that the unknown EU is liable to trigger fear, and it is precisely the choice of words (in this case, *bogeyman*) that determines this reaction. Another advantage is provided by the collocation with the verbal construction *defend from*, which implies that whoever defends anybody from a bogeyman is a positive figure, a hero.

But the conceptualisation of the European Union by means of metaphor does not always produce negative connotations. Winston Churchill, in his speech at Zurich University on 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1946, pleaded for a united Europe, launching metaphors that still prevail in the integration discourses of various European countries. He proposed the recreation of the European family as an end to the tragedy of the Continent:

What is the sovereign remedy? It is to re-create the European family, or as much of it as we can, and provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe. In this way only will hundreds of millions of toilers be able to regain the simple joys and hopes which make life worth living. All that is needed is the resolve of hundreds of millions of men and women to do right instead of wrong and gain as their reward blessing instead of cursing. (Churchill, *Documents on Europe* 1997: 39)

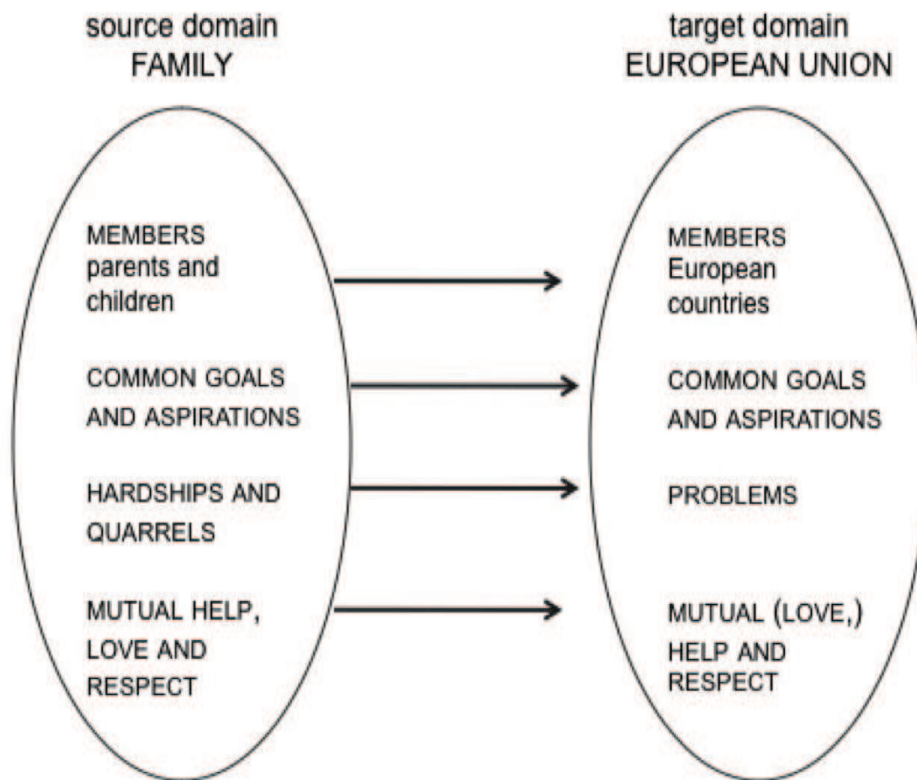
Examples of current metaphors, in Malta as well as in other European countries, are the conceptual metaphors THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A HOUSE and THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A FAMILY. These two metaphors are instantiated in Churchill's speech, as the paragraph above shows. No doubt, Churchill's idea of the European Family, also in need of a house to dwell in peacefully, marks the beginning of these metaphors. But there are so many different types of family and a myriad of different houses, built in a variety of architectural styles, exactly in the same way as we have a myriad of alternative metaphors.

The Indian fable "The Blind Men and the Elephant", introduced in the opening chapter, illustrates that phenomena and realities have different facets and that we might need several metaphors to refer to various aspects of a concept or, to couch it in linguistic terms, we need a range of source domains. Since the two Maltese political parties (PN and MLP) have totally opposite views on the European Union, our "Elephant", it is not surprising that they create or make use of different, sometimes competing metaphors, depending on their stance as Europhiles or Europhobes<sup>38</sup>.

I will now briefly illustrate how conceptual metaphors function technically, by using the example of the FAMILY metaphor. The conceptual metaphor THE EU IS A FAMILY presupposes 'understanding' one domain of experience, i.e. the EUROPEAN UNION, in terms of another domain of experience, i.e. the domain of FAMILY, which is in itself a sociocultural construct. Practically, we have a more structured domain, one that is also conceptually rooted in people's worldview, i.e. FAMILY, which is mapped onto the less structured domain, the EUROPEAN UNION.

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<sup>38</sup> This is not to say to the same conceptual metaphors cannot be employed to convey different viewpoints (cf. section 10.2.1.2.).



**Figure 5:** Family metaphors - mappings

As the above scheme illustrates, it is obvious that entities in the target domain correspond to elements in the source domain: European countries – parents and children, common goals in Europe – common goals in a family, (economic) problems – hardships in a family (which may lead to quarrels), etc. However, as we shall see, the mappings are not always so neat when metaphors are analysed as embedded in the discourse. On the one hand, variance can be unintentional (like the blind men in the Indian legend, people have different views); on the other hand, variance can be intentional (the speakers themselves might decide to foreground certain facets of a concept and to obscure others).

In this section I have suggested that due to the complexity of the EU there are alternative conceptual metaphors (different source domains), each focussing on different aspects of the target, but also that there are alternative metaphors of the same conceptual metaphors. I shall revert to this topic and discuss it thoroughly at

various points throughout the thesis. For an extensive discussion of the family metaphor, see section 13.2.1.2., “Identical Source Domains – Different Cultural Models”.

From the perspective taken in this thesis, metaphors vary both spatially and temporally. We do live by metaphors, but metaphors also live by themselves. The next section will focus on the most important cycles in the life of a metaphor.

#### 7.4.1. The “Career” of (European) Metaphors

As outlined in Section 6.1., linguists traditionally distinguish between dead and novel metaphors and conclude that exclusively the latter are worth analysing. In contrast to this view, cognitive linguists take great interest in dead metaphors, as they are supposed to offer a glimpse into the conceptual framework.

Thus, the term *integration* (as in the EU integration), for example, would no longer be analysed as a metaphor, despite the fact that its etymological source, the Latin term *integrationem*, is a noun of action from *integrare*, which means ‘to make whole’, from *integer* ‘whole’. This concrete meaning to ‘put together parts or elements and combine them into a whole’ is not entirely lost, even if the EU member countries are not merged in such a way that particular attributes vanish. A proof of this is the small countries’ fear that EU membership presupposes changing one’s customs and way of life in order to suit the overall tendency to harmonise traditions, even if at first sight this fear does not seem to be triggered by the use of the noun *integration*. A middle position assumes the view that metaphors can be seen as having a ‘career’ or a life cycle. This theory was introduced by Bowdle and Gentner (2005). They propose a hybrid account of metaphor comprehension meant to reconcile the two existing approaches to metaphors: the first regards metaphors as figurative comparison statements, and the second analyses metaphors as figurative categorisation statements. The key claim of their approach is that the conventionalisation of the metaphors implies a shift in the mode of processing from comparison to categorisation (Bowdle & Gentner 2005: 194).

According to Glucksberg (2008: 73), metaphors create categories. In his famous example “my lawyer is a shark” he speaks about a metaphorical and literal ‘shark’. In the afore-mentioned metaphor, the ‘shark’ is not the fish lurking beneath ocean waters, but a more abstract form of ‘shark’:

The central idea is that metaphors are categorical, class-inclusion assertions. For conventional metaphors, the category preexists; it had been established when the metaphor was first coined. For novel metaphors, a category is created and the metaphor vehicle serves as the name of that category. (Glucksberg 2008: 69)

Thus, Glucksberg considers that this process of polysemisation also takes place when novel metaphors are created; in contrast, Bowdle and Gentner argue that polysemisation occurs only when metaphors become conventional. In other words, as metaphoric mappings are repeated, they become gradually entrenched and the metaphoric reading of the source becomes fixed as a second meaning alongside the literal sense. The two meanings engage in a relation of polysemy, and the comprehension of the metaphoric meaning no longer requires online feature-mapping, as the abstract category is automatically retrieved.

The assumption that metaphors create similarity is widely shared nowadays. Therefore, it may be useful to look into the mechanism of similarity creation. In order to test this mechanism, I will analyse a frequent metaphor occurring in the Maltese discourse on the European Union.

#### **7.4.2. On the (Imagined) Similarity of Source and Target**

According to the traditional view, the pre-existing similarity between target and source underlies a metaphor and enables non-literal comprehension. For example, the interpretation of the metaphor THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A WHALE would be rendered possible by the overlapping features of the target and source. This view has been criticised for several reasons. One of the reasons is that the property selection argument does not hold. For example, both the EU and the whale are very large. However, the ‘size’ criterion alone does not facilitate the interpretability of the metaphor.

Another argument against the feature-matching model is based on the fact that the source and the target normally constitute different semantic domains. Thus, correspondences are established between non-identical properties. For example, the metaphor THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A WHALE can be interpreted as meaning that both the EU and the whale are voracious, although there is a radical difference between the EU’s voracity and that of a whale.<sup>39</sup> Features such as having flippers and fins are

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<sup>39</sup> See also Bowdle and Gentner’s interpretation of “Men are wolves” (2005: 194).

not transferred. When Glucksberg analyses a similar example (“My lawyer is a shark”), he concludes that in such contexts, the category ‘shark’ diverges from the ‘shark’ that has fins and gills (Glucksberg 2008: 73). The author distinguishes between a metaphorical and a literal “shark” and resorts to “dual reference” theory to explain how new categories are given a “name”. According to the “dual reference” theory, the *metaphor vehicle*<sup>40</sup> can be used to refer either to an abstract, superordinate concept or to a basic-level concept, which makes metaphor vehicles polysemous (Glucksberg & Haught 2006: 362f).<sup>41</sup> This theory can be tested on further metaphors that are dominant in the European political discourse and that can be referred to as *European metaphors*.

### 7.4.3. European metaphors

As indicated in Section 6.6. on “Discourse Metaphors”, the existence of a European discourse can be presupposed. It follows that European metaphors (EMs), such as THE EU IS A FAMILY or THE EU IS A HOUSE, can be analysed within the context of a specific discourse. This approach enables the analysis of EMs diachronically; from the perspective of diachronic development, it becomes evident that European metaphors such as *the European family of nations* or *the European house* first emerged as creative metaphors and then became entrenched through a process of institutionalisation.

As already mentioned, many studies focussing on the metaphor usage within the European Union have been published. However, they tend to concentrate almost exclusively on a synchronic usage. An explanation for the synchronic bias is that the European Union is still perceived as a new or as a still “unknown” phenomenon. Nevertheless, the crystallisation of a new form of discourse (the EU discourse) within 60 years enables a diachronic analysis, although this is not an easy task.

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<sup>40</sup> *Metaphor vehicle* is equivalent to the concept of *source domain*, used by cognitive linguists.

<sup>41</sup> The “dual reference” theory was first introduced under the notion of *dual function* of a metaphor vehicle (Glucksberg & Keysar 1990). See the analysis of the metaphor “*my job is a jail*”; according to the “dual function” theory, *jail* refers both regular prisons, but it can also be used to refer to situations that are unpleasant and confining (1990: 7).



Notwithstanding the conventional use of metaphors, the unconscious as well as the voluntary creation of new metaphors cannot be downplayed. I argue that it is this differential selection of certain source domains by language users in a sociocultural and discursive context that brings about innovation, if and only if at least one of the vitality criteria, which will be discussed in what follows, is fulfilled. Inspired by Lakoff and Johnson's revolutionary tenet (discussed in the section 6.3., "Metaphors in Cognitive Linguistics") that dead metaphors are not less alive than novel metaphors, I will claim that each metaphor (either conventional or novel) has a vitality potential and that these vitality parameters can be best measured diachronically. This view is also held by John R. Searle (1999: 83) who considers dead metaphors (in the traditional terminology) "especially interesting (...) because, to speak oxymoronically, dead metaphors have lived on. They have become dead through continual use, but their continual use is a clue that they satisfy some semantic need."

The vitality of a source domain in relation to a target (or the vitality of a source domain – target domain pairing) will be defined as the potential to evolve and become conventionalised and thus to interact systematically with other metaphors and integrate with our conceptual system. It follows that if the innovative entities are vital enough to determine further selection during later communicative events, new conventional metaphors are established.

I consider that there are two vitality or resilience criteria related to metaphor selection: cognitive endowment and attention-focussing potential. Cognitive endowment refers to the capacity of the source domain to offer optimal access to the target domain in such a way that the target is either thoroughly understood or gives rise to a conceptualisation (a possibly biased perception) as desired by the "innovator". The second criterion, attention-focussing or attention-seeking potential, is apt to assure selection due to its surprise effect. The term *attention-seeking device* is largely used to describe the language of advertising (see, for example, A. Goddard 1998). I argue that the term suits the goal description of metaphors as well, because in the same way in which advertising is used with the objective of persuading and selling products, metaphors can be employed to convince and "sell" ideas.

The importance of appealing to the interlocutor's (audience's) senses as a selectional pressure device should not be underestimated. Cognitive linguists have



also drawn attention to the importance of emotions for the normal cognitive functioning of the brain. Thus, Lakoff claimed that contrary to the widely-held opinion, rationality cannot be separated from the emotions. This idea is also shared by Antonio Damasio, who – in his famous book *Descartes' Error* (1994), briefly introduced in Section 6.3.2. *Embodiment – “Being in the Body”*– attempts to correct the traditional views on the nature of rationality and indicates that reasoning without feelings is impaired reasoning. Damasio examines findings from neuropsychological research on humans and animals and finds that even when all functions associated with rational behaviour are intact, an impaired ability to experience emotion leads to flawed reasoning and to decision-making failure. Here are Damasio’s observations on a significant case:

The instruments usually considered necessary and sufficient for rational behaviour were intact in him. He had the requisite knowledge, attention and memory; his language was flawless; he could perform calculations; he could tackle the logic of an abstract problem. There was only one significant accompaniment to his decision-making failure: a marked alteration of the ability to experience feelings. Flawed reason and impaired feelings stood out together as the consequences of a specific brain lesion, and this correlation suggested to me that feeling was an integral component of the machinery of reason. (Damasio 1994: XII)

Thus, the attention-focussing potential is to be understood as intertwined with an individual’s emotions or emotional experience. Reverting to the vitality of a source domain, I suggest that a “vitality test” (i.e. fulfilment of the two criteria mentioned above) is very helpful in understanding why particular source domains are more appealing than others in the political arena. If we consider the emotional layer of attention, two types of attention-focussing potential (AFP) can be distinguished: AFP<sub>p</sub>, resting on positive (p) emotional experience, and AFP<sub>n</sub>, dependent upon negative (n) emotional experience. As determining factor for the vitality of source domains, there will be no gradual difference between the effect of AFP<sub>n</sub> and AFP<sub>p</sub>, provided that they are used in an appropriate context and congruent with the intention of the speaker, i.e. if a negative attitude is expected, an attention-focussing device building upon negative emotional experience will be resorted to and vice-versa. The notion of vitality will be further elaborated upon in Section 12.3.

In the next section, I shall attempt to offer a theoretical introduction to the diachronic enterprise and to distinguish stages of development of the EM existence.

#### 7.4.4. Stages in the “Career” of European Metaphor

*European metaphors*, as the term suggests, are first of all spatially demarcated by their geographic appellation. When different instantiations of the same conceptual metaphor are compared over a longer span of time, it becomes nevertheless striking that the mappings and thus the meaning as such differ a good deal, but the difference in meaning might be only grasped by virtue of the context. A diachronic approach has not been adopted for the present analysis; but I believe that a diachronic comparison may prove useful for the further research.

In order to investigate the diachronic differences empirically, I suggest that the analysis may successfully be performed if metaphors are compared according to the temporal pattern introduced in this section. The main finding supports my contention that five stages in the European Metaphor (EM) “career” can be distinguished: a) the onomasiological stage; b) the “European metaphor launching” into the situated discourse; c) the stage of conventionalisation in which the new EMs become an integral part of the EU discourse; d) the European metaphor refreshing stage in which conventionalised metaphors might be revived; e) the stage of (probable) re-conventionalisation, presumably after joining the EU. However, it should be pointed out that the boundaries between these stages are not clear-cut, so that overlapping cannot be excluded.

It will now be useful to provide a brief description of each stage. During stage one, European metaphors emerge in the documents that signified the beginning of the European Union. Initially, they have an onomasiological or name-giving function, i.e. the European metaphors have the role of assigning names to a rather incomprehensible phenomenon (at least for lay people).

In the second stage they are employed in the situated European discourse(s) and new entailments come to the fore. It is at this stage that the ‘empty’ slots are filled in with cultural substance, which leads to synchronic variation.

Furthermore, the metaphors that prove extremely efficient (such as the EUROPEAN FAMILY OF NATIONS) become entrenched due to overuse in both standard EU discourse and situated EU discourses. During this third stage, a process of conventionalisation takes place. For the sake of exemplification, let us consider the FAMILY OF NATIONS metaphor; what is striking about it is that one can distinguish two conceptual domains FAMILY that are connected by a tendentially polysemic

relation: family1 (X) and family2 (Y). Family1 is the domain of the basic social unit in which there are a number of roles distinguishing the participants (such as parents and children) while family2 refers to a group of related entities (e.g. family of plants, family of languages, etc.), which are not necessarily involved in a hierarchical relationship. Therefore, it makes sense to claim that two related conceptual metaphors can be detected: in the former, the particular roles are mapped from the family members onto the member states of the EU, whereas in the latter model there is no emphasis on hierarchy and thus no or only scant subjective associations are activated. Note that the latter model, which has undergone a process of semantic bleaching, is specific for this third stage.

The term ‘semantic bleaching’ was used by some scholars to explain grammaticalisation as the result of meaning loss or weakening of meaning (Heine 1993:89). Similarly, I will use the term bleaching to refer to the meaning loss in the source domain in order to indicate that speakers use the sequence *family of nations* without having to reproduce the metaphorical associations characteristic for the model 1 “basic social unit”. From this perspective, two metaphors can be detected ‘A is X’ and ‘A is Y’. It is not claimed that ‘A is X’ does not occur at this stage, but it is to be observed that the ‘A is Y’ emerges and that an entrenched ‘A is X’ replaces the creative metaphor of stage one and two, as the online decoding has lost its vigour and relevance. Thus it can be argued that that the process of the conventionalisation of metaphors implies not only “semantic bleaching”, but also “affective bleaching”, i.e. the affective mappings become less salient and, subsequently, mute. T

It might be argued that the occurrence of ‘A is Y’ is not only the consequence of extensive usage, but also the result of a better understanding of the EU with its emphasis on equality in the policy-making process. The family frame X provides a structured set of relationships that has the potential to allude to a hierarchical organisation, which is no longer valid in the context of the new conceptualisation, i.e. the equality of all members. It follows that, in the contexts in which the features associated with the frame X are not relevant, this frame can be discarded and replaced by the frame Y that gives rise to a different conceptualisation reflecting a more generic and schematised, horizontal organisation. It should be noted that frame Y is a generic form of X, consisting only of the parts of the domain FAMILY that are necessary to structure, in a systematic way, the concept of POLITICAL ORGANISATION.

Lakoff and Johnson postulated that the metaphorical structuring of concepts is partial since only parts of the source domain are employed to structure the target domain. With respect to the conceptual metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS, they noted that only the foundation and the outer shell are selected from the domain BUILDING in order to structure the domain THEORY. The *foundation* and the *outer shell* are the ‘used’ parts, whereas parts such as the *roof, rooms, staircases, etc.* remain ‘unused’ (2003: 52). This is not to say that metaphors in which the ‘unused’ parts are mapped do not exist, but only that they do not refer to essential elements of the target domain. They have the potential for making optional reference to aspects of the target, but do not reflect core elements that form an essential part of our common understanding of a concept (see also p. 53). In like manner, one can assert that the used parts of the source FAMILY that are fundamentally needed to structure the domain of POLITICAL ORGANISATION are family members, and that the types of family relations are not essential, so they might remain unused.

It can be concluded that each source domain has certain components that essentially relate to a target domain because they are the fittest to confer the structure of that domain. These components are conventionally associated with a particular target and are thus grouped together to form the “conventional” source domain. They have a clear advantage over the remaining components which might be put to use exclusively in ephemeral instances, and which are only by chance instantiations of the same general metaphor. These non-mandatory constituents form the non-conventional area of the source domain. Furthermore, the conventional source domain can be almost universal, whereas parts of the non-conventional area could be (but are not necessarily) culturally embedded.

During stage four (optional) ‘A is X’ might be refreshed if a competing metaphor is coined in order to illustrate a conflicting policy (e.g. “partnership” – *Switzerland in the Mediterranean* vs. FAMILY OF NATIONS). The latter metaphor can replicate parts of the source domain that are normally ‘buried’ for a certain source-target pairing.

Finally, in stage five the EMs might become inactive again after Malta’s joining the European Union.

In this section I have demonstrated how metaphors can change in time. However, variation in metaphor use induced by spatial (and cultural) patterns plays a

crucial role for the present study. The next part will provide the cultural background upon which my analysis of overt and covert variation rests.

**Part Two:  
Cultural Background**

## 8. Man and Island: Being “In” and “Around” the Body

Space and our experience of space are considered universal, based on the fact that we have the same body and share the fundamental bodily experiences. Therefore, human beings have the same pre-conceptual schemas irrespective of their geographic location: containment, verticality, balance.

A broader and more dynamic point of view places equal focus on the environment and on the interaction body-environment, and assumes that we are born as universal beings, but that we gradually adjust our perceptual apparatus to the cultural environment in which we are embedded. Zlatev (1997:5ff) introduced the term *situated environment* to express our dual status as embodied beings, situated however within “a culture of shared practices”. According to the author, the child’s language acquisition is the result of a dialectic relationship between bodily dispositions and sociocultural practices.

Cognitive linguistics has also recognised the importance of space for cognition<sup>42</sup>. The analysis of conceptual metaphors based on spatial referents essentially contributed to the finding that language is spatially marked. Nevertheless, the findings mainly concern cases of spatial abilities that are basically shared by people, as all of us inhabit a common physical realm.

In what follows, attention will be drawn to cases in which the environment might incorporate consistent differences that would determine dramatically variant world-views. The present section does not aim to elaborate extensively on the relationship of geographic space – cognition – language, but only to offer a wider context within which the Maltese identity, the EU stance and the use of metaphors in the Maltese discourse can be understood.

Mark Johnson (1987:18ff.) has recognised the importance of our bodily movements in space and claimed that our sense of reality is based on the correlation between our interaction with the environment and our perception of the same. This correlation experience-perception determines the emergence of image schemas that give coherence to our reality. Yet, this idea of embodiment presupposes that everybody

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<sup>42</sup> Consider, for example, Lakoff and Johnson’s account of orientational metaphors (2003: 14-21).

experiences the same space and does not distinguish between different types of environment.

In order to investigate how space influences cognition and renders our worldviews coherent, it is important to distinguish between physical space and experiential space. Physical space is the objective space that is considered to exist independent of its observer. The island as objective space is not relevant for the present purposes. The island as experiential space or lived space is assumed to be emotionally loaded, even if the islanders might often be unaware of many of the subtle feelings associated with the island.

Whether an islander or a mainlander, everybody makes the experience of a container. This experience can be positive or negative, depending on the situation, and might have a central or marginal place on our experiential map. Mark Johnson (1987: 22) distinguishes at least five important entailments of the experiential containment:

“(i) The experience of containment typically involves protection from, or resistance to, external forces. [...] (ii) Containment also limits and restricts forces within the container. [...] (iii) Because of this restraint of forces, the contained object gets a relative fixity of location. [...] (iv) This relative fixing of location within the container means that the contained object becomes either accessible or inaccessible to the view of some observer. [...] (v) Finally, we experience transitivity of containment. If B is in A, then whatever is in B is also in A. [...]” Everybody experiences all these consequences of containment. However, depending on further circumstances, some consequences become more salient on the *experiential map* than others.

It can be argued in the same vein that everybody has the experience of a container even within the first months of life, for example by coming into contact with the milk bottle. This develops into an image schema that will underlie the conceptualisation of various objects, organs or entities (even the human body) which are shaped in such a way that they can be used to hold liquid, but also other objects or entities. Thus, the milk bottle or water glass as basic containers will serve as an algorithm for the understanding of abstract entities, e.g. an island (that can hold people, buildings, flora and fauna, etc.) or a political union (that can incorporate various other countries). This generative model is represented in Fig. 6:<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Images taken from <http://pleatedjeans.files.wordpress.com/2009/06/island-drawing.jpg>

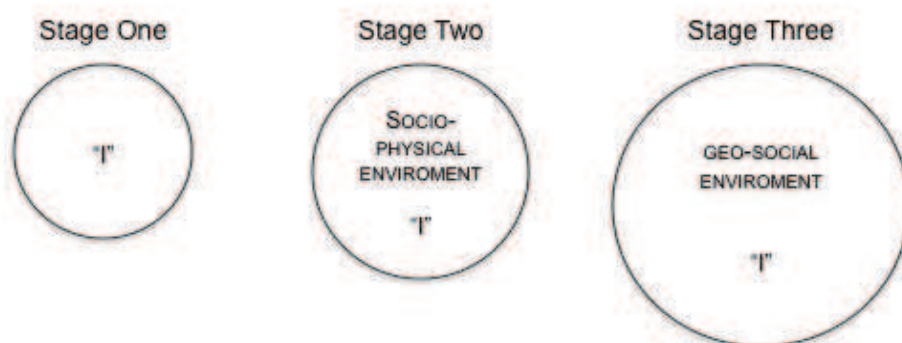




**Figure 6:** Containers

However, the basic image schema (in our case, the container) is unlikely to remain static in its characteristics. I argue that the interaction of the basic schema, which has become an abstract, and to a certain extent stable schema in its core features, with other entities, which are recognised and categorised (even if in an unconscious way) as containers, will modify the primary schema. In more concrete terms, the encounter with the island (or with the lift, prison ward, the straight jacket, etc.) is apt to alter the pre-existing container image schema.

Certainly, this superimposition of new elements upon a pre-existing schema is a gradual process (accompanying the epigenetic development), which can be represented as follows:



**Figure 7:** Egocentric frames of reference

As outlined above, we first have an egocentric (body-centred) frame of reference, which later evolves into an allocentric frame of reference<sup>44</sup>. According to Piaget and Inhelder (1998: 9), a baby's frame of reference during the first 5-6 weeks is entirely egocentric<sup>45</sup>; it is only after this age that babies are able to recognise familiar faces. Thus, only after our first weeks of existence do we come into contact with the first elements of the socio-physical environment (i.e. objects in the room, the house, the family). Later, our environment grows progressively larger, and we come into contact with the native town (with its school, church and grocery shop, etc.) and with the mountains or the meadows, the island with its boundaries or the beach.

The relationship between individual, spatial behaviour and the environment is the focus of behavioural geography. According to William Kirk, "Behavioural environment is thus a psycho-physical field in which phenomenal facts are arranged into patterns or structures (*gestalten*) and acquire values in cultural contexts." (Kirk 1963: 366)

For future research, it would be interesting to extend the scope of behavioural geography in order to account for political decisions and the overall process of decision-making. Furthermore, the findings of behavioural geography should be applied to the (social and political) behaviour within insular spaces.

The following section will continue this line of argument with the aim of explaining the mysteries of the Maltese identity.

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<sup>44</sup> The terms *egocentric* and *allocentric* are recurrently used in the field of behavioural psychology.

<sup>45</sup> "[...] if during the first few months of existence the child's universe is really one lacking permanent objects [...], this means that perceived figures simply appear and disappear like moving tableaux (...). However, one can say that from the age of 5-6 weeks, following the appearance of smiling, the young baby is capable of recognition. Thus it recognizes a familiar face despite changes in distance or the effects of perspective." (Piaget & Inhelder 1998: 9)

## 9. The EU and the Maltese Identity: Smallness, periphery, phobias and identity verification

Everything happens for a reason...

*Hamlet*, Act V, Scene II

As will be shown throughout the thesis, both Maltese political parties resort to Malta's cultural values and to the most relevant identity features of the Maltese people in their argumentation for or against EU membership. The Nationalist Party makes repeated remarks about Europe's Christianity and thus appeals to the Maltese as faithful Catholics. The Labour Party mainly resorts to the history of colonialism in their plea against EU membership. Geographical issues, such as Malta's island status, are also employed by both the Nationalist and the Labour Party, although – as we shall see later on – each party focuses on different aspects of insularity in order to make their point.

Since everything is used for a reason, it is of course important to explore the cultural domains and further features that the politicians stubbornly employ in order to disseminate their ideas in an effective way and to communicate persuasive messages. Hence, it is essential to consider some of the cultural characteristics of the Maltese, as they also contribute to a better understanding of the Maltese identity and thus ultimately aid us in comprehending which metaphors may be manipulative within the Maltese context and why.

To begin with, one of the main characteristics of the Maltese culture is their Catholic Religion, which they cherish to such an extent that it sometimes comes close to fundamentalism:

Legally you can live without being Catholic, but you are marginalized. It is like living in a Muslim country without being a Muslim. That is why I [John Zammit, my addition: MP] say that Malta is like Iran, instead of a fundamentalist Muslim country, Malta is a fundamentalist Catholic country.

*The Malta Independent*, 21 April 2003

Although the importance of religious faith seems to have decreased, religion still influences many aspects of Maltese life. Interestingly, Tabone refers to the diminished

religious feeling among the Maltese, but also raises the question of the authenticity of the non-religious sentiment:

Nowadays this factor is not as strong as once was, and there are a few Maltese who seem to have little or nothing of this religious feeling. However some of these only pretend to have lost this sentiment, or even force themselves to ignore it, but in fact it is there. (Tabone 1987:68)

Another characteristic is nationalism, with the strong Maltese attachment to their native island. The high rate of emigration is not a counter-argument since many Maltese emigrate with the intention of living only temporarily abroad. In addition, during their stay outside Malta, they preserve their cultural values and, most importantly, continue to practice their religion. Moreover, the sense of community and unity among the people is also a significant Maltese feature. This strong loyalty and sense of belonging is motivated by the small size of the island as well as by the harsh history that has most probably strengthened the people's desire for unity. It is often asserted that a sense of inferiority also characterises the Maltese. This is also held to be a consequence of the long history of occupation and of the lack of decision-making liberty, which has led to the inference that all foreigners are superior (Tabone 1987: 70).

For Malta, Europeanization is more than EU integration and an adaptation to new rules and regulations: it is seen as the official recognition of Maltese identity as European. Since Malta is a rather new state (it gained its independence in 1964 and became a republic in 1979), with a history of strong outside influences during the long centuries of colonisation, identity-formation is still an ongoing process. Baldacchino (2002: 195ff; 201) audaciously defines Malta as a nationless state and regards 'the other' (e.g. EU) as essential for identity formation.

Genetically determined features, such as skin colour, are a very important issue related to the Maltese identity because the dark colour of the skin gives a clear hint of the long period of Arab occupation. Together with the Semitic origin of the Maltese language, the dark complexion led to the Maltese being regarded as 'Arabs', i.e., as non-whites. However, the long centuries of European colonisation that followed the Arab colonisation and the deeply-rooted Catholic religion made the Maltese regard themselves as European (Pirotta 1994: 103).

EU membership for Malta is seen by some as a means of improving (see 'promotion' below) and defining races. For example, in the pro-EU camp, one even

finds the "old nationalists" who view European Union membership in the same way Enrico Mizzi<sup>46</sup> viewed unification with Italy, i.e. "as a sort of racial promotion for the Maltese" (<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2001/0408/opinion.html>). Therefore, one can assert that EU membership would warrant giving the Maltese the 'official' name of European (instead of Arabic), thus also solving their racial and identity issues. This identity dilemma looms large in the EU-membership debate, as becomes obvious from the following quotation:

I see membership of the European Union as an affirmation of what we are: European. Being part of the EU will make it so much more interesting to be Maltese. [...] I would not feel safe sitting outside the EU. [...] At this point, we are either Malta in Europe or Malta in Africa. The world is dividing into blocs and there is no room for piggies-in-the-middle. [...] In the end, membership of the EU will mean a better and safer life for the Maltese. This is a fundamental life choice.

*The Times of Malta*, 3 March 2003

Whether to join or not to join the EU is a question of re-defining Malta's geographic position on the world map. Organising the world seems to be a game with ever-changing rules, and at the same time neutrality is obliterated: neutral players have to leave the game. Directly connected with this 'identity fuzziness' is Malta's long history of colonialism. Interestingly, politicians also make direct reference to colonial times and compare the status of being an EU member to the status of being a colony. Consider, for example, Alfred Sant's argumentation as illustrated by the following paragraph:

[...] the argument has been that, in the EU context, sovereignty can and should be shared. So what is wrong with Malta giving up part of what it had at last gained in 1964 and 1979? After all, by doing so it gains a voice in the way by which continental policies will be shaped. For those who genuinely believe this fantasy, it at least offers an escape route by which to fudge the return to the politics of colonialism in Malta.

*The Times of Malta*, 16 April 2003

Another important component of the Maltese identity is created by the island's biophysical environment. The islanders are said to be greatly influenced by their

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<sup>46</sup> Enrico Mizzi was a famous Maltese politician and was the leader of the National Party from 1944 to 1950, when he was appointed Prime Minister of Malta. Mizzi proposed Malta's federation with Italy as he was convinced that the Maltese were by "natural attachment" linked to "mother Italy" ("gran madre Italia"). (Frendo 1979: 155)

interaction with the boundedness of the island they inhabit. In the case of Malta, island-status is combined with its geographic position on the periphery of Europe, and with the small territory of the country. It goes without saying that the finite character of the island also strengthens the feeling of marginality:

Feeling a citizen of the world gives a sense of liberation from the claustrophobia of living in a minuscule and over populated island surrounded by sea. It is a pity that some people armed with no-entry signs are desperately trying to block our way towards the future...

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2001/0408/opinion.html>)

The metaphor dominating this quotation is AN ISLAND IS A CONTAINER with the entailment “EU membership opens closed spaces”. Malta’s distinct features as listed above – smallness, insularity, remoteness – and the lack of a land connection to Europe, render the country self-contained: a whole by itself and not an integrated part of a whole. However, this self-containment is not exclusively beneficial: its isolation makes the island vulnerable. According to the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), vulnerability is defined as “the conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards” (ISDR 2004).

These two facets of insularity – *self-sufficiency* and *vulnerability* – play a pivotal role in the debate on EU membership. On the one hand, the fear of engulfment is expressed as in the examples below:

In other words, the MLP is convinced that they - the EU - are all out to get at us and poor little Malta desperately needs someone to defend her: the MEPs elected from the MLP list of candidates. [...] Is the rest of the EU, therefore, the enemy threatening to swallow us up?

*Malta Today*, 9 May 2004

The islanders feel vulnerable and stifled inside what they perceive as a kind of “insular enclosure”. This feeling of anxiety within the non-EU island is articulated as “claustrophobia” that can be alleviated by joining the EU:

[...] We have lived through several administrations and were never very impressed. Maltese society is so insular, our lives so dominated by political parties, everything is so dependent on who one knows, that it is

sometimes difficult to breathe. We have been longing for a breath of fresh air and that is what I perceive the EU to be.

*Malta Today*, 2 March 2003

This idea is conveyed by the conceptual metaphor THE EU IS A SUPERSTATE that emphasises that the EU is developing in a federalist direction, which implies that small countries are turned into regions:

I'm [Sharon Ellul Bonici] in favour of a lot of what the EU has to offer, what I'm against is the political (federalist) integration of the member states," she replies. "Malta's so small that, if the EU follows its current trend and winds up as a huge federal state, then we will be nothing more than a sub-regional province. Our national status will be removed and we will end up with no power or influence, far removed from the centre of power. At the moment we may be a small nation, but we are, at least, a nation, with the ability to enact our own laws, regulations and foreign policy.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2001/1028/people.html>)

The same idea is expressed in the metaphor MALTA IS A SMALL FISH or THE MALTESE ARE SMALL FISH as opposed to the EU, which is metaphorically conceptualised as a big fish, a whale:

Mr Speaker: I cannot understand how the opposition, when and where it suits them best, say that Malta is the small fish (makku) compared to the giant whale (balena), and when it suits them, they look up to America. As if we could ever do what America is doing, and take measures to provide that same assistance that America provides. Mr Speaker, the opposition has to decide whether Malta is the small fish or the big fish, and not jump from one side of the fence to the other.

*The Parliament of Malta*

(Unofficial translation; original at:

<http://parliament.gov.mt/file.aspx?f=1479>)

The source domain SIZE is decisive in this context, but not sufficient to faithfully decode the metaphors above that focus on a predator-prey relation. Thus, the metonymy SIZE STANDS FOR POWER is essential for a proper understanding. Antonio Barcelona's hypothesis that "every metaphorical mapping presupposes a conceptually prior



metonymic mapping (...)”<sup>47</sup> (Barcelona 2003: 31) is supported to a certain extent by the examples mentioned. In its turn, the metonymic mapping can be explained by the experiential correlation between SIZE and POWER. The experiential correlation (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 54-55) is a relation between a stimulus and a reaction (e.g. subjective experience, judgement) that is repeatedly activated until it becomes grounded in our basic neural makeup. Once the experiential correlation is entrenched, the stimulus will simultaneously trigger the associated reaction. Unlike other authors (e.g. Grady) who consider such a correlation the basis for a conceptual metonymy, Lakoff and Johnson regard the experiential correlation as the basis for primary metaphors.

It cannot be contested that in the present example the size (as stimulus) and the power (subjective judgement) are simultaneously activated. This can be demonstrated by our experience with objects of different sizes. In early childhood, we experience that small objects can be more easily manipulated than big objects. This interaction with objects of different sizes leads to the insight that *size* correlates with *force* or *power*, which explains why we tend to automatically and unquestionably consider tall and well-built people stronger than short and thin ones. This *size-power* correlation will apply to wide-ranging relations, from concrete objects or beings to more abstract entities; consequently, bigger dogs are regarded as more dangerous than smaller ones (no matter how loud the little lap dog might bark) and, in a similar way, larger countries are held to be more powerful than smaller ones, etc.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> In view of the examples that deny Barcelona’s theory, this assumption should be taken cautiously. Indeed, there are many metaphors, especially primary metaphors, which are motivated by metonymy, but there also metaphors that prove the contrary (cf. Taylor 1995: 139).

<sup>48</sup> No doubt, there is a radical difference between these types of relations based on the size-power correlation: the feeling of fear of big dogs and the fear of big countries: the fear of dogs is perceived as imminent and acute, whereas the fear of big countries can be perceived as a more subtle, abstract form of anxiety. If the correlation size-power applied to countries is taken under scrutiny, it becomes evident that this form of anxiety related to larger countries is not easily comprehensible to everybody, irrespective of their background. It can be presumed that this type of fear is characteristic for small and economically vulnerable countries and thus culture-specific and socioculturally-induced. This is a plausible explanation, as, in view of the current state of research, emotions have ceased to be considered entirely universal (for more details on the study of emotions within a cross-cultural context, see Mesquita, Frijda, Scherer 1997: 255-298).



This cause-for-effect metonymy (*big size* is an index of *power*) helps us to understand the *predator-prey* relation in the animal world or in the aquatic environment (as in the present case). This interpretation is further supported by Alfred Sant's repeated use of the metaphorical expression 'whitebait' to refer to the Maltese: "Alfred Sant's scaremongering, that we will be swallowed, that we are like whitebait..." (*Malta Today*, 30 March 2003). The fact that the MLP leader employs the lexeme 'whitebait' is extremely meaningful, as apart from size, direct reference is being made to the use of such small fish as bait. Moreover, against the background of the EU debate, 'whitebait' correlates with passivity and manipulation since the suspended bait is a perfect symbol of the passive victim, used to trick the other party. If one takes into consideration that the Malta Labour Party kept reproaching the Nationalist Party for what they considered the "wrong" decision to have Malta join the EU, it can be inferred that the Nationalist Party used Malta as bait.

On the other hand, there are counter-arguments that recommend joining the EU as a means of fighting vulnerability, i.e., as a means of demonstrating resilience:

Small countries cannot fight globalisation on their own. If there is something on which Dr. Sant is positively wrong, it is this. On its own Malta runs the risk of being carried away by the current without a safety net to hold us. The EU can be that safety net.

*The Times of Malta*, 6 March 2003

In the above quotation the conceptual metaphor ECONOMIC INSTABILITY IS SPATIAL INSTABILITY suggests that Malta is likely to be carried away like a small fish/animal/object due to its fragile economic situation.

Following this overview of the Maltese cultural fingerprints, I will now turn to the political scene in Malta.

## 10. Politics in Malta

Politics plays a very important role in Malta. The large majority of Maltese citizens are interested in politics, and a very high percentage (around 90%) of the voting-eligible population turns out to vote:

On election day, cloistered nuns have been known to abandon the seclusion of their convents to join with other voters at the polls. Other voters, sometimes only a few days from the grave, can also be seen being ferried, frequently of their own volition, from their sick beds to some polling station in order that they too may register a preference. (Pirota 1994: 96)

### 10.1. Political Parties: a diachronic perspective

Party politics is a relatively new phenomenon in Malta. The first Maltese party, the Nationalist Party (Partit Nazzjonalist) was founded in 1880 (during British occupation) by Fortunatto Mizzi as the Anti-Reform Party. The Nationalist Party was an elite party consisting of members of the bourgeoisie (lawyers, priests, etc.), who aimed at maintaining the Italian language as the main language of the church, state and law. The Nationalists feared that the British presence in Malta could lead to the protestisation of the Catholic Church and therefore strengthened their links with Italy (Mitchell 2002: 9).

The British became involved in the development and protection of the local culture and language and thus also encouraged the use of the English language. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the trade union movement emerged and started militating for the improvement of the Maltese workers' conditions. The trade union also supported the development of the Maltese culture and language and was committed to the British. Within this context, the Constitutional Party emerged in 1921 and defended the British interests, including the rise of the Maltese language<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Although Malta became a British colony in 1800, the Italian language preserved its official status until 1934. The British finally succeeded in replacing the Italian language by appealing to the Maltese nationalistic feeling: the British promoted the elevation of Maltese into the language of education, administration and civil service and concurrently introduced English as an official language. (Bonnici 2007: 394f)

The Malta Labour Party adopted the policy of supporting the development of the local culture and language and at the same time emphasised a good relationship with Britain. In 1956 they even called a referendum and proposed that Malta should be integrated into the United Kingdom<sup>50</sup>. The Nationalist Party and the Church vehemently opposed the integration proposal and thus the referendum was defeated. This marked the beginning of the Church-Labour hostilities as well as the embracement of a nationalist policy. According to Mitchell (2002: 10) this nationalistic attitude was, in many respects, more nationalistic than the one of the Nationalist Party.

In their turn, the Nationalists gave up their dreams of unification with Italy and began militating for independence from Britain, which was gained in 1964. The Labour Party, which did not regard the independence granted in 1964 as the end of the colonisation period, continued the fight for “independence”, campaigned for republic status and for the expulsion of the British troops. When they came to power in 1971, the Labour Party continued the efforts to turn Malta into a republic, which was achieved in 1974 (Mitchell 2002: 10).

In the 1980s the identity issue came to the fore again. The Nationalists remained faithful to the idea of “Italianità”, whereas the Labourites forged an idea of national identity that highlighted the Arabic and Semitic influences traceable in the Maltese culture and language and imaged Malta as a bridge between north and south, east and west (Mitchell 2002: 11). The Nationalists, who considered the Labour Party’s pro-Arab attitude dangerous for the Church and for the established elite, endeavoured to foreground Malta’s European and Christian roots in their manifestos. With a manifesto of Pro-Europeanism, the Nationalists won the 1987 elections; and although the negotiation with the EU had not yet begun, this year constituted an important signpost pointing towards the road to membership.

As indicated in this section, national identity is not stable and immutable, but flexible and adaptable. Carving out a national identity can also be regarded as a source of power and therefore a source of conflict. In the following section, I shall discuss the

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<sup>50</sup> “In the 1950s there were thought to be barriers to independence for the poor, the small and the defenceless, and Dom Mintoff astonished the conservative government in 1955 by requesting not independence for Malta but ‘integration with Britain’, a legitimate if unusual end to colonial status.” (Austin 1998: 23)

importance of the issue of shaping and negotiating of a national and supranational identity in the EU-membership debate.

## **10.2. Politics and the EU-membership debate**

In the political manifestos of 1987 (preceding the general election of 1987), both parties (the Nationalist Party and the Malta Labour Party) tackled the issue of a future relationship with the European (Economic) Community. Under the subtitle “Our place in Europe on the right conditions”, the Nationalist Party expressed the resolution to join the EEC: “We shall join the European Economic Community which will assist us in carrying out the necessary changes over an extended period” (<http://www.maltadata.com/pn-87.htm>).

In contrast to this clear statement, the Malta Labour Party declared that they would pursue friendship with the Arab countries and would also make an effort to establish “close ties” with the European Community: “It will give the greatest importance to developing friendship with Arab countries, especially those close to us. As since 1971, a Socialist government will work for close ties with the European Community, for the benefit of Malta and Europe” (<http://www.maltadata.com/mlp-87.htm>). The collocation “close ties” reminds one of the idea of “partnership” that will be introduced in the future MLP manifestos.

As already mentioned, the Nationalist Party (led by Eddie Fenech Adami) won the 1987 election and applied to join the European Community in 1990. The Nationalists also won the 1992 elections and the EU-membership debate began therewith. The Malta Labour Party vehemently opposed the EU membership from the very beginning, which seems rather surprising in view of their desired integration with Britain in the 50s.

The Nationalist Party started streamlining Malta’s laws and practices with the aim of adjusting its economy piecemeal to the EU standards. One important change undertaken in this view was the introduction of the value added tax. This amendment together with the unfavourable response from the European Commission in 1993 contributed to their election loss in 1996. The Malta Labour Party (led by Alfred Sant) took over Malta’s government and froze the country’s EU membership application.

After only two years, however, the Nationalists returned to power and reactivated the island's membership application.

The EU-membership debate in the 1990s was shaped by the question of identity. Emotional issues were raised, such as the future of the Maltese family, the Maltese culture and traditions, as well as the political and economic independence. These factors structured the debate and split the Maltese political scene as well as the electorate:

To its supporters, Europe was seen as a source of potential economic security and stability for a country that was vulnerable. (...) To its detractors, however, Europe itself was a threat to national sovereignty and national identity. Its influence was evident in various areas of life, and stimulated vigorous argument about the erosion of the Maltese 'tradition' in the face of European 'modernity'. (Mitchell 2002: 12)

In 2002 Malta's application for membership was accepted. Because of the extreme divisiveness on the EU-membership issue, a referendum was held on March 8, 2003. Despite a high turn-out (91% of the electorate), only 53,65% voted in favour of the EU accession (<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/01/feature/mt0401102f.html>). Because of the slight difference between the favourable and unfavourable poll results, Alfred Sant contested the elections.

Therefore, in April 2003 a general election was held. This was supposed to clear up the EU-membership issue. The Nationalist Party continued to defend the "full membership" option, whereas the Malta Labour Party rebuffed the idea of membership and proposed a partnership agreement between the island and the European Union<sup>51</sup>: "A Labour government will create a package of incentives which are competitive, effective, sustainable and clear, and which will attract both Maltese and foreign investment within the context of a partnership relationship with the EU, which will be more flexible and suited to Malta"(<http://www.maltadata.com/mlp-03.htm>). The result was that 51.8% voted for the Nationalist Party, which was interpreted as a confirmation that the majority of the Maltese population was in favour of the EU entry (<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/01/feature/mt0401102f.htm>). Consequently,

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<sup>51</sup> "Full membership" is to be understood as the regular form of EU membership, in which the members are equal, i.e. they enjoy the same rights and are bound by the same obligations. "Partnership" denotes a form of partial membership, in which the members take part only in selected EU policies.

the re-elected Prime Minister, Eddie-Fenech Adami signed the Treaty of Accession in Athens, on April 16, 2003.

In the next section I will provide a glimpse of the public opinion with the view to indicate to what extent people's opinion overlap with the politicians' opinion as the result of the influence of the political discourse on the average citizens, but also as a consequence of both politicians and common people forming a sociocultural nexus in which they interact. The public opinion will thus enable to disclose patterns of situated conceptualisations of the European Union or, more precisely, the situated ontologies<sup>52</sup> of the source domains used to understand it.

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<sup>52</sup> The term "situated ontology" is used by Michael Kimmel in his contribution "Culture regained: Situated and compound image schemas". He argues that "image schemas" should not be seen outside their sociocultural context. Embedded in a sociocultural context, image schemas acquire situated ontology (2003: 296ff). It can be stated that, in a similar manner, source domains acquire a situated ontological status when seen in their sociocultural setting.

## **Part Three: Empirical Findings**

## 11. Political Discourse and Beyond (Questionnaire)

As shown in the theoretical introduction to cultural linguistics (see Section 6.5), meaning is situated and depends on the mental models of the participants in an utterance-event. It is a fairly common observation that worldviews are created by one's culture. Culture and world-views (collective or individual) are however not stable, but prone to change in time, even if very smoothly. Therefore, it is important to find ways to measure cultural identity shifts. One possibility for doing this is by analysing a country's metaphorical profile at different points in time. However, since the relation between metaphors and culture is governed by mutual influence, and selective mappings are often subject to change, or metaphors may become entrenched, it is useful to check the degree of cultural anchoring of the metaphors experimentally.

Instead of drafting the set of metaphorical mappings only introspectively, it is helpful to move towards a broader analysis in which the set of mappings is redrafted on the basis of authentic data that is apt to shed light on the world-views of real individuals who belong to a certain culture. This approach is inspired by the methods (e.g. analysing oral narratives) used by cultural linguists in order to disclose cultural models underlying the discourse. Although the questionnaire method is employed in the field of cognitive linguistics and also in the study of metaphor, its usage is limited<sup>53</sup>. In the study of metaphor, questionnaires are used primarily in order to assess the effort involved in metaphor comprehension, particularly as opposed to non-metaphorical expressions (Glucksberg & Keysar, 1990; Gibbs 2001). Nevertheless, I am not aware of any empirical studies on political metaphors that aimed to provide evidence on how source domains become socioculturally marked when analysed in a situated context or to detect or construct metaphorical mappings on the basis of raw sociocultural data.

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<sup>53</sup> In his contribution "Methodology in cognitive linguistics", Dirk Geeraerts (2006: 35-36) claims that experimental techniques are rather scarce in the field of cognitive linguistics: "To begin with, we may note that some methodological formats are relatively underrepresented. The experimental techniques that are being used predominately involve elicitation in the form of production and comprehension tasks, plus some decision, association, and categorization tasks. Sophisticated methods like eye tracking or FMRI and other neurological imaging techniques are used only occasionally. This also holds for survey techniques in the form of interviews and questionnaires, or for direct observation as usual in some forms of sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics."



My questionnaire was distributed at the University of Malta on October 10, 2006 with the aim to uncover cognitive models and, ultimately, cultural models<sup>54</sup>. With one exception (retired, 64), the participants were students aged 18 to 25 (9 male, 41 female). Due to the small scale of the questionnaire (low number of participants, age group, occupation), my study has the character of a pilot study.

In order to avoid influencing the results, researchers are not supposed to inform the respondents on the real purpose of the study. Nevertheless, it is important to give informants some information in order to win their willingness to give elaborate responses. Therefore, I told the participants that the topic of my thesis was politics in Malta and the EU membership debate, but I made no reference to the field of cognitive linguistics or to the metaphor analysis. As will be shown later on, the data can be used to identify the mappings of conceptual metaphors and this is primarily useful for cases of covert variation.

### **11.1. Design of the Questionnaire**

The survey was carried out using a questionnaire that comprised 5 questions:

- 1) A child wants to know what the 'European Union' is. Think of ways to define the 'Union' for them. What would you say?
- 2) What are the advantages and disadvantages of Malta's EU membership? Explanation should be given to people who received poor education.
- 3) Imagine that the European Union and Malta are human beings. What adjectives would you use to describe each one of them?
- 4) A foreign visitor is coming to Malta. He/ She wants to know something about the most common or the favourite type of housing in Malta. Can you describe a typical Maltese house?
- 5) Is family important for the Maltese people? Explain.

The raw results of the questionnaire are included in Appendix 5. The respondents' answers contain mistakes which have not been corrected in order to

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<sup>54</sup> Ungerer & Schmid (2006: 58) distinguish between cognitive and cultural models, which they nevertheless see as interrelated: a cognitive model is defined as the sum of the contexts related to a certain field that has been experienced and stored by an individual, whereas a cultural model focuses on contexts that are shared by a society or social group.

preserve the sense of authenticity. Furthermore, the respondents were requested to include five items of information, such as: age, sex, occupation, location (town/village), stance towards EU (in favour or against). However, some of the respondents did not fill in all the requested information; in such cases the missing information is marked by “X”. In exceptional cases when a word was illegible, I used three dots in parentheses in order to mark the omission.

Before delving into the review of results, it is necessary to explain the motivation for the choice of the questions included in the questionnaire. In the next section the reader will be provided with sufficiently detailed information on what motivated the design of the questionnaire.

## **11.2. Motivation**

In line with the arguments presented in the previous section, the questionnaire was administered in order to disclose patterns of the language-culture-mind continuum by means of real-world data and to probe the concepts prevalent in Maltese culture in pursuance of unveiling the “real” metaphors.

I will briefly explain the motivation of the five questions at this point: the first question, “A **child** wants to know what the ‘European Union’ is. Think of ways to define the ‘Union’ for them. What would you say?”, made use of the child as the recipient of the information not only in order to elicit the use of metaphors, but also to avoid embarrassment for cases in which the respondents might have experienced difficulties in delivering a specialised definition, as defining the European Union is no easy task. The same reasons also determined the formulation of the second question, “What are the advantages and disadvantages of Malta’s EU membership? The explanation should be given to people who received a **poor education**.” The reason why the participants were asked to outline the advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire was not in order to obtain “expert” or accurate information on the advantages and disadvantages of the EU membership. Although I view the answers as very interesting as regards the prevailing opinion on the pros and cons of the EU, this

question has to a certain extent– like the previous one – a phatic<sup>55</sup> function. In other words, the question was meant to keep the participants “talking” and disclose patterns of the conceptualisation of the European Union; direct reference to the advantages and disadvantages was of marginal relevance. The imaginary recipients of the explanation were in this case “people who received poor education”. On the one hand, I replaced the “child” as receiver of the message with “people who received poor education” for sake of variety; on the other hand, I intended to render the question plausible and considered that charting advantages and disadvantages for a child would make little sense.

The third question, “Imagine that the European Union and Malta are **human beings**. What adjectives would you use to describe each one of them?”, directly elicited the use of personifications, i.e. ontological metaphors. In order to avoid confusion as regards this question (and the questionnaire as a whole), it should be stressed at this point that the aim was not to prove the impossibility of conceptualising a new phenomenon (e.g. the European Union) without resorting to metaphors. This is because demonstrating that metaphors are ubiquitous and a prerequisite for our conceptualisation is no great achievement for the following reasons: first, this is already common knowledge; secondly, the results would give rise to biased evidence, since the question itself instructed the participants to personify Malta and the European Union, i.e. they were instructed to use metaphors. Certainly, on the basis of the results, it can be argued that the respondents did not encounter difficulties in using metaphors, this being quite a natural practice. However, the purpose of this question (and also of the questionnaire as such) was to check whether the metaphors used in public discourse reflect authentic cultural models or habitual manners of conceptualisation.

The last two questions, “A foreign visitor is coming to Malta. He/ She wants to know something about the most common or the favourite type of housing in Malta. “Can you describe a **typical Maltese house**?” and “Is **family** important for the Maltese

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<sup>55</sup> The notion *phatic (communion)* was coined by the anthropologist Malinowski (1920) to refer to a type of “verbal signalling”, a means of establishing communication and social bonds between people. (Wales 2001: 295) In phatic communion “language does not function [...] as a means of transmission of thought.” (Malinowski 1923: 478)

people? Explain”.<sup>56</sup>, were designed in order to elicit specific characteristics of the Maltese family and house that can be used to uncover cultural models and reconstruct schemas of sociocultural life. As will be shown, even if everybody shares a generic template of house and family, these prototypes are not universal, but culturally-dependent<sup>57</sup>. These patterns of cultural knowledge can be used to reconstruct conceptual domains that enable a more reliable analysis of metaphors, but can also help to determine how the Maltese understand metaphors that are currently employed in the EU debate. The question “Can you describe a **typical Maltese house?**” is of high importance for at least two reasons: first, it is apt to give a glimpse into the Maltese people conceptualisation of the HOUSE, which is the source domain *par excellence* in the discourse on the European Union, but also in the politics taken *in toto*; secondly, since the Maltese language has only one word *dar* to designate both ‘house’ and ‘home’, it was tempting to test whether such a question would trigger mixed interpretations. As will be shown in Section 12.4., “Stony House or Sweet Home”, the results do not seem to strongly support the interpretation that the Maltese speakers hardly distinguish between *house* and *home*.

Altogether this chapter has presented a glimpse into the design of the questionnaire and also disclosed the reasons for the choice of particular questions. In the next chapter I will turn to the assessment of results as such, and also indicate their relevance for the present approach to the analysis of metaphors.

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<sup>56</sup> This question could be criticised for being redundant: a question on whether the family is important or not presupposes a “yes” answer. It should be noted, that this is not designed to be a yes/no question as it is accompanied by the instruction “Explain”; thus, the question is supposed to elicit an open-ended response. Moreover, the family is not only the most important pillar for the Maltese society (as one can take for granted in respect to all human forms of organisations, but the Maltese believe that they cherish family values much more than other nations. Therefore, the question “Is **family** important for the Maltese people?” is a challenging one, and has hereby more potential for educing insightful answers.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Quinn (2005: 38f).

## **12. Evaluation of Questionnaire Results**

This chapter is dedicated to the assessment of the participants' responses. Overall, observations with single occurrences will be considered as marginal as they have scant value. If similar views occur with a certain degree of frequency, it can be concluded that these views transgress individual identity and fall under cultural identity. The chapter is organised as follows: Section 12.1. will examine the way in which the respondents defined the European Union; Section 12.2. will look at the human-like properties that were attributed to Malta and the EU; the next two sections shall explore the ways in which the Maltese conceptualise two essential source domains in the discourse of the EU: the FAMILY (Section 12.3.) and the HOUSE (Section 12.4.); the concluding section (12.5.) will be concerned with investigating the metaphors that occur in the informants' responses throughout the questionnaire.

### **12.1. The conceptualisation of the European Union**

In the preceding chapter I gave a brief overview of the questionnaire design and I also indicated what motivated the choice of questions included in the questionnaire. In this section, I will evaluate the findings of the questionnaire and focus on their relevance for the conceptualisation of the European Union, without limiting the discussion to the analysis of metaphors. A full analysis of metaphors will be the topic of the next chapter.

Due to the complexity of the EU, we cannot open a dictionary, look up the EU and find a clear and complete definition of this phenomenon. As it is impossible to make generalised statements about the EU, taking into consideration contextual differences (e.g. national differences) is extremely helpful for the understanding of the EU. Such information can be extracted from corpora or by findings of surveys or questionnaires distributed in a certain national context. Therefore, the point is not to come up with "a definition", but with a description of conceptualisations based on the definitional attempts made by the questionnaire respondents. Thus, the task to define the EU was only meant to help identify the ways of conceptualisations evoked by the EU.

Many definitions<sup>58</sup> of the EU that the respondents offered can be analysed in terms of a frame similar to the classic pattern *genus proximum et differentia specifica*.

With regard to the *genus proximum*, the EU is essentially defined as a type of collective, e.g. group, team, club, organisation:

“a group of countries/ people”, “a network between countries”, “a congregation”, “a family of European Nations”, “an association”, “a club”, “a kind of team”, “a number of countries”, “a gathering and association of a number of countries”, “a bond”.

A closer analysis of the *types of collective* clearly shows that they reflect different levels of cohesion, from a mere assembly of several parts to interaction and even coalescence. The degree of aggregation is very important to understand what meanings the concept of the EU activates; in addition, a series of interpretations as regards *the relations within the collectivity* can be derived.

To illustrate this point, it may be helpful to explain the particularity of the collectives recurring in the respondents’ answers.

A good example of neutral association is the “group”, a concept used in 25 definitions (out of 49). Interestingly, the components of the collective are not always countries as in “group of countries”, but also “group of people”. The metonymy contained in “EU is a group of people” supports the view that the EU is not merely an abstract mechanism, but a collective in which the human nature of its constituents also plays a part. This assumption is intensified by the context and the purpose of the group, e.g. “...a group of people, who gather together to share their values and beliefs, in order to protect and look out for one another” might lead to the false belief that the EU is a benevolent, bottom-up institution in which the interest and needs of the individuals come first.

As already mentioned, “group” is neutral inasmuch as the coherence level is not clearly quantified. In contrast to “group”, the usage of “family” of countries and “bond between countries” clearly primes the interpretation of belonging together. At the other end of the continuum, we find “a gathering of” and “a number of”. Unlike “a number of”, which suggests no commonness, “a gathering of” contains the meaning of “coming

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<sup>58</sup> *Definition* is to be understood as ‘informal definition’ or ‘definitional attempt’ throughout this chapter.

together”, but the implication of “remaining together” for a certain period of time is not obligatory.

Another significant feature of the definition of the EU is the type of relation between members. Most respondents described the relations as follows: “work together and live together in peace”, “share their help and money”, “help and support each other”.

The definition is completed by the aim type of the collective or its purpose of existence. The major types of aim are: “to ensure a better future”, “to provide a safer environment”, “to make life better”, “to discuss and solve problems”.

If one adopts the same approach as for “a group of people (i.e. individuals)”, the purpose of existence of the EU is seen as beneficial not only to the member countries, but also to the individuals as such and this not as a long-term effect, but from the very beginning. This idea is expressed in one of the respondents’ definition of the EU: “A union is a group of people, who gather together to share their values and beliefs, in order to protect and look out for one another” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour).

Mention should be made that the same purpose contains a wealth of different implicatures when embedded in their original context or if the sociocultural conditions in Malta are taken into consideration. Thus, although in most cases the verb *to help*<sup>59</sup> refers to “give financial aid”, *help* also occurs with the meaning of receiving non-pecuniary benefits: “It is like a group of people who work together to improve Malta’s situation where finance, business, education and culture is involved.” (Student, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour). Definitely, in this quotation the view on *help* is an egocentric one inasmuch as the “whole” loses importance and the “part” comes to the fore. This view is shared by other respondents as well: “A group of 25 countries who are members of the same union. They work together with the best interests of the country in mind.” (Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against)

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<sup>59</sup> The boundary between “the type of relations” and “type of aims” is not always clear-cut. This is the case with the verb “to help” that normally presupposes *an actor, a recipient and an object*. That is why “to help” is discussed both under the category “type of relations between members” and “type of aims of the collective”.

All in all, the survey of how the EU is conceptualised indicates that the respondents tend to use metaphors in their defining attempts. Such metaphors used to conceptualise the EU (and all other issues related to the EU) will be examined in the Section 12.5., “Metaphor Maltese live by”. In the next section I shall indicate how the EU and Malta are comprehended as humans.

## 12.2. The Personification of the EU and Malta

Despite the complexity of the EU processes and the intricacies of its institutions, the findings presented in the previous section have indicated that people can conceptualise the European Union, and they thus have clear images in mind when they hear or see the term *EU*. Apart from defining, the participants were also assigned the task of personifying both the European Union and Malta, which – as the results suggest – they accomplished successfully.

As explained in Section 11.2. (“Motivation”), what spurred me to assign task 4 “Imagine that the European Union and Malta are **human beings**. What adjectives would you use to describe each one of them?” was to check whether the metaphors used in public discourse reflect authentic cultural models or habitual manners of conceptualisation. Furthermore, as the hypothesis suggests, provided that the images in the public discourse coincide with the images in the participants’ discourse, the empirical evidence could be useful for constructing the set of mappings that takes place between conceptual domains.

But let us first look into the results, which I will subsequently review in order to assess their relevance for my study. The results will be categorised as follows:

- The portrayal of the EU;
- The portrayal of Malta;
- The description of the relation between the EU and Malta.

The characterisation of the EU and Malta will be separated into:

- Physical appearance,
- Personality aspects and
- Miscellaneous (adjectives that cannot be classified either as appearance or as character traits, or belong to none of the two categories).



The last category does not bring numerous results since only 11 respondents made reference to the relations in which the EU and Malta engaged. Having regard to the length of the tables displaying the adjectives used to describe the EU and Malta, I decided to outline these results in Appendix 3 (“The Portrayal of the EU”) and in Appendix 4 (“The Portrayal of Malta”). The first column in each table contains numerical values. They are numbers that were randomly assigned to the respondents; the respondents’ details associated with the numbers are included in Appendix 2.

I will start with the portrayal of the EU based on the raw data contained in the respondents’ answers. As the adjectives in the table suggest, the adjectives used to depict the physical appearance of the EU focus almost exclusively on the size of the Union. Thus, the EU is *big*, *large*, *vast* or even *massive*. The adjectives employed to describe the Union’s personality/character group around four topics: intelligence (*intelligent*, *clever*, *smart*, *open-minded*, *shrewd* and *knowledgeable*), experience (*experienced*, *wise*, *mature*), power (*powerful*, *empowering*, *threatening*, *oppressive*, “has a sense of leadership”, *dominant*) and kindness (*helpful*, *friendly*, *sociable*, *benevolent*, but also *scheming*, *selfish*). The attributes classified under “Miscellaneous” are also very interesting; as they can be better understood by contrast to the ones used to define Malta, I will revert to their investigation after introducing the portrayal of Malta.

As the reader can see in Appendix 4, the adjectives employed to describe Malta’s physical appearance refer, like in the case of the EU description, almost exclusively to the island’s size. Thus, Malta is *small*, *tiny* and *short*. The attributes applied to give a picture of Malta’s character can be classified into three categories, which coincide with the ones used to depict the personality of the EU: experience (*naive*, *uncertain*, *simple*, and *ignorant*) power (*unpowerful/ powerless*, *weak*, *helpless*, and *insecure*) and kindness (*friendly*, *warm* and *kind*). The category intelligence is almost absent in the portrayal of Malta: the only adjective used that clearly appears to belong to the field of intelligence is *silly*, as in “silly enough to be taken in by the lies of someone who wants to take advantage of him/her.”

The next step is to compare the description of Malta to the description of the EU. If we compare the adjectives used to describe the EU to the ones used to depict Malta, we find that most of them engage in an antonymic relation: the EU is *experienced*, whereas Malta is *naive*; the EU is *powerful*, whilst Malta is *powerless* and so on.

Objectively, one might expect that only the adjectives delineating size would be clear antonyms. However, in the actual responses (i.e. the actual opinion of ordinary people), the EU and Malta are portrayed as opposites, and there is a strong tendency to use positive<sup>60</sup> adjectives to describe the EU and a large number of negative adjectives to refer to Malta. The frequency of the negative adjectives in the portrayal of Malta brings to surface the extent to which the Maltese manifest an inferiority complex; the high number of positive adjectives in the outline of the EU makes me speculate that, as a direct consequence of their feeling of inferiority, the Maltese regard the Other (in the present case, the EU) as superior. Importantly, some informants use the adjective *inferior* itself.

Nevertheless, there are several adjectives occurring in the responses of many participants that lead to the conclusion that despite their inferiority complex, the Maltese are willing to get involved into improving their situation; Malta is thus described as *ambitious*, *developing*, *determined* and *with potential*. A relevant attribute repeatedly used by the respondents refers to Malta's being *dependent* (on others). This attribute is particularly salient for two reasons: on the one hand, in view of Malta's history of colonisation, it is *culture-laden*; on the other hand, the EU is regarded as *independent*, which indirectly suggest that Malta and the EU might engage in a dependency relation. As we shall see below, this insight also emerges in the investigation of the relation EU-Malta.

The relation EU-Malta, which can be reconstructed in the light of the information extracted from the participants' responses, will be investigated in what follows. Let us now have a look at the raw data as such:

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<sup>60</sup> It should be however mentioned that the positive attributes used to describe the EU mainly belong to the categories *intelligence* and *experience*. Even if positive attributes occur in the other two categories as well, *power* and *kindness* power, they are either mixed with negative features (*powerful* and *threatening*) or are accompanied by an extension that mitigates the positive effect (e.g. "a helper, but deep down with bad intentions").

Respondents	Relation EU-Malta
3.	"rich person who wants to gain political strength through financial investment"
4.	"the father and children; or the bully and the little brother! [...] The businessman and all the different levels of his workers."
5.	"EU- A smart open-minded business man. Malta – A foreign child who is being educated in the methodology of the business man's world without losing his own culture. The child is the businessman's step-son."
15.	"A mother and child" "A giant and an ant"
29.	"EU -> the manager or boss of a company. Malta -> an employer of a company."
31.	European Union: ruler; Malta: ruled
32.	"It looks out for others' best interest in the long run, making sacrifices now for their well-being in the future."
37.	"part of EU family"
39.	"EU: Parent, somewhat uncaring. Malta: Child, naive, immature, gullible"
47.	"European Union: [...] a good leader. Malta: A loving and welcoming woman with a heart of gold."
48.	"The European Union is a tall, serious-looking man and Malta is a beautiful woman wearing a red and white (Malta flag colours) dress."

**Table 1:** EU-Malta Relations

The examples above indicate that Malta and the EU are not seen as equal partners. The metaphorical portrayal of the EU rests on a cluster of mappings from the source domains of FAMILY, ECONOMY and MANAGEMENT, i.e. source domains of social systems inasmuch as the members are intertwined and in which power relations are at stake. The power relations are explicitly articulated as in "the bully and the little brother"; "European Union: ruler; Malta: ruled" and "EU-> manager of the company. Malta -> an employer of the company." Sometimes, the respondents produce an affectionate discourse as "European Union: [...] a good leader. Malta: A loving and welcoming woman with a heart of gold"; or, "The European Union is a tall, serious-looking man and Malta is a beautiful woman wearing a red and white (Malta flag colours) dress." Yet, even such contexts, in which gender relations are central, supply a clue to the power relations in which Malta and the EU engage, albeit sometimes very subtle (as in

the second example). I will revert to the metaphors expressing power relations in section 12.5, which is dedicated to the actual analysis of metaphors. The next section will aim to identify key values which characterise the family from the respondents' perspective, i.e. from the point of view of ordinary people.

### **12.3. The Conceptualisation of the Family**

The evaluation of the questionnaire results is also very helpful for the faithful construction of the source domain family, which is essential for a better understanding of the conceptual metaphor THE EU IS A FAMILY. The most striking feature in the respondents' answers to the question "Is family important for the Maltese people? Explain." is the indication that the accepted family model within Malta is the closely-knit family model. Many also argue that this is almost an inescapable feature of the Maltese family due to the small size of the island: "It seems so, since Malta is physically small one cannot really live too far from the family so there is always that unity and sense of belonging in a family. One does not really leave the family unless he leaves the country (so we always feel close)" (Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far). In short, the most representative characteristics of the family as depicted in the questionnaire are: (1) *closely-knit family model*; (2) *based on mutual help*; (3) *religious*.

Although the results of the questionnaire will not be reviewed quantitatively, it cannot be left unnoticed that a large number of respondents referred to the family as being a "closely-knit unit" (20 out of 50). This is especially remarkable since the question enquired about the importance of the family without making any reference to the closeness of the family or to its spatial correlation. As the examples in the table below indicate, the Maltese tend to conceptualise the family via the equation *importance-closeness*. Furthermore, they seem to see familial closeness (from the emotional point of view) as directly correlating with spatial closeness (12 respondents out of 20). All examples in Table 2 below indicate that the Maltese family is closely-knit (column 2); if the respondents stressed that there is a causal link between the *space component* and *family closeness*, this part of their argumentation is displayed in column 3 ("space component"):

Respondents	Closely-knit Family Model	Space component (as prerequisite)
1.	"Most families [...] make up little communities"	
3.	"very tightly knit"	"[...] because of the small size of the country"
4.	"there is always unity and sense of belonging in the family"	"[...] since Malta is physically small"
5.	[Deep bond] "common goal achievers"	
8.	"Family for the Maltese means security and solidarity."	
9.	"Most Maltese stick together"	
10.	"Very united"; "Gatherings are held quite often."	
17.	"[...] Maltese seek to be close to the family"	"Due to the small island [...], we consider ourselves lucky to be in touch with relatives"
18.	"very close and keep in contact"	"This is because of tradition & size of our country [...]"
19.	"[...] visiting our family is made easier and is done much more often"	"[...] we are a small country [...]"
20.	"[...] the family members are very close."	
24.	("very important")	"[...] being that Malta is a small island, we tend to meet the relatives quite often [...] Family is seen as the closely knit unit."
28.	("important")	"[...] because Malta is a very small island [...]"
36.	"[...] Maltese people are very close with each other [...]"	
38.	"everyone is bound to know each other"	"As we are a considerable small country [...]"
40.	"[...] the family unity remains quite strong."	"[...] maybe because Malta is such a tiny country and people are not used to living far apart [...]"
41.	"[...] families remain close [...]"	"Since Malta is so small [...]."
42.	"[...] families remain very close [...]"	"[...] since it's a small country [...]."
48.	"[...] we are very tightly knit families [...]"	"As a small island [...]"
50.	"They try to keep their family united."	

**Table 2:** A closely-knit family model



The correlation of *emotional closeness – spatial closeness* is in agreement with Lakoff and Johnson’s account of primary metaphors (influenced by Grady) and constitutes the basis for the primary metaphor *Intimacy is Closeness* (1999: 50)<sup>61</sup>. *Intimacy is Closeness* is not a metaphor in Malta, but the reality beyond metaphor.

Overall, the data suggests that the interpersonal relations in the family are very important and that the family is a reliable source of mutual help, support and comfort. Certainly, this is not a surprising feature, but a logical consequence of the strong family unity.

Respondents	Help and Support
1.	“They [the Maltese families] are a strong support system in themselves.”
9.	““Most Maltese stick together especially when there’s emergencies or any kind of natural/ phenomenal disasters.”
10.	“[...] all members look out for one another and concern themselves with the lives of all members of the family.”
12.	“Yes, most of the Maltese citizens look for their relatives’ advice.”
20.	“Usually each person tries to help any other family member especially parents with their children.”
33.	“It is the smallest form of society where people help each other through the everyday situation and provide love and sharing to each other.”
34.	“Family is important for the Maltese since it makes them feel secure and loved.”
36.	“[...] family represents security and a place where one can share problems and be heard.”
47.	“[...] an important institution on which they rely on for moral support and help.”

**Table 3:** Mutual Help and Support in the Maltese Family

Although the question did not explicitly touch upon spirituality, many participants stress the esteem in which religion is held, as well as the interdependence between family and religion. Evidence of the religious view on the family is included in table 4:

<sup>61</sup> In contrast to the practice of using small capitals for conceptual metaphor, I used italics for *Intimacy is Closeness*, according to the format in the original (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 50).

Respondents	Religiosity
2.	"Yes, because it [family] is everything to any mediterranean [no capital in the original], catholic and traditional country."
8.	"For the Maltese the family is seen as a sacred institution due to our Roman Catholic views."
23.	"[...] family in Malta is still seen as sacred."
32.	"It is still considered to be the key component of society (heavily influenced by the church) – hence the avoidance of divorce & abortion."
39.	"Yes, most Maltese people, being Christian, are traditionalists – therefore they believe in a traditional family."
49.	"We are Catholic, and thus value the family in a religious way."
50.	"Yes, mostly because as it is a religious country people are more united and tend less to obtain a divorce."

**Table 4:** Family and Religiosity

Quite a few participants referred to the family as a source of moral values: "Yes, it [the family] is very important as they derive their values from it and it helps build their character" (Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour). Surprisingly, one respondent directly affirms that the Maltese are among the last Europeans with "strong family values": "[...] personally I consider the Maltese to be among the last Europeans with strong family values" (Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour). Again, the decline of the traditional Maltese family is not seen as the mere consequence of modernisation as a natural process, but as a tendency towards Europeanisation. In other words, it seems that the traditional family is not contrasted with to the modern family, but to the "European family": "Older families are especially close to one another whereas newer ones tend to be the European way" (Student, female, 18, B'Kara, in favour).

All three main characteristics of the family emphasised by the respondents have a strong emotional layer: the closely-knit family model is a paragon of emotional closeness, help is the effect of friendship, and religion and emotion are inseparable. If the vitality test is applied, more precisely if compliance with the two vitality criteria,

cognitive endowment and attention-focussing potential<sup>62</sup>, introduced in Section 7.4.3., is checked, it can be asserted with relative certainty that the *family* domain fulfils the attention-focussing criterion.<sup>63</sup> With regard to the cognitive endowment, one can expect, even without reviewing the respondents' answers, that every person can define *family* with a minimal, if at all, expenditure of energy. In this case, it becomes obvious that *family* is a good candidate for a vital source domain.

I further argue that the proportion of the two features, cognitive endowment and attention-focussing potential, vis-à-vis each other, is also relevant. Thus, when the cognitive endowment is greater than the attention-focussing potential, the source domain would have a lower impact than when the cognitive endowment is smaller than attention-focussing potential. Consider, for example, the metaphor THE EU IS A COMMUNITY. 'Community' is a concept sufficiently understood by a large number of speakers, so that one can assume that it is a source domain apt to structure the respective target suitably. However, 'community' is so general that this metaphor would probably remain unnoticed despite the high cognitive load of its source domain. Nevertheless, a high attention-focussing potential and a very low cognitive endowment will not result in a vital source domain either. A significantly low cognitive endowment percentage in combination with a high attention-focussing potential will possibly lead to a metaphor that is striking at first, but whose occurrence in various discourses and at different times would be likely reduced. For example, EU IS A CADDO HUT will have a high attention-focussing potential, but will probably be a rather poor meaning carrier in relation to the EU, except for a limited number of speakers. Infrequent occurrence coupled with a limited potential to concoct "truths" (even if only "perceived truths") will very unlikely have high persuasive power, if one considers that persuasion presupposes an explanatory and an understanding act. As it is indicated in Figure 8, the combination of the two criteria, cognitive endowment (CE) and attention-focussing potential (AFP) likely give rise to three types of source domains: type (I) characterised

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<sup>62</sup> In Section 7.4.3., I defined *cognitive endowment* as the capacity of the source domain to offer optimal access to the target domain in such a way that the target is either thoroughly understood or gives rise to a conceptualisation (a possibly biased perception) as desired by the "innovator". The attention-focussing or attention-seeking potential is considered apt to create a surprise effect.

<sup>63</sup> This assertion is based on the literature about the importance of the Maltese family, results of questionnaire as well as on various informal discussions with Maltese people.



by a relatively high CE and a relatively low AFP, type (II) with approximately equal CE and AFP and type (III) with a relatively high AFP, but a relatively low CE.

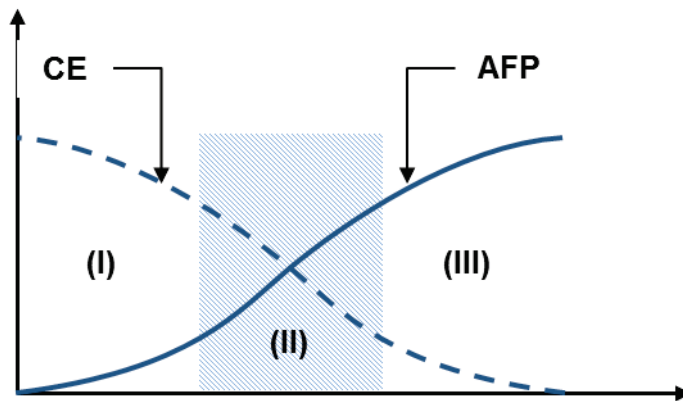


Figure 8: Vitality Chart

I argue that the most successful source domains are the ones of type (II). Depending on the manipulative goals, a shift to the right (the area between II and III or beyond) could take place. Thus, a more aggressive style would be positioned on the right-hand side whereas a less aggressively manipulative style would shift to the left.

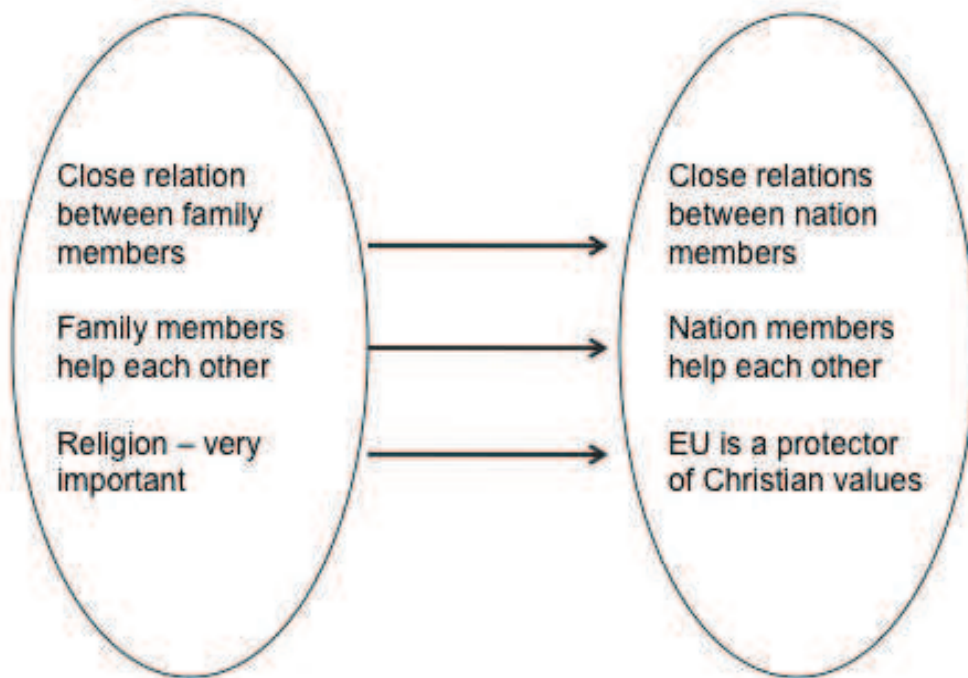
This is not to say that cognitive endowment cannot vary, too, depending on the emotional experience. Thus, individuals or groups of individuals could have different perceptions of the cognitive content of a source domain and, in relation to a target domain, different mappings could be generated. It follows that a source domain hardly has intrinsic and static qualities, but rather dynamic features that depend upon the perceiving subject or group of subjects.

If the results illustrated in Table 2 (“A closely-knit family model”) are considered, it becomes evident that the large majority of the respondents share knowledge and attitudes toward *family*, i.e. share common ground, which plays a crucial role in persuasion. Certainly, relying on the common ground of a community could mean walking on fragile ground, even if the act of communication builds upon values and attitudes that are deeply rooted in a socio-cultural group. However, the distinction between *core common ground* and *emergent common ground*, postulated by Kecskes (2008), Kecskes and Zhang (2009) and Kecskes (2012), turns out useful to explain how a particular source domain (in our case, *family*) can be crucial for persuasive communication, despite different values and attitudes potentially occurring at the

individual speaker's level. Kecskes and Zhang define *core common ground* as “the relatively static, generalized, common knowledge that belongs to a certain speech community as a result of prior interaction and experience”, for the present study, the community worldview of the Maltese, whereas *emergent common ground* is described as “the relatively dynamic, particularized, private knowledge created in the course of communication that belongs to the individual(s).” (2009: 347) It follows that the emergent common ground on the “family” domain is activated at the individual level as a combination of both elements of the community worldview and of the hearer's personal biography.

It can thus be hypothesised that *family* is a domain favoured by politicians also because of a social group's shared perception and attitudes, which ensures the success of a particular message across a large group of recipients. It can be assumed that the more the common ground is enhanced in a message (among others, by metaphor use), the less objectivism would the target recipient apply in the interpretation of the message. Furthermore, it can be postulated that the more the *core* common ground is highlighted in a message, the less objective the interpretation of the message by a larger target audience would be and thereby the stronger the persuasion mechanism.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, the conceptual metaphor THE EU IS A FAMILY can be represented as in the figure below:



**Figure 9:** THE EU IS A FAMILY (situated)

Given that the model above reflects a widely spread model (i.e. the traditional model of the family), the results of the EU referendum were striking (for more details, see Section 10.2., “Politics and the EU-Membership debate”). In view of the religiosity of the Maltese, it came as a surprise that the percentage of the electorate that voted for “full membership” only slightly exceeded the votes for “partnership”<sup>64</sup>. Briefly, in the ninth chapter, I will suggest that these unexpected vote results reveal a reframing concerning family values in the Maltese society. This seems to be a plausible explanation, although the overall answers given by the questionnaire participants indicate that their cognitive model for the family closely resembles the traditional type of family, which apparently contradicts the reframing explanation. However, it can be argued that a reframing has taken place, even if not yet perceived at the conscious level. The economic changes have undoubtedly determined the secularisation of family values, but these are not yet consciously accepted due to the strict control *still* exercised by the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, there were a few participants who hinted at the fact that the Maltese family has undergone change and is continuing to change and that family values are in

<sup>64</sup> It should be recalled that the difference between “full membership” and “partnership” was explained in section 9.2., “Politics and the EU-membership debate.”

the process of reinterpretation and re-evaluation: “Yes. Family is still considered important as proven by late censuses<sup>65</sup>. However, there is an alarmingly steady increase in people who do not consider family as a necessity.” (Student, male, 18, Marsascala, in favour) And again: “Maltese people still cherish the family but the nature of the Maltese family is changing as more women go to work and the number of one-parent families increases.” (Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Mellieha, in favour)

Thus, it can be concluded that people’s cognitive models have changed, but when they are asked to make judgements on family values in a conscious way, the traditional family type is still used as a paragon. A cognitive dissonance between two types of mindmaps can thus be detected: between a cognitive mindmap which is gaining ground and a cognitive mindmap which constitutes the accepted way of thinking and surfaces in conscious discourse. In Lakoffian terms, the “deep frame” and “surface frame” (2006: 12) do not entirely coincide. The beginning of a process of disestablishment of a frame can also be recognised in the use of the adverb “still” by some of the speakers, who otherwise maintain an overall positive stance towards the importance of the traditional family model among the Maltese: “Yes, I believe that it is still considered important by most of the Maltese.” (Student, female, San Gwan)

In this section I have presented the most pertinent results regarding the conceptualisation of the family in Malta. On the one hand, this discussion has confirmed the heralded position that the family holds in the Maltese society and also stressed the existing interrelatedness with the Catholic religion; on the other hand, it has hinted at the current tendency to overhaul the traditional Maltese family model. In the next section, I will turn to another fundamental sector of the Maltese life: the Maltese *house*.

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<sup>65</sup> The reference to the census as authoritative discourse is of extreme relevance in the present context. Undoubtedly, a census produces reliable information, such as birth rate or death rate, number of marriages etc., but is unlikely to provide pertinent information on subtle perception changes that are in an incipient stage or are kept in an incipient stage due to legal restrictions, religious moorings and social pressure.

## 12.4. Stony House or Sweet Home?

All that is needed to explain a ‘typical’ Maltese house is the word ‘home’. Any place where one can live and feel warmth and welcome.

(Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour)

Like the FAMILY, the HOUSE is an essential source domain in politics, as this concept is a vital realm of people’s life and can be seen in conjunction with fundamental traditions and values. The argument is in agreement with Ungerer and Schmid’s (2006: 49ff; 118) claim that the source and target domains should be understood as tied to ‘cognitive models’ and ‘cultural models’. This entails the endeavour to construct the Maltese cultural model of the *house*, as the Maltese are to understand the target domain, in the present case, the European Union, not by transferring properties from a supra-cultural domain of *house*, but by mapping information from a culturally tarnished space, the *Maltese house*.

The questionnaire respondents were instructed to describe a Maltese house to a foreign visitor: “A foreign visitor is coming to Malta. He/ She wants to know something about the most common or the favourite type of housing in Malta. Can you describe a **typical Maltese house**?” Although no specific characteristics were pre-given, the main components that make up the definition of the Maltese house as conceived of by the participants are: building material, size, interior and, sporadically, participant’s attitude.

The results based on the participants’ definitions can be summarised as in the table below:

<b>A. Feature</b>	<b>B. Frequency (number of participants)</b>
<i>1. Material</i>	
globigerina limestone (local stone)	2
limestone	8
(local) stone	4
<i>2. Size</i>	
Number of Storeys	
- more than one	1
- 2	7
- 2-3	4
- 3/4	1
<i>3. Interior</i>	
Furniture	9
<i>4. Respondees' subjective attitude</i>	23

**Table 5:** House – Overview

As pointed out in the table above, 14 participants gave information on the material used to build traditional houses in Malta; 13 referred to the size of the houses and indicated a number of storeys. 9 respondents briefly described the furniture; almost all participants made reference to the rooms and some of them also suggested a number. I excluded this type of information from my analysis, as I did not consider it relevant for the present survey. Furthermore, the information concerning the number of rooms and overall size seems so contradictory that it is very misleading to draw conclusions on this basis: thus, as regards size, houses are either “quite big” or “quite small”, which indicates that the participants conceptualises the house in an individual way (they consider their own house to be the paragon) or that nowadays such features depend on a range of factors and vary accordingly. The latter interpretation is supported by one of the responses: “Depending on the area. Central zones are mainly made up of apartments & maisonettes, compact, practical, space saving, whereas in the south where life is

relatively slower houses are bigger and more focussed on impressing with excessive architecture” (Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour). Therefore, the results concerning (objective) size will be treated marginally due to their low reliability and in order to avoid hazardous conclusions.

In contrast, I regard the participants’ attitudes towards the interior to be more relevant and that is why more attention will be given to people’s subjective opinion. 23 participants expressed their attitudes either towards the house as a whole or towards the interior. The respondents’ subjective or even affectionate attitudes towards the Maltese house are presented in two tables: the first table contains data regarding the participants’ stance towards the house in general, whereas the second table gives information on the subjective attitude towards the interior of the house:

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Subjective Attitude towards House</b>
2.	“[...] on the whole, is usually airy, full of light and quite welcoming.”
4.	“In the town: larger houses to suit a family comfortably [...]”
5.	“Any place where one can live and feel warmth and welcome.”
7.	“Warm, noise, bustling with life, a united family.”
13.	“big [...], very damp in winter + cold, [...] expensive to us.”
14.	“quite large”
15.	“ [...] quite small [...] and very comfortable to live in. It reminds me of past ages of the Knights.”
17.	“Beautiful Maltese balconies, with a tidy layout. It is general to find plants around the house, as Maltese love greenery.”
21.	“old fashioned, antiques, big and narrow, humid”
22.	“Small. [...] Very limited outdoor space.”
37.	“[...] warm and welcoming.”
41.	“House of character [...], strong front doors which are left open during the day – revealing an ‘entre-port’ [...].”
43.	“Rather sizeable, spacious [...].”
49.	“[...] usually very big [...] ”
50.	“usually it is a big house [...].”

**Table 6:** Respondents’ attitudes towards the Maltese house



Although the purpose of the survey is not to measure subjective attitude, even a superficial look at the table above indicates that people manifest a positive attitude toward the Maltese house. Attributes such as *warm*, *welcoming*, *comfortable* rank highest among the results. No doubt, *warmth* seems to be a definitional feature of any form of housing: “Any place where one can live and feel warmth and welcome.”

As stated above, the *size* criterion or, more precisely, the more or less objective assessment of the size, is not decisive for the present analysis. Rather, the relevance rests on the estimated well-being inside the house from the point of view of spatiality. The perceived space as well as other subjective attitudes are relevant, as these are the feelings evoked by the use of a particular metaphor and it is precisely the emotion inducement and emergence of (sometimes unexpected) associations that can explain the occurrence of covert variation (see Section 13.2.2., “Intracultural covert variation”). Despite the objective lack of space on the small island, it is remarkable that no respondent displayed a negative attitude toward the scarcity of housing space.

In anticipation of the analysis of the HOUSE metaphor within the Maltese political discourse, the presence of the human element, i.e. the family, in this context should be emphasised. One respondent characterises the house as follows: “Warm, noisy, bustling with life, a united family” (Student, female, 18, x, in favour); another respondent (no personal details are available) suggests that the front doors are left open during the day. Admittedly, these are sporadic or incidental statements and they can therefore be rejected as less reliable or even misleading. Yet, their importance of an assertion such as “the front doors are left open during the day” cannot be stressed too much, since covert variation does not only occur at intercultural and intracultural levels, but also at the individual level. Nevertheless, statements that can be interpreted in a similar way come across as answers to other questions and they strengthen my belief that this attitude has cultural resonance; one such example is the judgement about the close relations among the Maltese given in response to question 6, “Is **family** important for the Maltese people? Explain.”: “[...] relatives pop in a lot. Usually just to see what we’re doing (and neighbours).” (Student/Bartender, male, 18, Masta, in favour) In fact, it cannot be contested that the whole discussion of the Maltese family as a closely-knit family and, by extension, closely-knit society (“Everybody knows everybody”), presented in section 12.3., supports the interpretation that cordial neighbourliness is a



central trait of the Maltese society. If we argue further in the direction of covert variation, it can be assumed that other societies might dismiss such a neighbourly attitude as a form of intrusion into the private sphere.

After the brief consideration of the respondents' attitudes toward the house in general, let us now turn to the second table, containing the participants' subjective attitudes towards the interior, furnishings and decoration:

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Description of interior</b>
1.	"[...] lavish furnishings, incorporating the classical and rustic styles. The kitchen and dining rooms are the cosiest and rooms are usually quite big."
8.	"It is fully equipped with domestic appliances. Basically we aren't deprived from any comforts."
10.	"Rooms are generally quite big [...]."
14.	"[...] with lots of ornate or antique furniture, and religious things such as crosses in almost every room!"
20.	" [...] well decorated, too many details sometimes, sometimes a bit old fashioned which I really don't like."
28.	"Big, spacious and airy rooms due to the heat."
29.	"Lots of expensive furniture and lost of ornaments."
35.	"[...] traditional furniture"
37.	"Either rustic or semi-modern furnishings [...]."
39.	" A typical Maltese house is cluttered with furniture, riddled with family frames [...]; More modern housing include apartments which are usually professionally decorated."

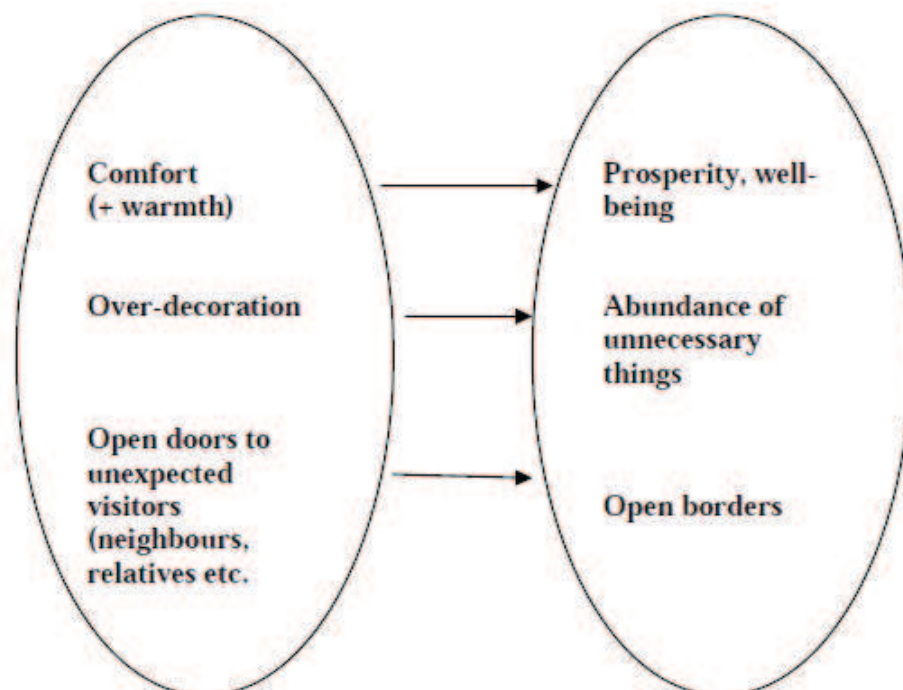
**Table 7:** Respondents' attitude towards the interior

Based on the interior characterisations in the table above, it is easy to recognise that a recurring feature of the Maltese house interior is the large quantity of furniture and of other decorative objects. Two other especially important issues need to be mentioned with regard to furniture: furniture style and its effect on the house-dwellers. According to the questionnaire results, the dominant trend is the antique rustic style, "old-fashioned" for some of my very young informants, who also stress the emerging tendency to decorate modern flats in a more "professional" way. The "old-fashioned" style relates to the Maltese history and to the traditional way of life, an assumption that seems legitimate in view of the following comments: "[...] It reminds me of past ages of

the Knights.” (see Table 6; included in the table on the attitude towards the Maltese house as it can be inferred that the comment refers to both the house as a whole, but also to the living *inside* the house); “[...] with lots of ornate or antique furniture, and religious things such as crosses in almost every room!” (the presence of crosses obviously correlate with the Christian practice of praying); “riddled with family frames”, which stresses the importance of a close family membership.

With regard to the effect of the furniture and decoration clusters, it can be hypothesised that the respondents (albeit with exceptions) and, by extension, the Maltese enjoy the overabundance of furniture and embellishments. If the attitude toward the type of housing in general (and implicitly toward living) is also considered (see table 6), it can be concluded that all these decorative odds and ends create a feeling of intimacy (cf. the use of vocabulary from the lexical field “warmth”). However, it can be assumed that in other countries, social groups or families diverging feelings may arise: instead of feeling cosy, one might feel stifled by excessive decoration.

Overall, it appears that the key features of the Maltese house are: *comfort* (and warmth), *over-decoration* and *the openness to the outdoors* (during the day). The situated HOUSE metaphor can be represented as in the figure below:



**Figure 10:** The situated house

Obviously, the Maltese house as conceptualised by the questionnaire respondents is not limited to its architectural characteristics. Aspects regarding the family members living together are also included; the relations to the neighbours are also touched upon by a few participants.

As illustrated in the figure above, domestic *comfort* is mapped upon *prosperity* and *well-being* within the EU; it should be expected that the concept of *warmth* is mapped to various degrees: from heating to affection, depending on the speaker's/hearer's perspective, although it may be assumed that in the Maltese (situated) HOUSE metaphor the affective component of *warmth* is highlighted. If *prosperity* is desirable in all houses (irrespective of the geographic location or social group) and thus also in the European house, things might differ with respect to *warmth* and *affection*. This view suggests that the affective component might be mute in the other THE EU IS A HOUSE metaphors, depending on their discursive situatedness. The same can be asserted about the *over-decoration* feature: whereas excessive decoration is associated with a feeling of cosiness by many Maltese, mapped upon the decoration of the European house this might be seen as a repelling feature. Finally, the *open doors* to unexpected visitors (such as neighbours and relatives) are mapped upon the open borders within the EU space. Again, the *open doors* can also lead to different types of interpretation, depending on the respective metaphor situatedness: for some speakers the *open doors* would ease interpersonal relations and facilitate interhuman contact, while other speakers may see the *open doors* as enabling unwarranted intrusion into their private sphere. The Maltese, as members of a closely-knit society, would not mind the intrusion into their private, domestic space.

As we have seen, the respondents do not limit their explanation to the house as building. If they also refer to the purpose of the house, the motivation behind it is due to either a logical way of defining or to the deep experience that we, almost all human beings, have of a house. Nevertheless, hardly any participant indicates a tendency to mix the two cognitive models of *house* and *home*, due to the existence of only one lexeme, *dar*, in the Maltese language used to refer to both *house* and *home*. If the two domains fused in the representation of the Maltese, they would have the tendency to dismiss the enterprise of trying to define the house as *building* and would concentrate on features related to aspects of dwelling in the house. However, the respondents appear

to be able to define the house as physical entity. The fact that they correlate the concept of *house* with the concept of *home* cannot be considered specific for the Maltese speakers, and cannot be seen as an inclination to mix the two domains.

## 12.5. Metaphors Maltese live by

The statement that politics is an area *par excellence* in which we would expect metaphors to be used is rather trivial. With the rise of cognitive linguistics, linguists began wholeheartedly to support the view that metaphors are everywhere: in all language registers, in all jargons and in all our thoughts. However, there are not many studies that concentrate on the layman's raw language. In what follows I will point out the most frequent metaphors used by the Maltese respondents to refer to EU-related matters.

On a first glance at the responses one might assume that some metaphors are sporadically used and that thus they cannot be grouped into categories. Yet, if they are analyzed in more detail, it makes sense to assume that they are related to the main classes of metaphors, which will be discussed later in this chapter, or it may be claimed that they are coherent as they pertain to the Maltese sociocultural background. Let us consider in this respect the metaphor EU IS A CONGREGATION, as in: "The European Union is a 'congregation' of countries which co-operate with each other in political and financial (or monetary) matters" (Student, male, 18, Marsascalea, in favour). Even if the respondent uses quotation marks for 'congregation', which might suggest the conscious use of metaphor, and also clearly indicates the domains in which the EU members cooperate, the vividness of the metaphor and its implications remain in place. Notwithstanding that the use of the verb *congregate* in politics with the meaning of "coming together" is not exceptional, it can be argued that the religious connotations are still striking. Furthermore, it can be taken for granted that in the Maltese context, in which the religious cognitive model is deeply stored in people's minds, such a metaphor is far from insignificant. The source domain CONGREGATION is apt to give structure to the European Union (the roles in a congregation are mapped onto the roles assumed by the EU members/ leaders), to hint at its *raison d'être* or to put forward a telic interpretation (e.g. a mission to be fulfilled). Like the members of a CONGREGATION, the members of the European Union will assemble regularly; like the ministry leaders, the

leaders of the EU will be guided by the EU rules and regulations; like the congregation itself, the EU has a mission. That this is a plausible interpretation of this metaphor is also supported by the reference to a “mission” in another respondent’s contribution: “Union is a group of something or someone that are joined together to fulfil a mission” (Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour). As in the case of *congregation*, *mission* is currently used in various linguistic registers, without salient religious connotations. Nevertheless, within the Maltese cultural setting and bearing in mind that religious metaphors were often used by politicians and journalists during the EU debate in Malta, it may be asserted that the religious interpretation is not only plausible, but also the inherent interpretation:

Add to that, of course, the fact that the people were promised, as they always are at election time, heaven on earth with EU membership and they are finding life this side of the EU just as bad, or even worse than it was on the other side. As well as the fact that since everything was down to EU membership, this appeared to most people as the panacea that would automatically solve everything.

*Independent on Sunday*, 8 August 2004

Granted there are source domains used sporadically (such as FOOTBALL), surveying the overall use of metaphors indicates that several domains are consistently resorted to. At this point I will have a closer look at the pivotal source domains and also classify the metaphors into three representative groups.

The ontological metaphors used by the participants to define the relationship Malta – EU fall into three main classes:

- (1) Metaphors of family relations with two subdivisions – parental relationships and sibling relationships;
- (2) Metaphors of colonialism;
- (3) Metaphors of economics.

Examples pertaining to class (1) are not isolated cases, but occur frequently and naturally:

A union is similar to the family. At home, the parents are the leaders but all of the family pitches in to do all the work and make the home a better place to live. The union is similar: leaders of countries work together to make the countries’ life better and bring them closer to each other. The leaders involve their countries to bring them closer together, like a big

family. (Student/ teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19,  
San Gwann, in favour)

If one compares the data from the corpus (collected from public discourse) to the results of the questionnaire, it can easily be noticed that there are several conceptual metaphors that occur both in the public and in individual discourse. A simple and valid explanation is the existence of a set of shared understandings about the relationship Malta – EU. However, as media forms opinion and choice, and its impact cannot be ruled out by anyone, it can be asserted that the metaphors occurring in both discourses are clear cases of media influence<sup>66</sup>.

The most interesting case is class (2): metaphors of colonialism. The respondents used adjectives such as *tall, elite, cultured, polite* in order to personify the European Union and *short, dark, sweaty* and *eager to please* to characterise Malta. Such adjectives automatically bring to mind stereotypical portraits of the *colonised* and of the *coloniser*.<sup>67</sup> The shared understandings in this context can be explained by Malta's cultural heritage. Colonisation is a widely occurring topic that has become a cultural theme due to its high recurrence in public debates, in the family, at school, etc. It is not surprising that colonisation is the Malta Labour Party's favourite source domain in the EU-membership debate, and this could also be an explanation for its frequency within the data collected via questionnaire. However, if it were only the influence exercised by the politicians' metaphor usage, it should be expected that these metaphors would occur only in the answers of the respondents who declared a negative attitude towards the EU. Nevertheless, the data suggest that even some of the respondents with a declared positive attitude towards membership resorted to the colonisation source domain. It can

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<sup>66</sup> Undoubtedly, this has dramatic consequences for people's decision-making. However, I shall not chart the implications of media influence as this would go beyond the scope of the dissertation.

<sup>67</sup> This assumption relies on the conviction that people have stereotypical representations of the colonised and of the colonist, and that words such as *tall, elite, cultured* etc. vs. *short, dark, sweaty, naive* etc. are essential components of the stereotypical portraits. These are not *sine-qua-non* for the comprehension of the words *coloniser* and *colonist*, but undoubtedly part of the encyclopaedic definition of these lexemes. My assumption is not only based on introspection and general knowledge. A rather ironical portrait is offered by Memmi (2003: 47): "We sometimes enjoy picturing the colonizer as a tall man, bronzed by the sun, wearing Wellington boots (...). When not engaged in battles against nature, we think of him labouring selflessly for mankind, attending the sick and spreading culture to the nonliterate. In other words, his pose is one of a noble adventurer, a righteous pioneer."



therefore be cautiously asserted that colonisation can be regarded as a basic cultural schema that is of a great import and appeal for the Maltese and which has become embedded in the Maltese way of thinking, a schema which is used to understand a wide range of contexts, even if these contexts only skeletally resemble the original schema<sup>68</sup>. It can be assumed that this basic schema contains information on the opposing relationship types, such as a relationship between entities with equal status and a relationship between entities possessing different statuses. The colonisation schema in its 'skeletal' form would be used to understand the relationships between entities with different statuses.

For the sake of clarification, let us have a look at the mechanism of the colonisation scheme in general, and subsequently explore its applicability for Malta in view of the questionnaire results. The general colonisation frame includes one person exploiting another person (the colonist), a person that is forced to allow the exploiting (the colonised), and the goods of which the colonist wants to deprive the colonised person. This scheme characterises a typical form of colonisation, i.e. based on economic interest. However, in Malta the reason for colonisation was Malta's strategic position in the Mediterranean Sea. This lenient form of colonisation can be schematised as follows: one person (the colonist) who takes advantage of another person (the colonised) and the services with which the colonist provides the colonised, e.g. the colonist's culture and experience. This acculturation can be seen as a form of cultural imperialism, either positive or negative. Notwithstanding the fact that today cultural imperialism is normally associated with the US cultural domination, this phenomenon is understood here in its general and more abstract form as the domination of one weaker, local or marginalised culture by a stronger, centralised culture. According to Schiller (1976: 9), "the concept of cultural imperialism today best describes the sum of processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system, and sometimes bribed into shaping

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<sup>68</sup> Note that due to the reduced scale of the questionnaire (as regards the number of the participants, the context and the age segment), this is only a tentative conclusion which needs to be tested via further experiments. This hypothesis is primarily supported by Malta's long history of colonisation and based on my conviction, that even if colonisation in Malta did not take a traumatic form, it still influenced the life of the Maltese as a whole. As the life of the colonists and the life of the colonised were not simply juxtaposed, it is to be expected that the colonisation experience impacted on and shaped the Maltese identity and their world-view.

social institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and structures of the dominating centre of the system.” This is apparently a soft type of domination in which the indoctrination takes place without the recipients’ awareness, as by learning the language of the dominant culture (linguistic colonialism).

Interestingly, the results of the questionnaire indicate that the used lexemes can remain the same (e.g. *colonist*, *colony*, *colonised*), whereas the cognitive models evoked might differ considerably, depending on the type of colonialism or the type of domination exercised. For example, within the frame of cultural colonialism, the *colonist* acquires a different status than in the general colonisation frame: the roles *exploiter/ exploited* are weakened as soon as the colonised person is the recipient of (cultural) benefits. The category *colonist* itself does not acquire any specification as to the “type of colonist”. Rather, it is the activated frame that selects a certain cognitive model: either the humane version of the colonist or the fully beast.

At the end of the present chapter, attention should again be drawn to the importance of the questionnaire evidence for the analysis of metaphors in the Maltese political discourse, which constitutes the primary focus of this dissertation. In summary, the aspects discussed in this chapter should be considered in order to reconstruct the source domains employed by politicians and thus to identify mappings that might not be evident at a superficial level of analysis, but which are selected and get activated at the decoding level. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that the source domains surfacing in both the participants’ responses and in the politicians’ speeches are potentially affect-laden and thus good candidates for persuasive or even manipulative metaphors.

The following chapter will deal with the impact of cultural knowledge and local beliefs on metaphors, and will propose that cultural patterns may be salient or apparently absent, but they should be expected to be latently present and to become manifest at the level of reception.



### 13. Metaphor in (cultural) use: Overt vs. Covert Variation

The topic of this chapter is metaphor in use and its importance for a country's culture. The title of the chapter has been chosen intentionally to stress that the analysis of metaphors is not to be separated from the mental knowledge of a spatio-temporal milieu. According to this view, the sociocultural knowledge in the mind of the language speaker constitutes a determining factor both for the production and for the reception of metaphors and has to be taken into account in order to analyse variation. With respect to the metaphors occurring in the discourse on the EU, I will distinguish between *overt* and *covert* variation and argue that both types of variation can lead to *nation-specific* metaphors (as opposed to *European* metaphors).

Metaphor variation is commonly considered to be of two types: different source / same target and different target / same source. Goatly (2007:12-13) coined the term *diversification* to explain cases in which one target is referred to by different sources and the term *multivalency* to designate cases in which one source can be applied to different target domains. Similarly, Kövecses (2005: 121ff) distinguishes two types of relationship between the source and the target domain: the range of target and the scope of source. The range of target defines the set of source domains in a given language or a variety that are conventionally associated with a particular target domain (FAMILY and SHIP to refer to nation). Kövecses specifies that different languages or varieties can have different ranges of source domains for the given target domain. The scope of metaphor refers to the set of target domains with which a source domain is associated (e.g. the source domain journey can be used to refer to several target domains, such as life, love, EU integration, etc.).

Although it seems nonsensical at first, same target – same source variation also exists. This variation can only be recognised at a deeper level and not at a superficial level, and is manifested foremost interculturally, but also intraculturally, due to differences in attitudes and beliefs between various social groups or various regional groups. Thus, *same target-same source variation* can best be explained through inter- or intracultural differences. As an example of same target-same source variation, the reader is invited to imagine the *euro* in the role of a *saviour*: “The euro has successfully

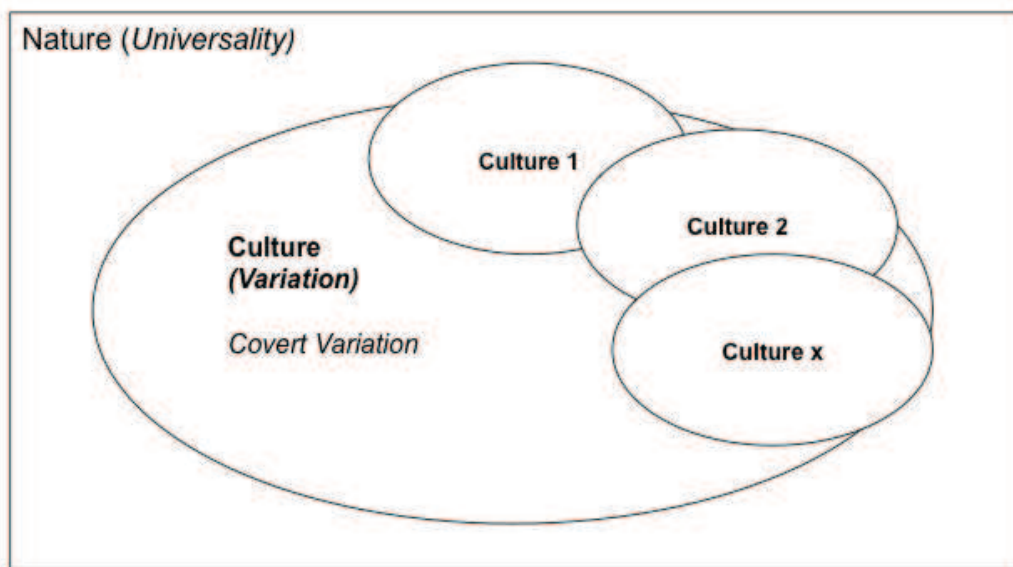
established itself as a global currency. It now looks like it could be asked to take on the larger role of a saviour of troubled economies.” (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7932770.stm>) In order to avoid the pitfall of stereotyping, I will not exemplify the differences in the decoding of this metaphor as depending on one’s country of origin, but simply as being a consequence of one’s personal values and beliefs. I dare assume that an atheist (or someone in whose life religion does not play a central role) would comprehend *a saviour* merely as a person (an *agent*) that saves someone (a *patient*) from a dangerous situation. Therefore, the *euro* would simply be personified so far as to assume the role of *a saviour*, but no further information on the identity of the saving agent will be provided; the *economies* are also personified not in being *troubled* (water can also be *troubled*), but in needing to be *saved* (inanimate entities do not normally require *saving*, but ‘repairing’). If, on the contrary, the reader is a religious person, it can be argued that the identity of the saviour is no longer unknown; the saviour is comprehended through religious experience, in other words, the saviour is Jesus Christ. Consequently, the metaphor comprehension from a religious standpoint is likely to enhance the tendency to undervalue the power of metaphors and thus to take the intended message for granted.

In certain cases, however, variation is also caused by a difference in perspective: one’s perspective and self-perception play a role in selecting the target. That is, the positioning of the speakers ‘inside’ or ‘outside’ the European Union (EU members or non-members), or their (perceived) economic position on the margin or in the centre are likely to determine the selection of the target: the European Union or the aspiring member country (cf. “Europe stands at a crossroads”; “Malta at the crossroads again”; for a more detailed discussion of the JOURNEY metaphor, see section 13.2.1.1., “Identical source domains – different targets”).

For the sake of convenience, I will use the terms *overt variation* (to refer to both multivalency and diversification, although my examples are almost exclusively cases of diversification) and *covert variation* (at the non-manifest level, same target-same source).

The scale from *overt* to *covert variation* manifests itself in the degree of obviousness. Thus, *overt variation* refers to clear, incontestable cases of source domain variation, which are recognised as such at first sight (e.g. COLONISATION, a prevalent

source domain in the Maltese discourse; as its recurrence is historically motivated, it is unlikely that this source domain occurs in the German discourse). In such cases, it is not only selective mappings that diverge, but the whole source domain. *Overt variation* remains obvious when the metaphors are looked at in separation from their original context. In contrast, *covert variation* is only salient if the metaphors are analysed within their original linguistic and cultural context, which implies that prototypical cultural models play an important role.



**Figure 11:** Covert Variation

As outlined in the chart above, culture has to be understood as embedded in nature (human nature should also be considered). This explains why cultures are similar in their core features, such as values and beliefs, traditions, history, social relationships, architecture, etc. Thus, all cultures have values and beliefs, they all have a history (no matter if more or less similar to the history of other countries, at least for the reason that all histories have a temporal axis and also because most histories intersect), people engage in social relations, all cultures have types of housing, etc. That is why, it comes as no surprise that we experience and conceptualise reality in a similar way and hence, that many metaphors are universal, or – as we shall see – nearly universal. The circles in the figure depict various cultures: the largest circle represents the abstract concept of culture, whereas the smaller circles profile national cultures. The smaller circles only

slightly supersede the large circle, which indicates that they are different only to a trivial extent. It is only to this extent that overt variation exists (e.g. instantiated as strikingly different conceptual metaphors or unique conceptual metaphors). *Overt variation* is based on a horizontal type of variation.

The overlapping parts reflect overlapping features; yet, it is worth mentioning that they are identical only at first glance. Overlapping can be understood as superimposing: a superimposition of layers. In other words, the fact that the family is a form of life known all over the world does not necessarily imply that all familial forms are identical. This subtle form of variation, exerted on the vertical axis, will from now on be called *covert variation*.

Within the framework of cultural variation, Kövecses distinguishes between congruent and alternative metaphors (Kövecses 2005: 68-70). Congruent metaphors are defined as near-universal generic schemas which are filled with cultural information at a specific level and activated in culture-specific ways. For example, THE ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER metaphor may be nearly universal at a generic level. However, cultural investigations of the pressurized container metaphor indicate that there are cultural-specific characteristics that distinguish various situated instantiations of this metaphor. Thus, Matsuki (1995) shows that all the metaphors for anger in English, as analysed by Lakoff and Kövecses (1987), are shared by the Japanese language, but at the same time the author observes that a large number of metaphorical expressions are based on the concept of *hara* (belly) (1995: 143ff). Examples from other languages allow the conclusion that the basic structure (generic-level) is largely shared, but that salient cultural content completes this blueprint in such ways that different metaphors are instantiated at a specific level (Kövecses 2005: 69). While congruent metaphors display the same general structure, alternative metaphors exhibit divergent source domains. As Kövecses argues, each language has at its disposal a range of source domains for the conceptualisation of a specific target domain (Kövecses 2005:70). The range of conceptual metaphors may include source domains that are present in other languages as well, but typical source domains, which constitute the basis for alternative metaphors, may also be detected.

Kövecses' distinction between congruent and alternative metaphors seems to coincide with my terms overt and covert variation. However, it is only the term

alternative metaphors that can be used with the same meaning as overt variation. The term congruent metaphors does not imply that the amount of cultural information is not always obvious at the level of metaphorical expressions. *Covert variation* is therefore meant to stress that there are cases of metaphors (both conceptual metaphors and metaphorical expressions) that seem identical (e.g. the European Union is a family of nations, join the large family of nations) and that it is only sociocultural information (present in one's worldview or the information about the mental structures of a group of speakers) that provides routes of access to certain aspects of a domain, which otherwise would remain backgrounded.

As the object of analysis is restricted to the discourse on the European Union, the term universal metaphor would not suit my purpose. Therefore, I suggest replacing the well-known dichotomy of universal vs. culture-specific metaphors (cf. e.g. Kövecses 2005:35-36) with the more restricted opposition *European vs. nation-specific metaphors*. European metaphors are metaphors shared by the EU-related political discourse(s) in Germany, France, England, as well as Malta and other smaller European countries, whether EU-members or aspiring EU-members. Nation-specific metaphors, on the other hand, are those unique, or at least specific, to the discourse of individual countries, here specifically Malta. However, since metaphor variation within European discourse is particularly determined by economic differences, it should be emphasised that nation-specific Maltese metaphors may to some extent be shared by the public discourse of other countries characterised by a weak economy (e.g. countries of the former Eastern Bloc). Moreover, it cannot be excluded that these conceptual metaphors, which are widespread in the public discourse in Malta (and Eastern European countries), will also occur in the European discourse of economically strong countries like Germany or France. In fact, the main difference often lies in the frequency of occurrence: while nation-specific metaphorical expressions are frequent in the discourse of some, e.g. the smaller and weaker members, the odd occurrence in the discourse of well-developed countries cannot be excluded. Nevertheless it is this difference in the frequency of use that reflects the political makeup of a country. In fact, the situation is often not uniform even within one nation due to different political opinions: it is the prevailing political stance that dictates which source domains are employed and to what extent they are used. For example, as one of the two major political parties in Malta is

said to be a Europhobe party, it goes without saying that specific metaphors deviating from the middle-of-the-road European discourse will abound in Maltese public discourse coming from sources associated with this party.

The fact that many conceptual metaphors are shared by the European discourse(s) of the member states becomes obvious if one looks at the findings in the literature on EU metaphors. As the reader may recall, a survey of the findings of the research projects on the EU language was offered in Chapter 2, “The European Union: A Survey of the Research Projects (state-of-the-art).” However, as mentioned above, despite striking similarities, it can be misleading to offer such lists of shared source domains, since closer investigation may reveal *covert variation* due to different conceptualisations of these domains in different cultures and societies.

What follows is an analysis of the main metaphors that distinguish the Maltese discourse from the dominant European discourse represented mainly by German/British sources.

### **13.1. Overt Variation**

#### **13.1.1. Intercultural overt variation**

In the context of intercultural overt variation, one might be fascinated by the salient metaphors, which distinguish the discourse of one country from the discourse of others, and assume the existence of unique metaphors. However, a word of caution is required: due to their universal raw material, it cannot be excluded that metaphors recurrent in Maltese discourse also occur in the discourse of other member states characterised by a low-developed economy and, marginally, even in economically well-developed countries, in Europhobic speeches.

To begin with, a discourse of pressure can be recognised in the debate on the EU membership in smaller member-states. Consider, for example, figure 12, a poster of the youth-oriented NO2EU movement<sup>69</sup> that militated against EU membership alongside the Labour Party:

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<sup>69</sup> As the name suggests, NO2EU is a coalition of trade unionists, political parties and campaigning groups that militates against EU and, more precisely, against EU policies that, according to the NO2EU supporters, is a threat to democracy. This organisation, which presumably originated in UK





**Figure 12:** Don't take unnecessary risks

The feeling of pressure is paramount. The foregrounded object is an anvil whose size is distorted: the anvil is much bigger than the man. This is a visual hyperbole, as the size of a normal anvil is exaggerated in order to augment the feeling of pressure. The verbal component “EU”, attached to the image, invites the interpretation of the European Union as an anvil, which means that the EU/anvil relation is a verbal-pictorial metaphor. The choice of the anvil instead of any other heavy object is not made randomly. If we see the anvil in its context (i.e. in the blacksmith shop), it is expected that further pressure will be exerted by hammering pieces of metal on it. The man under the anvil can be interpreted metonymically: the man stands for the Maltese population as a whole. If the man in the picture is squashed, it follows that the whole Maltese population will be squashed by the EU.

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([www.no2eu.com](http://www.no2eu.com)), was one of the three anti-EU movements in Malta before EU entry: *Campanja Nazzjonali għall-Indipendenza* (the Campaign for National Independence CNI, <http://www.cnimalta.org/e1.html>), *Front Maltin Inqumu* (Arise Maltese Front) and no2EU ([www.no2eu.org](http://www.no2eu.org)). The web-page [www.no2eu.org](http://www.no2eu.org) cannot be accessed anymore, as – very likely – this movement does not exist anymore. One of my informants wrote in an email on October 10, 2010: “According to me, *no2eu* does not exist any more, since I see no reason why it should continue to exist!! Not only that, but one of the principal supporters of the movement, Sharon Ellul Bonici, is now working in Brussels.....with the EU of course. Cheap fools and idiots, those who opposed Malta's entry into the EU.”

The verbal tag in Maltese (Engl. “Don’t take unnecessary risks”) guides the interpretation of this poster as a situation that can be avoided. Within the frame of the EU-membership debate, this means “avoid joining the European Union”.

Not only in negative contexts, but also in positive ones, can an inventory of the lexical field of pressure be compiled, including items such as press, coerce, force, etc. These lexical items are present in contexts referring to all areas of life, from divorce laws to hunting and bird shooting, which would have to be adjusted to the European norms. Metaphors of pressure also prevail in Maltese discourse on the EU institutions:

From the great defender of makku’s sovereignty, Labour now rushes to report the government to the ‘big brother’ in Brussels whenever it drags its feet on any of those – hitherto – costly, bureaucratic, burdensome and useless maze of straightjacket EU laws.

*The Times of Malta*

(<http://www.timesofmalta.com/core/article.php?id=259431>)

Given their frequency in all kinds of discourse it is not surprising that anthropomorphic metaphors are also quite common in the discourse on Europe. But whereas in the German and British discourse Europe itself is personified, in the Maltese discourse it is Malta as an individual state that is regarded as a human being. In one of the metaphorical instances, Malta as a member is conceptualised as a ‘baby’:

“We need the money to be spent now – it’s like a baby that needs a full bottle of milk but is only given half now and the other half kept in the fridge. Why, if the baby needs it all now? And our economy needs these EU funds to be spent now”.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2009/03/15/t3.html>; quotation marks in the original)

In this example, the conceptualisation of the country as a baby, conflated with the conceptual metaphor MONEY IS A NUTRITIOUS FLUID, gives rise to the framing of the EU AS A NURTURANT PARENT – a metaphor which will be explored in greater detail in Section 13.2.2., “Intracultural covert variation.”

Not surprisingly, negative images are not uncommon – especially in the discourse of Eurosceptic parties (see Section 10.1 below) – in economically less well developed countries like Malta. The EU is the embodiment of negative forces, of monsters and other disastrous phenomena. An example of how such tendencies are



embedded in the specific socio-historical and linguistic context of Malta is Joe Brincat's conception of Europe as a 'spanker' or a 'sodomizer'.

To spank or to sodomise – Brincat and Bondi cross swords

On Sunday 9 June the MLP deputy leader, Dr Joe Brincat addressed the public in Gudja and during his speech, he voiced his opinion on the state of affairs concerning the EU – in plain Maltese language. 'Nispicaw biz-zokk f'idejna ... pero anke nispicaw biz-zokk fuq il-warrani...iz-zokk nuzawh fuq il-warrani.'<sup>70</sup> These phrases formed part of his speech and immediately elicited giggles from members of the listening crowd, who immediately tuned to one track of the comments ... He claimed that what he said had been in plain Maltese language, referring to a spanking with a stick and in no way had he meant to refer to anything remotely vulgar. On Friday 14 June in his regular column to The Times, Lou Bondi stated that Joe Brincat had spoken in an extremely vulgar manner to say the least, and claimed that Brincat had said that 'the European Union was trying to sodomise us' and that 'According to the MLP deputy leader we should, as it were, turn around and sodomise Europe back.'

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2002/0616/16.html>)

Due to a recurrent pun in the Maltese language, in which the Labour Party representative's speech was delivered, an ambiguity arises. Thus, *zokk*, which means 'stick or branch of a tree', is similar to the word *zobb* ('penis') and is often used euphemistically in common parlance to refer to 'penis'. Furthermore, placed in the context with *warrani* ('backside, bum'), the lexeme *zokk* suggests two alternative meanings or, more precisely, leaves it open to the hearer to decode the utterance in one way or the other.

If one analyses such metaphors against the Maltese cultural background, the assumption that they arise from the Maltese colonisation heritage is not far-fetched. Therefore, it can be concluded that such metaphorical expressions distinguish the Maltese public discourse from those of other countries for which colonisation is not a historical constituent. The long centuries of colonisation underlie the conceptual system of the Maltese people and therefore emerge in metaphoric usage.

Another example of *overt variation* is the conceptual metaphor THE EU IS A FORTRESS. As suggested by the example below, Malta would be reduced to the "status

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<sup>70</sup> "We will end up with the penis in our hand; also in our butt... we use it on our butt [my translation MP]." This sentence was translated on the basis of three Maltese native speakers' comments.

of a remote outpost”, which both recalls the colonisation period and stresses the lack of importance and influence of small states within the EU.

#### Malta at the Crossroads Again

The opposition expresses the fear of some of the partners in our small business: that we are not prepared for such a leap, that the human and economic cost of adjustment to the new reality will be catastrophic, that we have done well so far by being different, by exploiting our uniqueness just beyond the borders of Europe, membership will reduce us to the status of remote outpost.

*Speech by Dr Harry Vassallo, Chairperson AD – The Green Party to The Commonwealth Foundation, Visit of Commonwealth Fellows, 15th March 2002*  
(<http://www.alternativa.org.mt/speeches.html#SELFACstud>)

As Chapter 9, “The EU and the Maltese Identity: Smallness, Periphery, Phobias and Identity Verification” already hinted, another rich source of figurative language is Malta’s geographical position as an island. It is presumably not too far-fetched to argue that this special experience of space becomes embedded in people’s mental representations; and since the cognitive cannot be separated from the affective, it can be assumed that the physical setting also influences the psychological make-up of the Maltese. Consider the following quotation:

And here’s Mrs Mizzi’s ‘vote for moi’ advertisement in today’s newspapers: “I would like to see the insular mentality, so characteristic of islanders, to be diluted into a healthy blend of ‘Europeanism’. I would like to give children at an early age, a craving for learning and a yearning for knowledge.”

Yes, ma’am, we believe you. That’s why you voted in the 2003 general election for a man determined to keep us out of the European Union, because you wanted to dilute our insularity and give our children chances.

*Daphne Caruana Galizia's Notebook*  
(<http://daphnecaruanagalizia.com/2009/05/21/u-hallina-marlene/>;  
quotation marks in the original)

This example illustrates how the Maltese project the bounded landmark of the island as a real ecological space upon the mind space so that the ‘insularity’ feature becomes a characteristic of the mind. In this case two input spaces can be distinguished: the island space and the mentality space. The first input space, the island space, should not be limited to the “insular” feature as in the *Oxford Encyclopaedic English Dictionary*

definition, i.e. “a of or like an island; b separate or remote, like an island” (Hawkins, Allen 1991: 736). Thus, the island space should not be seen only as an ecological space, but as a chronotopically situated space that gives access simultaneously to the space of the island biogeography, to economic information (e.g. resource-poor or resource-rich island) and to historical information (e.g. exposure to colonisation). All this information is combined in the input space “island” and projected onto the mentality space that binds images of the self, of the other and the image of the relationship self-other.

<b>Island Space</b>	<b>Mentality Space</b>	<b>Insular Mentality</b>
separate and remote	self-image	distorted self-image
water surroundings (limited movement)	image of the other	distorted image of the relationship self-other
small, resource-poor vulnerable	image of the world	distorted image of the world
repeated victim to colonisation	image of the relationship self-other	

**Table 8:** Island Space – Mentality Space – Insular Mentality

As illustrated above, the island space in this blend highlight only negative aspects of the island and of the life on the island. The positive aspects of the island are often hidden in the EU-supporters’ arguments who aim to perspectivise an isolophobic experience that the Maltese can only escape if they join the EU. Consequently, the overall meaning of the blended space “insular mentality” sums up desolate images from the input space one which are blended upon the self-images in the input space two. The distortion is triggered by the ‘abnormality’ of living on an island that is sometimes felt by islanders:

For our sins for being Islanders we are meant to suffer insularity. This European Union thing may not change things as fast as we would have imagined. The infatuation with everything Brussels is also making it worse. We badly need to look beyond, but as long as we remain Islanders we have little choice.

*Malta Today, 26 September 2004*

In the quotation above, the discourse focuses on the relation EU-Malta from the perspective of insularity. Insularity is perceived as punishment for a sin. A balanced view on insularity would present both the advantages and the disadvantages of living on an island. However, neither the pro-EU nor the anti-EU discourse expresses an objective point of view on insularity: the pro-EU discourse tends to reduce insularity to a

handicap, whereas the anti-EU discourse places emphasis on the advantages of the physical isolation as a symbol of Maltese independence, sovereignty and self-sufficiency. Thus, in the pro-EU discourse the biased view on insularity is selected and blended upon mentality, which leads to a distorted self-image.

A distorted self-image can manifest itself as an inferiority complex in the case of small and resource-poor islands, such as Malta. The same features (size and economic situation) as well as past events are apt to create a deformed image of the relationship with the world and a potential 'other'. This is especially the case for countries with a long history of colonisation, whose long-lasting impact contributes to the establishment of the relationship image "self-other" in terms of the dichotomy harm-doer vs. victim. The separation from the rest of the world as well as the limitation of the inward and outward movements of the people is liable to hinder change and thus contribute to obsolete forms of organisation and backwardness.

It should be mentioned that an altered composition of the input space 1 (island space) meant to capture a different insular context would entail a different configuration of the blended space. Thus, if the input space 1 represents Great Britain, the output space would contain information absent in the blended space "insular mentality" of Malta. For example, in the concept of "splendid isolation" (originally used to refer to British international politics) with the modifier "splendid" stresses the positive connotations of being isolated.

Further, as in the above quotation the insular mentality loses concreteness and can be blended upon the space of the "European mind" in an attempt to create a new conceptual organisation. The metaphor (INSULAR) MENTALITY IS A LIQUID hints at the possibility of change. The "healthy blend of Europeanism" in the quotation (<http://daphnecaruanagalizia.com/2009/05/21/u-hallina-marlene/>, cf. p. 128) implies that the "insular mentality" in its present form is unhealthy and that only a combination with "Europeanism" would contribute to the formation of a new, desired mentality:

Educational programmes catering for the exchange of youths and students give the younger generation an added opportunity to study overseas. These programmes help in overcoming the insular often verging on the ghetto mentality that is often manifest in key sectors of our society and to strengthen a more cosmopolitan outlook.

*The Euro Movement*  
(<http://www.euro-movement.org.mt>)

In the above quotation, *ghetto mentality* is described as a type of *insular mentality*, or an insular mentality in its strongest form. Thus, it can be asserted that ghetto is a metaphor for island. In the metaphor THE ISLAND IS A GHETTO, the source domain GHETTO is mapped upon the target domain, ISLAND, which gives rise to a series of entailments. The mentality concept (like other psychological concepts) is very difficult to define: there are many definitions, but none seems to accurately cover its essential meaning. Therefore, metaphors help concretise the inchoate meaning of the mentality concept.

It is already common knowledge that metaphors are traditionally explained via a relation of similarity that is supposed to exist between the target and the source (in traditional terms, tenor and vehicle). The effect of this metaphor is striking (at least, if one has sufficient knowledge of the Maltese mentality), although objectively there is hardly a similarity relation between an island<sup>71</sup> and a ghetto<sup>72</sup>. As I will show in what follows, this metaphor creates similarity and this would support the cognitivists' idea that metaphors do not presuppose similarity but are apt to create similarities. The metaphor AN ISLAND IS A GHETTO illustrates this idea by showing how one feature shared by the source and the target can help trigger the intended analogy. In other words, a feature (e.g. isolation) that is shared by an element of the target (isolation by water) and an element of the source (isolation by economic and social conditions) helps the hearer/reader arrive at an extensive set of analogical relationships between source and target<sup>73</sup>:

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<sup>71</sup> According to the definition in *The Oxford Encyclopaedic English Dictionary* (1991:752) an *island* is “n. 1 a piece of land surrounded by water. 2 anything compared to an island, esp. in being surrounded in some way. 3 = *traffic island* 4 a detached or isolated thing. b *Physiol.* a detached portion of tissue or group of cells (cf. *Islet*). 5 (...).

<sup>72</sup> *The Oxford Encyclopaedic English Dictionary* (1991: 592) defines *ghetto* as: n. “1 a part of a city, esp. a slum area, occupied by a minority group or groups. 2 *hist.* the Jewish quarter in a city. 3 a segregated group or area. – *v.tr.* (-oes, -oed) put or keep (people in a ghetto. (...))”

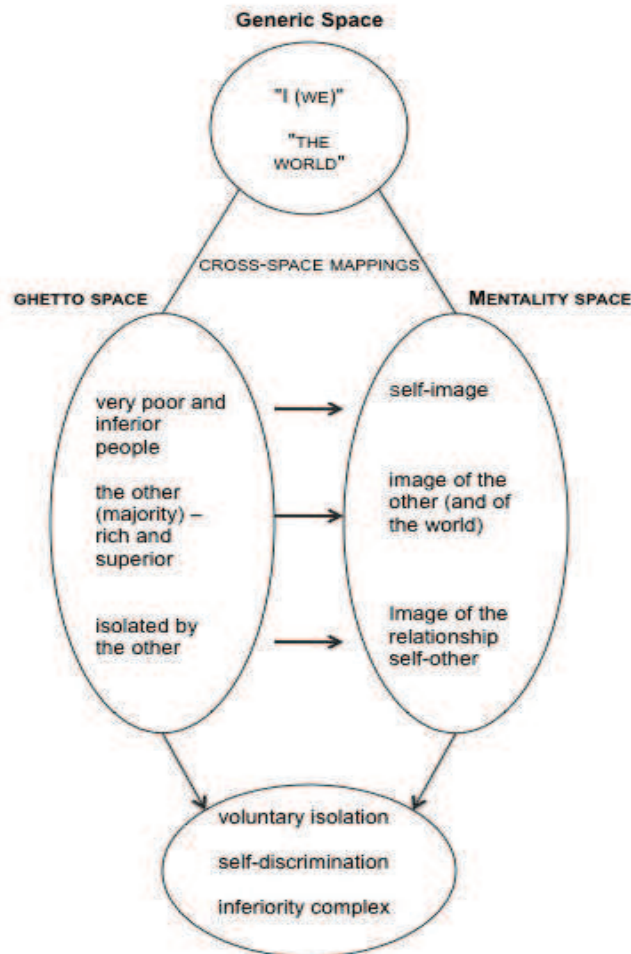
<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, the word “ghetto” comes from an island where Venetian Jews were forced to live. Ghettos were usually encircled by walls and gates and kept locked at night and during Christian festivals. (see Merriam-Webster’s *Collegiate Encyclopedia*, p. 651)

<b>source: GHETTO</b>	<b>Mappings</b>	<b>target: ISLAND</b>
GHETTO	→	ISLAND
GHETTO-DWELLER	→	ISLANDER
ISOLATION (DETERMINED BY HUMAN AGENCY)	→	ISOLATION (BY NATURE)
DISCRIMINATION (BY OTHER)	→	DISCRIMINATION (BY SELF)
BAD ECONOMIC SITUATION	→	BAD ECONOMIC SITUATION

**Table 9:** Mappings for the metaphor AN ISLAND IS A GHETTO

In a close analysis it becomes obvious that many of the “shared features” are only shared within the recipient’s scope of perception. The negative connotations are also supported by the correlation in bodily experience. Expressions, such as “trapped on this island”, “confined to an island”, “confined to a ward”, suggest that isolation is perceived as confinement and constraint. The embodied correlation between isolation (e.g. in a hospital ward because you are contagious or in a lift if you get stuck while using the lift) and the feeling of confinement cannot be underestimated: you feel trapped, your body struggles, you do not get enough air, and you simply want to get away. Therefore, isolated spaces trigger connotations of stifling confinement. Such a correlation is experienced before language and concept acquisition. Positive connotations associated with the island in general or with the Maltese island in particular (such as close family relations, etc.) are lost in this metaphorical context (ISOLATION IS CONFINEMENT).

The metaphor THE ISLAND IS A GHETTO thus helps us to understand the blend *ghetto mentality* in the Maltese context. GHETTO MENTALITY involves a blend of two cognitive models from two inputs: the MENTALITY SPACE and the GHETTO SPACE (represented in the figure below):



**Figure 13: Ghetto Mentality**

In the MENTALITY SPACE we have two roles: the collective self<sup>74</sup> and the other as well as the world they inhabit. In the GHETTO SPACE the role of the poor and marginalised is prominent; the role of the rich (the one imposing isolation) is backgrounded within the space itself, even though it is very important. In this space the poor or the inferior (for social, ethnic, etc. reasons) are isolated by the rich or the superior and are not allowed to mingle with the rest of the community. Being forced to dwell at the margin of the city and being considered as inferior, the ghetto dwellers start regarding themselves as inferior.

*Ghetto mentality* is easily understood with its negative connotations regardless of its Maltese context. In the Maltese context the understanding of the blend takes place in two stages: in the first stage, the GHETTO is interpreted as a metaphor for island and in

<sup>74</sup> Mentality can be understood as individual or collective. In the present situation the focus is on collective mentality.



the second stage ghetto images (or, more precisely, feelings associated with the ghetto) are blended upon mentality.

From a negative point of view, an island is characterised by isolation and, directly associated with it, ignorance and limited relations to the surrounding territories as well as scarce resources. These are exactly the arguments used by people favouring EU-membership. A dominant conceptual metaphor is EU MEMBERSHIP IS A GEOGRAPHY CHANGER. In the following excerpt from the article “Staying out means remaining a backwater”, a series of subject complements (“a backwater, ignored, bypassed, and insular”) convey the idea that not joining the EU would preserve and/or contribute to Malta’s isolation. If this proves true, it goes without saying that the opposite is also true, i.e. that EU membership is apt to amend the geographical (insular) position of the island.

The decision to join the European Union is like the decision to marry. The heart and mind both play a part. You have to use both when coming to your decision ... By staying out of the European Union, I fear that we will remain a backwater, ignored, bypassed, and insular. I find this far more frightening than any one of the scare stories being promoted by the ‘no’ lobby.

*The Times of Malta*, 4 March 2003

and again:

[...] The result is a two-speed political discourse which creates friction the faster Malta integrates into the European mainland: the more this island opens itself up to the cultural exports pouring in from the Western world, the greater that feeling grew of being constrained by the overtones of a national, religious discourse.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/e4.html>)

In the above quotation, the utterance “the faster Malta integrates into the European mainland” is a clear indicator of the Maltese belief that political manoeuvring can change geography. Integrating into the European mainland involves Malta’s discarding its insular characteristics (e.g. separation by water, isolation, remoteness) and, logically, inheriting mainlandlike features, such as stability. Interestingly, the European mainland stands here for the European Union, which induces the false inference that the EU includes all mainland countries, but no islands or that the insular status of the isle states was changed after EU entry. Another explanation for the conceptualisation of the EU as

a European mainland would be a difference in the mental maps concerning the division of the world between mainlanders and islanders. It can be assumed that the islanders – beside the official division of the world into continents – conceive of a separation of the world into mainland and islands. Furthermore, the mainland is associated with stability as opposed to insular entities that are associated with fragility. In the same way the European Union is regarded as massive and firm and hereby apt to provide small states attached to it with stability. If – as in the first of the above quotations – ‘staying out’ equals remaining ‘insular’, one can conclude that the conceptual metaphors structuring the EU debate are: EU IS MAINLAND, which implies NON-MEMBERS ARE ISLANDS.

This can also be interpreted in connection with the conceptual metaphor NON-PHYSICAL UNITY IS PHYSICAL UNITY metaphor, i.e. a political unification equals geographical unification. This idea also surfaces in some informants’ definitions of the European Union, in which the geographic division of the world is salient, and thus the boundary between politics and geography becomes blurred: “The world is divided into continents, one continent is Europe. Malta is part of Europe as are many other countries and together they form part of the EU so that us Europeans can work together and live together in peace.” (Student, female, 18, Naxxar); and again: “It is a club with exclusive membership for thriving countries within the boundaries of the European continent.” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala).

The discourse of *insularity/marginality* is also based on a *centre-periphery schema* with the EU constituting the centre and Malta standing for the periphery. As the insular geography cannot be contested, it is obvious that this centre-periphery schema underlies both positive and negative contexts. However, the negative contexts are characterised by a centrifugal propensity, whereas in the more positively intended texts a centripetal tendency prevails.

As already mentioned, the issue of size is also present in articles and speeches conveying a positive attitude towards the European Union:

Malta, the size of a small town in Europe, will be standing next to giants, sharing the same experiences and making its own contribution, whatever the cynics, in Malta and abroad, may think of the island. We will be leaving behind those still caught in a time warp.

*The Times of Malta*, 28 April 2003

This quotation is ripe with metaphors: the metaphor POWERFUL COUNTRIES ARE LARGE CREATURES, implying the metaphor SMALL COUNTRIES ARE PYGMIES dominates the passage. However, the collocation sharing the same experiences places different sizes on the same level; indicating that size is a relational value. Size is a category that may undergo changes by losing some of its most intrinsic features.

A closer inspection reveals that in positive contexts (as in the above paragraph), the centre-periphery schema sometimes disappears. Size is still a fact, but it does not indicate importance any more since Malta, as a member, will stand in the immediate proximity of other prominent countries. Therefore, the metonymy size for importance will become irrelevant after joining the EU (or in the visionary texts concerning the time after having become a member of the EU):

I firmly believe that the destiny of this country lies in the heart of Europe, and not at its periphery, nor at any other periphery. [...] Europe is changing. By next year, very few of Europe's countries will be left out of the European Union. Of those, most are standing in line to join. [...] We cannot afford to be left alone in an economic wilderness.

*The Times of Malta*, 5 March 2003

If one favours EU membership, the process of joining is understood as a centripetal movement, i.e. EU membership is assessed as guaranteeing Malta a central place within Europe. By contrast, those who oppose EU membership see joining not only as stagnation (i.e. staying on the periphery), but also as regression to a former state. "Former state" refers here to the historic period before independence.

When a favourable stance is adopted, Malta before EU membership is situated on the periphery of Europe (as it actually is from a geographical point of view) and moves (metaphorically) towards the centre after joining. Interestingly, the centre-periphery schema is split in this context between objective information (periphery: official knowledge about the geography of the country) and perceptual information (Europe perceived as the centre).

Conversely, when a non-favourable position is taken, no clear spatial centre/periphery patterns can be detected. In this case, the dichotomy colonialism vs. independence structures the image schema centre-periphery inasmuch as in the context this image schema contains the hidden concept of the periphery of the colonial empire.

According to Johnson (1989) we typically see ourselves as the point of reference at the centre of our experiential horizon and thus we can map a number of relational pairs onto the centre-periphery orientation (Johnson, 1989:112). However, this seems to be an exclusively egocentric perspective. In the Maltese discourse, the opposite appears to be the case: the “other” is represented as the centre while the “self” is placed on the periphery. This “auto-peripheralisation” has two conceptual substrata: at a first glance, this positioning is conditioned by objective data, such as the country’s geographic position, while at a metaphoric level power relations are involved.

Consequently, one can assert that the self is not always the point of reference, or at least not the only point of reference, i.e., the egocentric perspective is mingled with an allocentric point of view:

Center	Periphery
Other	Self

Depending on the situational context, the image-schema center-periphery is actuated in various patterns. On the basis of my data, it can be concluded that the center-periphery schema is modified according to the temporal perspective of EU membership, e.g. before EU membership vs. after EU membership. Furthermore, the temporal perspective can be combined with a favourable or an unfavourable stance towards potential membership. To illustrate this pattern distribution, we can draw the following tables:

1. Before membership		2. After membership	
Center	Periphery	Center	Periphery
Other	Self	Other	Another ‘Other’
‘Other’		Self	

**Table 10:** I Favorable stance (dynamic model)

Center	Periphery
Other	Self
	Another ‘Other’

**Table 11:** II Unfavorable stance (static model)

The versatility of this pattern emphasises the context-dependent functionality of the underlying image schema. As illustrated above, the favourable stance lends the image-schema dynamism. Thus, whereas in context 1 ('before membership'), the self is situated on the periphery and the other in the centre, in context 2 ('after membership') the self is moved by a centripetal (centre-seeking) force to the centre where self and other become juxtaposed. Another 'Other', i.e. the countries staying out of the EU, remains on the periphery. This perspective shift is suggested by the quotation below:

The new European Union should be a union of equal partners. Some time ago, there was a tendency to discuss the core Europe consisting of France and Germany. Enlargement is re-focusing Europe on to other states that may geographically lie on the periphery of the European map.

*Malta Today*, 6 June 2004

In contrast to this dynamic model, in the case of an unfavourable stance towards membership the actuated pattern is self-sufficient and does not admit modifications. Interestingly, this static pattern is also inherently allocentric (the other is acknowledged as the centre), but at the same time characterised by a centrifugal (centre-fleeing) propensity. However, the allocentricity of this model relies exclusively on objective criteria (e.g. geographic position). This argument in the discourse of Europhobes presupposes self-sufficiency, or, metaphorically, self-centralisation as an ideal.

All this suggests that the centre-periphery image schema is based on a dialectic relationship between egocentric and allocentric perspectives and is to be understood as a continuum ranging from egocentrism to allocentrism. Furthermore, I maintain that well-developed countries would tend to adopt a rather egocentric viewpoint, while developing countries would be inclined to situate their discourse at the allocentric pole.

### **13.1.2. Intracultural overt variation**

As a result of the tension characterising the political field in Malta, a strong intracultural variation becomes manifest within the Maltese public discourse. Malta's two dominant political parties, the Nationalist Party and the Malta Labour Party, can be defined in terms of their approval or disapproval of Malta's EU-membership. If one compares the source domains employed by the Nationalist Party and the available evidence on British/German discourse mentioned in Section 1 above, it goes without saying that the discourse of the former, which has been in favour of the European Union from the very

beginning, resembles the ‘sanctioned’ European discourse in Britain/Germany (and presumably that of other well-developed EU member countries), whereas the discourse of Malta’s Labour Party, a ferocious EU opponent, deploys a whole range of novel metaphors.

As indicated in section 9.2., the victory of the Nationalist Party as well as the defeat of the Labour Party at the General Election in April 2003 can be also explained by their approving/disapproving position regarding the European Union. Malta is a very interesting case inasmuch as the outcome of the EU Referendum in March 2003 closely mirrors the results of the General Election in April 2003.<sup>75</sup>

Thus, apart from the cultural differences, the division of the population into Europhiles and Europhobes accounts for the existence of shared and variant metaphors within the context of EU-enlargement. Quite plausibly, the Europhiles will tend to resort to metaphors common in the ‘European’ discourse, while the Europhobes are supposedly more likely to create their own, innovative metaphors. This is not to say that the Europhobes do not resort to conventional metaphors present in the EU discourse around Europe, i.e. European metaphors. Logically, they would use in their discourse some of the metaphors present in the discourse of other Europhobes in Europe or would employ dominant metaphors of the Europhiles in order to highlight their weaknesses and replace them by new metaphors<sup>76</sup>. Nevertheless, I assume that the Europhobes are more likely to create original, more convincing metaphors, as the general tendency is to enter the EU, so that the Europhobes’ lack of control is apt to trigger a larger usage of fresh, attention-seeking metaphors. And again, since the Europhobes are more oriented towards national values, they would undoubtedly tend to resort to the country’s national

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<sup>75</sup> The outcome of the EU Referendum on March 9, 2003 was a narrow pro-EU vote (53.6 per cent). This made Alfred Sant question the result of the Referendum and request the holding of general elections as soon as possible with the hope that the Labour Party would win and thus the invalidation of the pro-EU vote would become legally binding. The results of the election mirrored closely the result of the referendum as the Nationalist Party won with a slightly higher number of votes and thus the pro-EU vote was regarded as valid. Therefore, it is often argued that Malta voted twice for Europe: once in the Referendum and once in the General Elections as the vote cast for the Nationalist Party is a covert vote for Europe (Henderson, 2004: 155).

<sup>76</sup> See Mills’ advice on persuasion based on disclosing flaws in people’s existing “organising metaphors” and replacing them by new metaphors (2008: 41).

heritage and local culture when creating new, original metaphors. This is supported by the following set of examples:

Two years ago people overwhelmingly endorsed the European project. Euphoria was running high. Many people believed in Europe as the panacea for the country's economic ills. Some remained highly suspicious others reserved judgment. With the passage of time people started to draw a more realistic picture.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2006/04/30/editorial.html>)

This laudatory metaphorisation of the EU as a panacea becomes an ominous figure when the Nationalist Party position is ridiculed by their political opponents: for the latter, Europe turns out to be a quack:

They [The Nationalist Party; MP] projected EU membership as a cure for all ills" rather than the better way forward, on balance. The imagery was of a quack selling mysterious bottles [my emphasis] which would guarantee health, virility, hair growth, and sweet-smelling perspiration. That raised and fattened expectations.

*The Times of Malta*

(<http://www.timesofmalta.com/core/article.php?id=222530>)

For those opposed to the membership, e.g. the Labour Party and its supporters, Europe is conceptualised as an enemy (embodying zoomorphic or apocalyptic features), i.e. "the enemy threatening to swallow" little Malta ([www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html)).

So far I have discussed more or less salient, incontestable cases of variance that can be recognised effortlessly in the discourse. However, there are also cases of metaphor variance that may go unobserved. Such cases of *covert variation* shall be analysed in the following sections.

## 13.2. Covert variation

### 13.2.1. Intercultural covert variation

#### 13.2.1.1. Identical source domains – different targets

After concentrating on conventional cases of variation, the next task will be to uncover implicit variation. To begin with, consider the following examples of the JOURNEY metaphor from the British and the Maltese press respectively:



(a) Europe stands at a crossroads.

(cited from EUROMETA-corpus)

(b) The country [Malta, my addition: MP] is being driven into a dead end alley. (*Malta Today*;

[www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html))

In example (a), the target domain is EUROPE, whereas in (b) it is MALTA. This difference reveals two alternative attitude patterns underlying the discourses on Europe: the first conceives of the (aspiring) member as part of the whole, i.e. Europe, whereas the second pattern conveys an exterior and dynamic stance.

The JOURNEY, or more specifically, ROAD metaphor, is among the best examples of source domains shared by the European discourse as a whole, but applied to different targets. As in the rest of Europe, the ROAD metaphor with its sub-metaphor MEANS OF TRANSPORT is also largely used in Malta in the discourse about Europe. However, depending on whether the membership is seen from a positive or a negative viewpoint, the road metaphor is realised as a promising or a futile journey. Thus, it can be predicted that in speeches made by affiliate members of the Nationalist Party the road or journey into a promising future will recur, whereas the members of the MLP are likely to employ the opposite elaboration of this conceptual metaphor. Consider, for example, the following realisation of the journey metaphor as leading into a dead end alley:

Speaking to MLP supporters following the traditional May 1 demonstration, Alfred Sant said that as a result of Malta joining the EU, the PN government had led the country into a dead end resulting in an economic and social crisis. He then went on to add that the MLP is committed to get Malta out of this cul-de-sac ... However, this time the notion that the people made a bad decision as they were tricked by the Government into joining the EU was even more emphasised than was normal in the last twelve months – to the extent of Malta's EU accession being referred to as a serious mistake, akin to the country being driven into a dead end alley.

*Malta Today*

([www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html))

In the above quotation, Malta is pictured as a passive traveller. The PN government acts as a misleading guide (the active traveller) whereas the MLP is supposed to get the lost traveller out of the dead end alley. However, no indication of a new potential destination is given. *Prima facie*, the metaphors seem identical with the movement metaphors, for

example in British discourse. It should nevertheless be pointed out that the perspective encoded in these metaphors is radically different. Whereas the British metaphors focus on Europe ‘moving’ (e.g. ‘The European Community at its most saintly fudges its way’ (*The Guardian*, October 29, 1991, cited from EUROMETA) or being at a crossroads, one notices that in the Maltese texts, it is Malta that is at a crossroads (rather than Europe). And again, it is Malta on the bumpy road to Europe and not the community as a whole. Undoubtedly, this is due to a different perspective, which in the first case determines the visualisation of Europe as an Actor, while in the Maltese discourse ‘Malta’ becomes active in its movement towards the destination, i.e. Europe as a Goal:

Malta is at the juncture where for the first time after many years and as they did at important junctures in their and the region’s history, the Maltese can be protagonists in the events that are unfolding. But only if they are united and know what they want. The Maltese can for the first time actively participate in shaping the politics of peace and stability of the geopolitical environment in which they live. Will they do it? Will they rise to the occasion or will they divide and sub-divide on trivia?

*The Euro Movement*

(<http://www.euro-movement.org.mt>)

Often the JOURNEY metaphor is used in the context of the EU membership, but the target domain is not the EU membership. In the above example, the conceptual metaphor is HISTORY IS A JOURNEY.

Another example of shared metaphors that are instantiated in specific ways is the container metaphor, which also pervades the European discourse. Thus, in the discourse of powerful members, this metaphor is primarily used with reference to new members that should be taken in or let in, whereas in the discourse of weaker members the metaphor conceptualises the dilemma of ‘staying out’ or ‘going in’ – cf. “the crossroads in this nation’s history over whether it should join the EU or stay out” (*The Times of Malta*, March 6, 2003) – or even ‘taking (the country) out’:

Once the party had taken its stand against European Union membership, Dr Mifsud Bonnici argues, it had to respect the views of those it persuaded to vote for it and continue to sustain this view. Moreover, it must promise to bring Malta out of the EU as soon as it regains the support of the majority of the people and finds itself in power ... If anything, as has been stressed time and again by the Nationalist Party, one would have expected the Labour Party to be more eager than the Nationalist’s to join Europe, considering the prevalence of social democratic traditions and rights of workers inside the EU.

The orientational metaphors directly related to the container metaphors also gain persuasive importance; OUT IS COLD and IN IS WARM as in: "People have a choice whether they want to form part of the new EU with 25 member states or to stay out in the cold" (*The Times of Malta* 5 March, 2003).

Two particularly fruitful source domains which show how metaphors that are used in a seemingly identical way in the discourses around Europe acquire different meanings in different sociocultural contexts are FAMILY and HOUSE. These will be looked at in greater detail in the next section.

#### *13.2.1.2. Identical source domains – different cultural models*

The FAMILY metaphor plays an important role in the present analysis of metaphors. It is an illustrative example of how cultural (covert) variation works, even when prima facie the metaphor seems to have a universal status (e.g. SOCIETY IS A FAMILY). Moreover, the FAMILY metaphor is not only an example of intercultural variation, but also of intracultural variation since within one society there is normally more than one co-existing family model, as will be shown in the following section.

The definition and analysis of a 'universal' family as the nucleus of every society implies a high degree of abstraction and a RADICAL reduction of the particular features of family models around the world. For the present case, I will compare the 'Western family' ideal with the idealised model of the 'Maltese family'.

As the term *idealized model* suggests, family models are only abstractions, used for theoretical purposes. According to Carmel Tabone, there are at least five family models co-existing in present-day Malta. They can briefly be characterised as follows: the traditional family cherishes fundamental values and resists change; the conventional family accepts traditional values, which are part of its members' conscious worldview, but in practice adopts a way of life that is incompatible with these values; the modern family opposes the traditional family model and adjusts to progress and to the needs of the contemporary society; the deprived family is characterised by a lack of satisfaction in life, which makes its members adopt a different value system from that of the traditional family; the progressive family tries to follow the trends of development but

preserves at the same time the basic traditional values in their behaviour patterns (Tabone 1994: 247-249).

But no matter how many family models co-exist in a society and how different values people associate with the idea of family, one can speak – as in any other society – of an abstract model which sums up the main features of a typical family. In what follows I shall outline the basic aspects of “the Maltese family.”

### *The Maltese Family*

This section will offer an overview of the Maltese family. The summary is based on the sociological studies of Carmel Tabone (1987, 1994, 1995).

Due to the small size of the island and also to the traditionalism that dominates Maltese society, the individuals are seen in connection with their families. The good status of a family contributes to the individual person’s image, and thus it is of great importance to preserve the honour of the family. Hence, it can be asserted that the family exerts an effective social control.

It is therefore important to outline what qualities are mandatory for a family in order to be considered a good family by the Maltese society. Mention should be made that the attributes listed below characterise the traditional Maltese family as a prototype. This is not to say that the family in Malta has not undergone modifications triggered by socio-economic changes. However, despite its adaptation to contemporary society, many elements of the traditional family are still preserved (even if in a weaker form), so that the traditional family remains the prototypical family for many.

An honourable Maltese family is first of all a faithful Catholic family. Additional cherished values are unity, fidelity, children and loyalty. A large majority of the Maltese are married in Church. It should be borne in mind that the largest part of the civil marriages are later blessed by the church and also that the numbers provided by the statistics include the numbers of mixed marriages as well as the foreign marriages performed on Malta. The performance of marriages only at the Registrar’s Office is considered an “abnormality”: “If one contracts a civil marriage only, one is considered as not being ‘normal’ in the sense that one would have broken a social norm and that one’s marriage is not founded on solid ground” (Tabone 1994: 234-5).

Unity is an essential feature of the traditional Maltese family. Sociologists classify the Maltese family under the modified extended type. The degree of family cohesion is so high that although the family in its extended form (parents and their married children with their own families) do not share the same house, their family interaction patterns resemble those of the extended family in its widespread definition, i.e. different generations of a family sharing a household (Tabone 1994: 232). The family unity is not only reflected in the regularity of family gatherings, but also in the mutual help that is expected (if not taken for granted) among the family members.

Marriage and the mutual respect of the married couple is also a key trait of the Maltese family. Maltese traditional marriage adheres to the principles of Catholic marriage and thus marriage is regarded as indissoluble<sup>77</sup>: “... a married couple always remained together living under the same roof for the simple reason that culturally, religiously and legally they were conscious of being united for the rest of their lives ‘for better or for worse’” (Tabone 1994: 234).

The traditional Maltese family attaches great importance to the number of their children. Children are considered God’s blessing and birth control is regarded as immoral.<sup>78</sup> Even if a large number of children creates financial problems, this aspect does not scare parents off; they would deprive themselves in order to assure their children a better life.

### ***Secularization and the Maltese Family***

The traditional family as depicted above is only an artificial construct. As with every other society, the Maltese society is subject to change and consequently the family is also subject to adaptation. In his book *The Secularization of the Family in Changing*

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<sup>77</sup> Divorce was in Malta illegal until 2011, although a divorce effected abroad had been recognised within Malta since 1975. In fact, Malta and the Philippines were the only two countries in the entire world that refused to allow an internal divorce law. In the Divorce Referendum held in Malta on 28 May 2011 the Maltese people voted in favour of the introduction of divorce with 53.2% in favour and 46.8 against (cf. Pace 2012: 573 The Divorce Bill was passed on 25 July 2011 and took effect as of 1 October 2011.

<sup>78</sup> Malta is currently the only EU member state with a blanket ban on abortion. The island state has strict anti-abortion laws. Women found to have had an abortion or to have consented to an abortion are liable to imprisonment from 18 months to 3 years.

*Malta (1985)*, Tabone employs the sociological concept of secularisation in order to explain the impact of modernisation on the Maltese family. The term secularisation refers to the transformation of a society caused by a shift of its focus from religious values and institutions to increasing engagement in worldly (e.g. economic and political) institutions. This tendency has also surfaced in the questionnaire results, although only few respondents clearly expressed the reshaping of the family to suit the modern world. As one participant explains, this is also due to the constraints represented by the Catholic Church:

The family is not as important as it was 50-60 years ago. Society has developed, although not as rapidly as 1<sup>st</sup> world/developed countries. Hence, the family is still given a lot of importance but has not remained people's be all and end all. It is still considered to be the key component of society (heavily influenced by the church) – hence the avoidance of divorce & abortion.” (Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour)

The concept of secularisation has several meanings and definitions. Larry Shiner (1967) attempted to group various uses of the term and distinguished six categories of meanings: “disengagement of society from religion”, “decline of religion”, “conformity to the world”, “transposition of religious beliefs and institutions”, desacralization of the world”, “the movement from a ‘sacred’ to a ‘secular’ society” (209-220).

After this short entry point into the Maltese family from a sociological point of view, in what follows I will come to the heart of the matter and explain how the family model as pervading the Maltese society (with its stifled crisis and vacillating values) is reflected in the political metaphors dominating the EU-membership debate.

### ***FAMILY Metaphor***

Despite obvious signs of secularisation, informal discussions with Maltese people about family values and typical behaviour strongly suggest that a striking difference between the Western model of the family and the Maltese familial model appears to manifest itself in the moving-out patterns of young people. This aspect is – in my opinion – likely to affect, and reflect the understanding of the ‘family’ metaphor. In Western Europe teenagers more easily and much earlier achieve their independence than the youth in Malta, where young people generally only leave home after marriage. This is first and

foremost due to the country's religiosity since moving out of the parental home would facilitate pre-marital cohabitation and pre-marital sex<sup>79</sup>. In addition to the religious as well as economic reasons, the explanation for the young people's living with their parents until getting married has to do with the small size of the island and the types of social networks resulting from this spatial matrix. Thus, no matter where young people choose to move, it is never too far from the parental home, so that parents can still easily find out everything about their offspring and could keep on meddling in their affairs.

If we transfer this feature to the metaphor THE EU IS A FAMILY, we can assume that the Maltese people would expect the European Union to be a 'family' in which members would know everything about each other and could easily get involved in each other's affairs. Given the dominance of the European metaphor THE EU IS A FAMILY, I would argue that counter to the expectation in other European countries, this metaphor might have contributed to the fear that the Labourites showed towards the option of Malta's entering the EU family in the form of 'full membership'. Since 'full membership' (the type of EU membership supported by the PN) as opposed to 'partnership' (form of agreement with the EU supported by MLP) stands for *marriage*, and because for each of us it is our own family (and our parents' marriage) that constitutes the spectacles through which we see "family" in general, it is this Maltese family model that frames the politicians' understanding of the "full membership" plan. In short, it is a strict, traditional "family of countries" waiting to welcome you to the European Union.

Undoubtedly, staying in the parental nest as long as possible can have advantages as well and it seems that some take heed of these advantages. As it is, parents are not always strict and intruding, but can also be very loving, caring and empathetic. George Lakoff would say that they are nurturant.

Indeed, an overarching metaphor dominating Maltese journalist discourse involving the family is the representation of Europe as a 'nurturant parent' (Lakoff

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<sup>79</sup> In emancipated countries young people move out first of all in order to establish their independence from the parents, and as a consequence leaving the parental home before marriage is not seen as non-religious conduct. However, irrespective of the point of view (religious or non-religious), it cannot be contested that pre-marital cohabitation has been detrimental to the institution of marriage, which is very important to the church.



2002: 108). Leaving aside the metaphorical expressions in which Europe is directly portrayed as a family, all the arguments circulating before Malta's Referendum on Europe were based on the conceptualisation of the European Union as a 'giver', 'a provider' whereas Malta would be the 'recipient', 'the beneficiary': "Many people look at the EU as if the queen was coming back to Malta; instead of milking funds from the queen we will be milking funds from the EU. This is not the case and this is a mentality we have to change" (*Malta Today* 1 February, 2004).

However, even within Malta, cognitive models of the family are not uniform and stable in time. Carmel Tabone posits the co-existence of at least five types of families in contemporary Malta, which have been already introduced in section section 13.2.1.2., "Identical source domains – different cultural models": the traditional family, the conventional family, the modern family, the deprived family and the progressive family (Tabone 1994: 247-249). Given the hypothesis that stored mental representations guide our meaning construction, it seems reasonable to assume that this intracultural variation also has an effect on the EU membership debate and on people's envisionment of the future reality (i.e. after EU accession). The next section will offer a glimpse into the competing family models that dominated the EU membership debate.

### **13.2.2. Intracultural covert variation**

On the Maltese political scene prior to the Referendum in March 2003, there were two alternatives open for Malta: firstly, full membership, supported by the Nationalist Party and secondly, partnership supported by the Labour Party. After a more thorough analysis, it becomes obvious that the two alternatives actually stand for two versions of 'familial unions':

EU membership is like being married. Before the marriage you have the engagement, which is when you lay down the rules and regulations . If you agree, you get married. That's it. You're in. But you must bear in mind that the dominant partner may change the rules and regulations after the marriage. No divorce is possible. Now with partnership, it's like two people moving in and living together: Initially, no rules and regulations, these are made up as you go along, to the common good of both partners. If you don't agree to the rules etc. you can walk out and start again. Nobody gets hurt.

*Malta Independent*, 5 March 2003

In other words, the ‘full membership’ version stands for the “accepted” type of familial union based on a marriage license or other legal document. The ‘partnership’ would merely be a form of domestic partnership agreement, in which the two partners are not joined in a traditional marriage or a civil union. The advantage of the latter would be that the union could be more easily dissolved in case of a bad match. This is exactly why Alfred Sant, the leader of the Labour Party, rejected the idea of ‘full membership’ from the very beginning. However, it should be pointed out that even in the case of a partnership, the roles of Europe as a ‘provider’ and of Malta as a ‘receiver’ remain the same. Only the prerogatives of Europe would be modified as Europe would have fewer rights that would allow interference in Malta’s affairs.

As the family and family life are central issues in the Maltese people’s lives, contributing a great deal to moulding personalities and shaping values, one can assume that the family model to which an individual belonged (or to which they adhere) might have determined the vote for one or the other form of ‘joining’ the EU. In his account of American morality and politics, Lakoff argues that individuals brought up with a ‘strict-father’ family model are likely to adopt conservative ideas whereas people brought up in a ‘nurturing’ milieu would be more attracted to liberal ideals instead (Lakoff 2002:12). In the following section, I will offer a brief overview of these idealized family models as explored within the Lakoffian approach.

### ***Family Models We Live By***

Having introduced the two family models in the previous section, I will now summarise Lakoff’s hypotheses on the make-up of these two idealised models. In an attempt to “reverse engineer” the American political discourse and to account for political differences, Lakoff came to the conclusion that there must be two idealised aspects of the family mapped onto two different images of the nation: a strict father family that analogically resembles pure conservative politics, and a nurturant parent family that is mapped onto pure progressive politics (Lakoff 2008: 76-77).

Before looking into these family versions in more detail, it is important to draw attention to the fact that according to Lakoff every person is biconceptual, i.e. has these two approaches (“strict father” and “nurturant parent”) available in their mindsets and that it is only ideally that one can speak of the two models as self-sufficient and pure

models (Lakoff 2002: 159, 2006: 69, 2008: 82). In reality, people have mixed models in which features of one of the models may be more significant and influential both quantitatively and qualitatively.

In short, the strict father model primarily rests on obedience, discipline and punishment. The strict father is responsible for disciplining the child and for implanting moral values in the mind of the child, who cannot distinguish right from wrong. He also has to resort to punishment in order to make the child obey and thus attain moral knowledge (Lakoff 2008: 77-78).

Conversely, the key principles meant to assure the functioning of the nurturant parent model are protection, empathy and well-being. Note that the father has been replaced by a parent, i.e. the two parents have equal roles and share parental responsibilities. Restitution is preferred to punishment, meaning that if the child has done something wrong, they can do something else to compensate for the bad deed (Lakoff 2008: 81).

However, we do not need to read Lakoff to know that the family is the first social institution with which we come into contact, even though only at unconscious level. The family is a form of domestic organisation and its functioning depends on a series of factors, such as the distribution of roles. That politics begins at home and that family is covertly our first encounter with a form of government is not commonplace. More precisely, it is not part of people's common (conscious) understanding, but it is a constitutive part of their subliminal understanding since it is quite common to refer to a parent or a spouse by using the metaphor "tyrant". Thus, we do acquire knowledge about governing relations in the family, which functions for us as a microscopic form of society.

Lakoff argues that our early experiences of governance and family life coincide as follows: "The institution is the family. A governing individual is a parent. Those governed are other family members" (Lakoff 2008: 85). He goes on to state that this superimposition determines the emergence of the primary metaphor "a Governing Institution is a Family" that can be recognised in many forms of organisation, from businesses to sports teams.

Thus, the family lays the foundation for our understanding of all forms of organisations and governing, both at national and supranational levels. Indeed, the

metaphor a Supranational Union is a Family proves suitable as well. On the basis of the linguistic metaphors detected in the Maltese discourse, I came to the conclusion that both versions of the family can equally be mapped onto the supranational political entity. When applying the metaphor to the European Union, I could distinguish the following scenarios:

THE INSTITUTION [THE EUROPEAN UNION] IS THE FAMILY.

The Governing Individual [the stronger EU member states] is the Father/Parent.

Those Governed [the other EU member states] are Family Members.

THE INSTITUTION [THE EUROPEAN UNION] IS THE FAMILY.

The Governing Individual [the officials of the EU members] is the Father/Parent.

Those Governed [the EU citizens] are Family Members.

These two scenarios represent typical conceptualisations of the European Union as a form of government. The former sees the EU as a form of oligarchy, in which only few member states, the “elite”, can influence the policy-making process. The latter seems to represent a democratic form of government if one disregards the fact that the citizens can only vicariously get involved in the policy-making process, i.e. through the elected representatives. Note that the two Lakoffian family models can successfully be applied to both scenarios, depending on the type of relations between participants: for example, if the parent focuses his attention on disciplining the family members, then we are dealing with the strict father model; and if the parent’s main interest is the family members’ well-being, the nurturant parent model applies.

### ***Strict Father or Big Brother?***

Interestingly, I could not find any clear metaphorical references to a father figure in the Maltese public discourse on the European Union. However, the “Big Brother” metaphor is used and this can definitely be regarded as a metaphoric instantiation of the Strict Father model.

It cannot be denied that the rhetorical force of the “Big Brother” metaphor is strengthened by the encyclopaedic knowledge of the Orwellian “Big Brother” symbol in Orwell’s novel *1984*.

Let us first have a look at the “Big Brother” figure, independent of the EU context. According to the common understanding, there is a clear-cut distinction between parents’ roles and status and children’s roles within a family. Under normal circumstances, no matter how old or “big”, a sibling remains a sibling and will not replace a parent. Yet, if the situation demands (e.g. father’s departure or death, etc.), the elder brother can fill his father’s role without a change of status from sibling to parent.

In the EU frame, all member states *should* be equal<sup>80</sup> and therefore it would be contradictory to map the properties of a parent to the properties of some of the strong members and the properties of children to those of the weaker member states. Therefore, the Big Brother metaphor suits the purposes best: it avoids contradictions at a surface level, but brings up discrepancies between equality, policy and reality.

From the great defender of makku’s sovereignty, Labour now rushes to report the government to the ‘big brother’ in Brussels whenever it drags its feet on any of those – hitherto – costly, bureaucratic, burdensome and useless maze of straightjacket EU laws.

*The Times of Malta*

(<http://www.timesofmalta.com/core/article.php?id=259431>)

The image of the ‘Big Brother’ in Brussels with his attributes as given in the above quotation unfailingly recalls the Orwellian ‘Big Brother’. Depending on the audience’s encyclopaedic knowledge, it can be expected that the symbol of the ‘big brother’ in Brussels will be enhanced by adding features of insidious manipulation and thought control to resemble the character in Orwell’s *1984*.

It can easily be demonstrated that the party policy of the Nationalists closely reflects the strict father model, first of all due to their religious affiliation. If the patriarchal family model dominates their mindsets, it follows that according to their view, the nation needs a strict father who has to teach the citizens right from wrong and

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<sup>80</sup> All EU members are *officially* equal; see art. 3a (Paragraph 2) of the *Treaty of Lisbon*: “The Union shall respect the equality of Member States before the Treaties as well as their national identities, inherent in their fundamental structures, political and constitutional, inclusive of regional and local self-government.” However, if there is a gap between the desired situation and reality (actual or even only perceived), cases in which parents’ features are mapped onto the more influential members are likely to occur.

discipline them. It is interesting to explore whether the same family model projected onto the nation is the model projected on the supranational entity as well.

The Nationalist Party is recognised as conservative and the Malta Labour Party as progressive. As regards their stance towards the EU, it seems that the metaphor changes: the Nationalist Party sees the EU as a *protector*, as a *caterer*, an *empathetic entity*. The Labour Metaphor adopts the opposite view.

Following a similar line of argument, it might be assumed that in the accession referendum the Maltese, utterly devoted to the idea of a family grounded in the Catholic tradition, may have voted for the ‘full membership’, while those with more liberal ideas and who accept a domestic partnership as an alternative to the traditional family might have supported the political partnership between Malta and the European Union. Admittedly, this assumption might seem sweeping. Yet, as the quotation below suggests, it does not seem far-fetched for the Maltese media to base their arguments on the obvious difference between marriage and an unwedded relationship:

Dr Alfred Sant said the electorate would be given the possibility of choosing between partnership and ‘full’ membership as negotiated by the government. The time frame remains unclear, but it is obvious that we would have missed the boat by then. The proposal is akin to the situation of a gigolo who agrees to marriage, but at the very last moment suggests an open relationship with the option of marriage should the need arise. Needless to say such an arrangement is not only surreal, but also selfish and one-sided.

*Malta Today*, 23 March 2003

Strikingly, partnership is not only compared to an ‘open’ relationship, but a pejorative term, “a gigolo” is used to refer to the person engaging or proposing such a relationship. Another argument for the contention that Catholic family values might have influenced people’s voting behaviour is the moral evaluation contained in the quotation above: a partnership agreement, like an unwedded relationship, would be “selfish and one-sided”.

Nevertheless, considering the extensive religiosity of the Maltese population, it is surprising that the percentage of the electorate that voted for ‘full membership’ is only slightly larger than the percentage of those who voted for political partnership. If one takes these results to be indicative of the frames dominating the Maltese society, it

can be concluded that the election outcome shows that a reframing must have taken place (Lakoff 2006:12–13).

### *THE EU IS A FAMILY vs. MALTA IS A FAMILY*

As the importance of the family is paramount in Malta, and due to the small size of the island, the whole nation is regarded as a ‘family’, based on the frequent argument that in Malta ‘everybody knows everybody’<sup>81</sup>. Thus, the NATION IS A FAMILY<sup>82</sup> metaphor can almost be taken literally in Malta as a consequence of the closely-knit social network characterising social life on the island.<sup>83</sup>

In Maltese literature, the nation is frequently conceptualised as a family and Malta (as a country) is referred to as the ‘mother’. Taking literary motif into consideration, along with the argument that Malta is not really interested in the EU-membership on a basis of shared interests, but for financial reasons, it follows that the fusion of the ‘Maltese family’ with the large family, i.e. Europe, is unlikely to be effected. As a direct consequence, Malta will only be a family within the ‘larger family’, without necessarily being part of an extended family in which ‘kinship ties’ are perfectly maintained.

The fact that some Maltese are obsessed with the idea of the family as a nuclear unit often leads to *familism*, which, according to Lakoff’s account of moral deviation, would be a form of moral pathology (2002: 312–315). To put it simply, individuals are likely to put familial interests above everything else and thus jeopardise the relation

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<sup>81</sup> “Everybody knows everybody“ (with its variant: “everyone seems to know everyone else’s business”) is a current sentence that everybody mentions when asked to talk about social relationships on the island and is cited in many books on Malta, from sociological treaties to travel guides: “The locals do talk about the slightly claustrophobic feeling of living in a tiny country with the population of a midsize regional town: on the one hand, there’s a great sense of community; on the other hand, a lack of privacy, and a tendency for gossip (everyone seems to know everyone else’s business).” (Bain, Wilson 2010:30)

<sup>82</sup> According to Lakoff, our brains harbour a largely unconscious metaphor, i.e. the Nation as Family. The existence of this conceptual metaphor is demonstrated by linguistic metaphors such as Fatherland, founding father, Mother Russia, which nobody questions (Lakoff 2006: 65).

<sup>83</sup> The notion of the “closely-knit social network” became well known with Milroy’s research (2002: 414); the concept was borrowed from Blom and Gumperz (1972).



with the larger social group. A reflection of this pathological attitude is the striking cleanliness of Maltese houses in comparison to the dirt on the path in front of the house:

The fact that the Maltese are meticulous in cleaning their house but quite reckless in matters concerning public cleanliness is symptomatic of such an attitude. And if they do clean in front of their doorways it is only because they do not want the dirt to enter inside. This does not occur in cleanliness only but also in various other aspects of social life. (Tabone 1994: 237)

The idea that sometimes the primacy of the family is exacerbated and that thus family attachment exceeds sane limits is also supported by the following observation made by a questionnaire respondent: “Family TOO important. Many alleged cases of favouritism towards close members of the family, especially filial relatives. Sometimes the family overshadows an individual’s personality and independence.” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour). If one extends this attitude to the larger scale of the “national family”, it follows that what happens outside the space of “one’s own” family (i.e. Malta) is not of great interest for the Maltese.

The same could be said of the metaphor THE EU IS A HOUSE. For the Maltese, Malta is the “house”, so that the island would just be a “house” within a larger “house”, where the walls of the Maltese house should not necessarily come into contact with the walls of the larger building, so that the former would not thereby lose its own characteristics or boundaries.

#### *THE EU IS A HOUSE*

This metaphor THE EU IS A HOUSE is another obvious case of covert variation. As in the case of family, this metaphor differs not only cross-culturally, but also within a culture. Schäffner (1996) offers a diachronic overview of this controversial metaphor. The metaphor of the “common European house”, introduced into political discourse in the mid-1980s by the leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, has been constant in European debate and has undergone an essential change; that is, the modifier *common* has been discarded. According to Schäffner, this omission is due to the decoding of the metaphor via the French prototypical house. Whereas Gorbachev imagined the ‘European house’ as a multi-storey apartment block with several entrances, shared by several families, each dwelling in their own flat, the French interpretation of “L’Europe

notre maison commune” was based on the one-family house, which would allow the dwellers free movement within the house (Schäffner 1996: 33–34).

As expected, this metaphor, which seems to be the European metaphor *par excellence*, differs from one culture to another. In Malta, this conceptual metaphor occurs both in the Europhile discourse and in the Europhobic one. If these two types of discourse are compared, it becomes obvious that, even intraculturally, there are two different instantiations of the house metaphor: THE EU IS A HOUSE 1 vs. THE EU IS A HOUSE 2.

If the frame for an understanding of the EU as a family (of nations), the source domain in the metaphor THE EU IS A HOUSE will most probably be understood as a house shared by the members of the family (of nations), i.e. the metaphor has connotations which entail togetherness and fellowship. Consider, for example, the following quotation from the article “A new beginning for Malta” that appeared in *The Times of Malta* (17 April 2003):

The European leaders, including Dr. Fenech Adami and President de Marco, were also part of the largest-ever European family photo. [...] ‘We consider the EU to be our home,’ he [Fenech Adami; MP] said.

*The Times of Malta*, 17 April 2003

Another example is taken from the article “The ‘Yes’ vote of a European Maltese” (Mario de Marco), which appeared in *The Times of Malta*, 4 March 2003: “On March 8 we will be voting so that a European Malta will take its rightful place in our maison commune, in our common European home.” (*The Times of Malta* 4 March 2003)

As the above examples show, the members of the Nationalist Party (the Europhiles) understand the ‘European house’ as a shared house where all the nation members live together like in a family. Interestingly, in the Nationalists’ vision, the European home is not an artefact, but a natural thing:

The choice before us is clear: do we want to be part of the European Union or do we want to be detached from our natural home, a home of common values and aspirations? The EU is a success story and has brought tremendous benefits to its citizens. [...] Malta cannot get a better deal from the EU by remaining out of union, which is what those who oppose EU membership are saying. [...] Can Malta afford to stay out? Absolutely not. European Union enlargement is an opportunity not to be

missed. By joining the EU, Malta would be returning to its natural home, a home of common values and aspirations.

*Malta Independent* 6 March 2003,  
(Referendum campaign, Eddie Fenech Adami)

In the above quotation home is not only a “dwelling-place” but also an identity symbol. New elements are added to the HOME metaphor, so that a new metaphor emerges: THE EU ACCESSION IS A HOMEWARD JOURNEY. The EU is a natural home to which Malta is returning after long wanderings, i.e. the movement through its history of colonisation. Effecting the European homecoming has great implications for the Maltese. The Semitic origin of the Maltese language together with the dark complexion of the Maltese people led to the Maltese being regarded as ‘Arabs’, i.e. as non-whites (Pirota 1994:103-104). Thus, the EU membership stands for a proof of their identity as Europeans, and coming homeward would mean reasserting their basic values (such as Christian religion) after a long history of political and cultural insecurity.

Furthermore, given that accession is seen as returning home, another interesting aspect arises. As returning to a place presupposes that you were once there, this metaphor misleadingly implies that Malta had been part of the EU before. In this context, the EU has to be interpreted first and foremost as a guardian of European culture that rests primarily on Christianity. Against the background of Arabic domination, returning home has been understood as a religious belonging before the Arabic colonisation period, which determined the metaphorical departing. The end of the Arabic colonisation signifies the official return to Christianity and European values, and the EU membership is once more an official documentation of this fact. Thus, while the European Union is distinct from Europe inasmuch as the former is a geopolitical entity, whereas the latter only is a geographical entity, these two spaces are superimposed in the metaphorical space and Europe and the European Union are envisaged as one. This metaphor reveals that for the Maltese the geographical and the geopolitical entity collapse into each other and that Europe and the EU are often used interchangeably to refer to the same blended space. It is important to emphasise that this compressed entity is not only in the metaphorical space created by politics and media but this is a mental entity dominating the worldview of the Maltese: “Although most Maltese would argue that their country falls into a wider European cultural region [...]

and therefore that they are ‘European’, the category ‘Europe’ has since the mid-1980s increasingly come to stand for the European Union.” (Mitchell 2002: 2)

It should also be mentioned that the connotations of the lexeme *home*, in opposition to *house*, i.e. the neutral term as the basic term for the category building, must not be overlooked. Moreover, I am convinced that the noun *home*, modified by the possessive adjective *our* is connotatively loaded. It should be emphasised as well that in the Maltese language there is only one lexeme, *dar*, used both for *house* and *home*<sup>84</sup>, which would also explain the constant presence of ‘home’ in contexts in which other languages prefer ‘house’. Despite the presence of the polysemous lexeme *dar*, it can be assumed that the use of *home* instead of *house* in English in contexts, in which *house* would be expected, is intentional and not the consequence of Maltese politicians’ semantic uncertainty. This conclusion is based on the results of the questionnaire (see Section 12.4. “Stony House or Sweet Home”) which indicate that Maltese speakers have no difficulty in distinguishing the two English lexemes *house* and *home*.

As the interpretation attributed to Gorbachev illustrates, living in the European House can be conceptualised as having your own house within a larger house. In Malta, it is this realisation of the metaphor that is present in the discourse of the Eurosceptics. Consider, for example, the following excerpt from the Malta Labour Party Manifesto 1998:

On the other hand, the New Labour Government appreciates and supports the process of economic, social, and political integration spearheaded by the European Union. It is also aware that this country can only enjoy the concrete benefits of full membership in this Union once we have adequately consolidated the economic foundations of our own home – our Maltese Home in Europe.

*Malta Labour Party Manifesto 1998*

Although the metaphor *our Maltese Home in Europe* does not refer to a block of flats, but to a house inside a larger house, the model put forward by Gorbachev seems to resemble the Labour Party’s vision of living together, but without interference from the other dwellers.

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<sup>84</sup> In the MLP slogan in Maltese *Id-dar Maltija fl-Ewropa* (‘The Maltese House in Europe’), it is not clear whether *dar* should mean ‘house’ or ‘home’. See Adrian Grima, *The Sunday Times*, Malta, (17 October, 1999).

The two models activated by the ‘house’ metaphor therefore do not entirely overlap: in the house pictured by the Nationalist Party, the family members live together in harmony (French model: *maison commune*), whereas in the house portrayed by the Labour Party, the Maltese are isolated inside their own house (‘house-in-house’ converges with the Russian model: ‘block of flats’). They are independent and no one else can interfere in the household’s affairs.

No matter which of the two models is activated, the HOUSE domain concurrently fulfils the explanatory function and has a strong affective content. This explains its popularity and resilience within the EU discourse. The next chapter will focus on how politicians create visions. It will also provide an overview of the most frequent metaphors used by the two main Maltese parties.

## **14. PN-Metaphors vs. MLP-Metaphors (Euro-philes vs. Euro-phobes metaphors) / Utopias vs. Dystopias**

A comparative analysis of the election manifestos in view of the parties' approaches to the EU membership is essential for the purposes of the present study. The analysis of the manifestos will be restricted to those aspects that can shed light on the EU issue. The manifestos, starting with 1992, will be focussed on especially, as in them the European orientation proved to be an important point.

The Malta Labour Party *Manifesto* from 1996 begins with the MLP European stance by introducing the "Switzerland in the Mediterranean" concept. This idea was first used by Dom Mintoff in 1959 and taken over by the MLP leader Dr. Alfred Sant to support his policy concerning partnership with the European Union. Dom Mintoff, "Malta's peppery and persuasive socialist prime minister", is still a very influential person in Malta, although no longer actively involved in politics (Boissevain 1986: 198). He was the leader of the Labour Party from 1949 to 1984 and prime minister of Malta from 1955 to 1958 (while Malta had the status of a self-governing British colony) and from 1971 to 1984 (after independence – 1964). As this blend seems to belong irrevocably to the EU-membership debate in Malta, a thorough analysis can throw light on some of the island's most important political aspects.

In what follows I shall undertake a diachronic analysis of this influential political idea. To begin with, it is helpful to explore its implications in the original article "A New Plan for Malta" published in the *New Statesman* (a British publication) on January 3, 1959. "A New Plan for Malta" expresses Mintoff's bitterness and ostensive hostility towards Britain's decision against a new constitution for Malta:

Although the news of the failure of the London talks on a new constitution for Malta was received here with deep regret, it came as a shock to nobody. The result was a foregone conclusion. A deep gulf still separates the Conservative British government from the Maltese leaders. [...] So far, Malta has thrown up no patriotic terrorist organisation. Indeed the disturbances of the past have all been spontaneous and unorganised. They have been the steam escaping from the safety-valve of the boiling economic and political situation. To shut the valve and jam it tight might for a short time prevent the unsightly and embarrassing

diffusion of vapour and deaden the hissing warning of danger but it will certainly bring us nearer to the peril of a sudden explosion.

*New Statesman* (1959: 8)

Mintoff's words also express a threatening hint of a putative national riot. The "belligerent" type of imagery is provided by the container metaphor conflated with the contained for container metonymy. If a safety-valve is the device controlling the pressure in the container and if this belongs to the "economic and political situation" (as explicitly suggested in the text by using *of* to express a possessive relation), it follows that the "economic and political situation" represents the container. In addition, the "economic and political situation" is also preceded by the modifier "boiling", an attribute that is normally associated with the liquid in the container. Imposing the characteristic of BOILING (i.e. capable of reaching a temperature at which the liquid starts to turn into gas) upon a SITUATION (an abstract concept) results in the metaphorical conceptualisation of the situation as a liquid (the ontological metaphor SITUATIONS ARE LIQUIDS). If the situation is construed as a boiling liquid, and taking into account that liquids are evidently the "contained", it can be concluded that the contained liquid (the situation) metonymically stands for the container. Furthermore, the forthcoming revolutionary reaction is conceptualised as vapour emitted by the container as a consequence of boiling or as an explosion posterior to the pressure exerted in order to keep the valve shut (e.g. measures taken to keep the population under control). The contained for container metonymy is very forceful because the boiling liquid is hereby placed in the foreground and projected as an imminent danger. One can derive the inference that the bubbling liquid has already transgressed the boundaries of the container and thus this metonymy produces a flashward effect. To avoid the explosive situation, Mintoff provides "a new plan for Malta" that has neutrality as its core premise:

Deliverance could only come to us in one way: the neutralisation of Malta as a free port with our freedom guaranteed by the Security Council of the United Nations. Fortunately for us a precedent exists – the case of Trieste immediately after the war. We would pledge ourselves never to make any military or other warlike alliance with any bloc or state. We would solemnly undertake to repair the merchant or naval shipping of any nation. As a denuclearised zone with a stable free society we would rapidly develop into a little Switzerland in the heart of the Mediterranean – a haven of peace and rest for weary, disarmed tourists. *New Statesman* (1959:9)



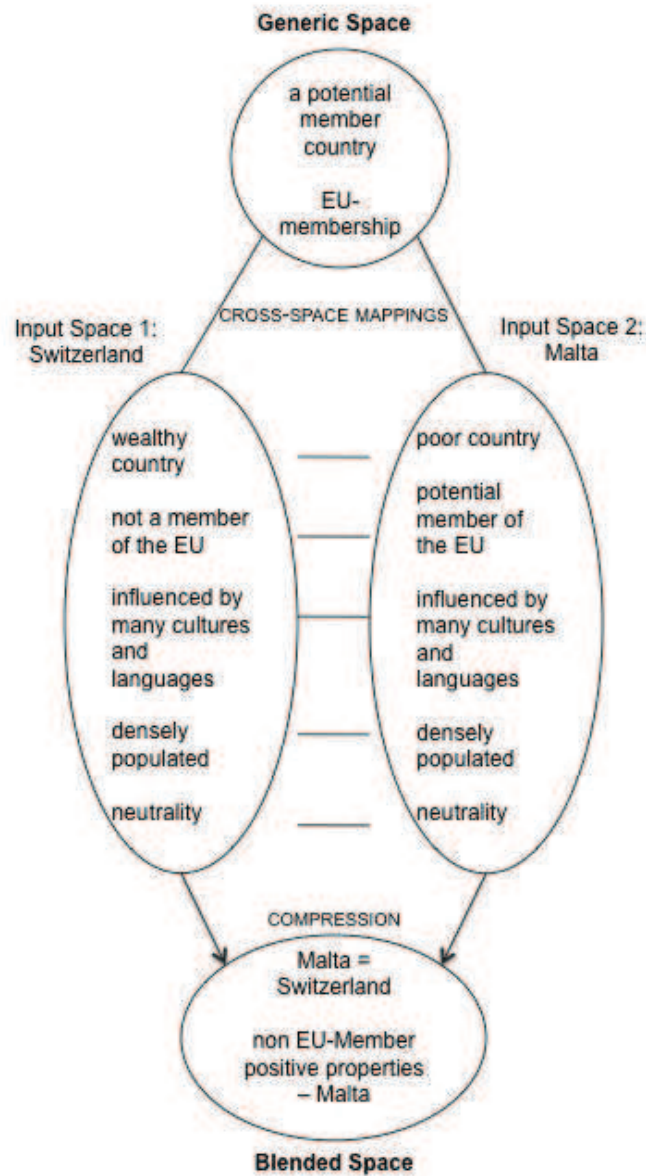
This formulation of Mintoff's vision, "a little Switzerland in the heart of the Mediterranean" is the blueprint for Sant's idea of partnership. It conveyed the idea of Malta as the epitome of neutrality and peace. It should be noted that the modifier "little" is no longer present in the Santian vision of "a Switzerland in the Mediterranean", although the small size of Malta is often topicalized in Dr. Sant's speeches. The idea of a protectionist country is also dispelled in the EU-membership debate as the war conditions no longer apply.

In the MLP *Manifesto* of 1996 this concept is meant to illustrate the party's vision of the island's relation with Europe within the Mediterranean context and to stress the combination of the two essential dimensions of Maltese foreign policy: Europeanness and Mediterraneanness. This blend emphasizes the Labour Party's commitment to neutrality, which is also stated overtly and repeatedly within the manifesto and which is seen as jeopardized by pursuing full membership:

Many of these have been designed for big European countries and do not suit the specific economic and social characteristics of small islands like Malta and Gozo. Besides, membership of the E.U. would also undermine Malta's neutrality. (...) An essential premise of Labour's foreign policy is that neutrality is a meaningful and valid option in Malta.

*Malta Labour Party Manifesto 1996*

As shown in Figure 14, the conceptual blend “a Switzerland in the Mediterranean” has two input mental spaces: one with Switzerland and one with Malta, and a frame-reference space, the Mediterranean (a sub-space of Input Space 2):



**Figure 14:** Switzerland in the Mediterranean

Except for typical features that structure the input spaces as given above, there are other, less conventional components in the input space 1 that could correlate with the space of a future Malta. These components are part of an idealised mental space, including positive features of Switzerland, which would be desirable in Malta. I will revert to this aspect later on.

Some provisional cross-space mapping can be recognised between the input spaces before conceptual integration proceeds, e.g. Switzerland corresponds to Malta, and thus an amount of prototypical knowledge about both countries comes into play. Please note that Malta is described as a “potential member of the EU” as the Swiss model was current in the debate on EU accession, before May 2004.

However, the “mental result”, the blend, is identical to neither of its input spaces and is not the sum of the shared features, but is instead an instant space endowed with new meaning, i.e. emergent meaning. Consequently, Malta as Switzerland in the Mediterranean is a blended concept, that is, neither prototype-Malta nor prototype-Switzerland. Further on, neutrality is the central feature of the Malta-Switzerland analogy, the idea of “contractual agreement” with the European Union along with the anti-full-membership stance emerges in the blended space. Under the first item “A Switzerland in the Mediterranean”, the 1996 manifesto states: “A Labour government will target a contractual agreement with the European Union that would envisage the setting up of an industrial free trade zone within a reasonable time scale.” and again: “Labour believes that Malta should refrain from seeking full membership of the European Union, which would entail the adoption by Malta of all the Union’s policies’.” This interpretation has become conventionally associated with the blend in the context of the EU-membership debate. In the blend the two counterpart countries become fused and thereby also their geographic position: Mediterranean is highly salient, Alpine Europe becomes mute.

Overall, Sant’s version of the blend is less charged metaphorically, presumably due to the deletion of “the heart” of the Mediterranean (recall that Mintoff’s image represented “a little Switzerland in the heart of Mediterranean”, which personified the Mediterranean) and is thus also less emotionally charged. The fact that this blend is only used in the item title, but not in the argumentation as such, as well as its replacement by the “Swiss model” version in the *Manifesto* 2003, signal that in the EU-membership debate this rhetorical device is used rather for its argumentative potential than for its emotional connotations.

Nonetheless, its selection is not a random one as – just to give an example – the “Norwegian model” could have also been used instead of the “Swiss model”. The selection of “a Switzerland in the Mediterranean” or “Swiss model” is motivated by

entrenchment, which means that a certain space and a whole chain of inferences are quickly activated. Fauconnier distinguishes between novel (dynamic) and entrenched mental spaces:

Mental spaces are built up dynamically in working memory, but a mental space can become entrenched in long-term memory. [...] Such an entrenched mental space typically has other mental spaces attached to it, in an entrenched way, and they quickly come along with the activation (Fauconnier 2007: 352).

The advantage of using “Switzerland” is that this mental space is both almost universally (for example, as a topos of beauty and abundance) and culturally entrenched (via the Mintoffian model).

However, Sant’s use of the “Switzerland in the Mediterranean” blend to defend the MLP anti-European position spawned a whole range of comments in the press. Its role and relevance for the EU-debate were discussed and its historical reminiscences were always conjured up. Interestingly, the inventor of this concept, Dom Mintoff, considered it obsolete:

On Tuesday, Mr Mintoff brought down Dr Sant's house like a pack of cards. The 'Switzerland in the Mediterranean' concept is now obsolete, no longer valid. It was valid, says Mr Mintoff now, when there were two blocs in the world, facing each other eyeball to eyeball. That is not valid today.

*Department of Information – Malta*  
(<http://www.doi.gov.mt/en/commentaries/2000/07/ind06.asp>)

In Mintoff’s terms, the career of this slogan had come to an end. Notwithstanding the fact that within the new historical context, its degree of salience diminished (presumably also due to the lack of the novelty effect), the slogan fulfilled its role of effectively introducing a political policy. The fact that “a Switzerland in the Mediterranean” was replaced by “Swiss Model” indicates a tendency towards categorisation. The “Swiss Model” simply denotes a type of relationship with the European Union: the relationship is based on a contractual agreement (or actually several agreements) that enables cooperation with the EU in many areas, such as trade and research, without obliging to become a member of the EU and thereby without entailing commitment to adopt all EU rules and regulations.

If the blend is chronologically displaced (i.e. taken out of the context of the EU debate before 2004), a new meaning will emerge. Consider, for example, the title of an article which covers severe weather events disturbing the Mediterranean island: “Switzerland in the Mediterranean, Valetta was among the worst hit by the hailstorm” (see picture in annex 1). In this context, we have to integrate our conventional schematic knowledge of the weather in Switzerland with our conventional knowledge about the Maltese climate. The political frame gives no further help in unpacking this “situated” blend because different items of information need to be selected in order to come to the desired blend. Nevertheless, the conventional knowledge that people share about this blend (in its political context) will be conjured up as well, which creates the humorous effect.<sup>85</sup>

This new “climate blend” contains an element that is not available in either of the input spaces: the non-normality effect. In the input space 1 it is normal to snow or hail in winter and it would not be normal if this did not happen. In the other space (Malta with its Mediterranean climate) it does not snow or hail and this is normal. In the blended space it hails, but this is unsuitable to the Mediterranean weather. It is only the geographical displacement (only possible in the blend) that brings about the effect of non-normality.

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<sup>85</sup> The comments of the readers posted online demonstrate that the blend “Switzerland in the Mediterranean” in its new context is not pruned of the conventional knowledge associated with the political blend; consider, for instance, James George’s comment (made on 28/12/08): “To me this heading has more political connotation than one cares to admit. Why is this country so immersed in politics, even at a time of the year when one tends to mend fences rather than break them. When will we ever learn” (<http://stocks.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20081228/local/switzerland-in-the-mediterranean;> in original without punctuation mark).



**Figure 15:** Switzerland in the Mediterranean (climatic blend)

(<http://stocks.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20081228/local/switzerland-in-the-mediterranean>)

Furthermore, if the input space 1 “Switzerland” is chronotopically displaced, entirely new blends are forged. Consider, for instance, the blend “Switzerland of Latin America” that was used to refer to Uruguay due to its commitment to a welfare state or “Bohemian Switzerland” (Czech Switzerland) used to refer to a region in the north-western Czech Republic that is well-known for its picturesque landscape. It seems that Switzerland as an idealised input space is so prolific that there may be at least one Switzerland on each continent (e.g. Singapore is the Switzerland of Asia, Guinea is the Switzerland of Africa, etc.).

As each of these blends have a geographical component, it can be claimed that it is this geographical element that determines the selection of the adequate information. Nonetheless, if the information required for an appropriate unpacking of the blend is not merely a geographic attribute (e.g. the case of the political blend “Switzerland in the Mediterranean” as opposed to the blend “Bohemian Switzerland”), another selector will be involved. Since the selection is to a large extent context-dependent, this selector of relevant information can be called a “contextual selector”. This contextual selector will constrain the recruitment of information according to its relevance for a situated context in space and time.

The fact that Malta is not always present as such in the blend (cf. The MLP Manifesto) illustrates the importance of the metonymy. In the input space, we have the Mediterranean that stands for Malta (totum-pro-parte metonymy), whereas in the blend Switzerland with its modified features, especially geographic location, stands for Malta via metonymy compression.

#### **14.1. PN-Metaphors vs. MLP-Metaphors**

As I have shown in Section 13.1.2. “Intracultural Overt Variation”, the choice of metaphors in the political discourse in Malta is determined by the feelings which people have towards Europe. The political parties make judgements by selecting a certain frame. For those in favour of the European Union, i.e. in the case of Malta mostly the Nationalist Party, Europe is seen as a panacea:

For those opposed to the membership, e.g. the Labour Party and its supporters, Europe is conceptualised as an enemy (embodying zoomorphic or apocalyptic features):

In other words, the MLP is convinced that they - the EU - are all out get at us and poor little Malta desperately needs someone to defend her: the MEPs elected from the MLP list of candidates. [...] Is the rest of the EU, therefore, the enemy threatening to swallow us up?

*Malta Today*

(www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html)

Also depending on the negative or positive views, Malta is represented as a passive or active entity. In the above quotation, Malta is portrayed as passive and endangered. If a positive position is adopted, the role shifts from a passive nation, which is threatened to be engulfed by the EU, to an active nation:

It is now up to us to decide, though I am in no doubt as to where our destiny should lie. [...] Do we have an alternative to membership? Yes. We can stay out and be alone in a world where it is becoming ever more vital to belong to a strong family.

*The Times of Malta*, 6 March 2003

When the pro-EU camp considers that Malta adopts an active role if the country joins the EU, the anti-EU camp sees Malta as active if the country decides to build a future outside the EU:



Retaining control over our affairs so that we can guide them forward according to our circumstances, in order to build a better future, is no pipedream. It is the only realistic way forward. No blueprints copied from Brussels or elsewhere, can fit our circumstances. Those who have lost faith in our ability to run our affairs tell us that only by joining the European Union can we progress further. They betray, as they say so, deep feelings of insecurity and inferiority.

*The Times of Malta*, 5 March 2003

Adopting an active attitude is also conceived of as “swimming upstream” instead of complying with the mainstream opinion, which presupposes that once you have become a member, you have to make every effort in order to adjust to the EU requirements. In this view, Malta will not accept every condition just to be part of the EU, but considers fighting for its welfare and leaving the Union if need be:

And yes, to all those who refuse to believe that Malta could one fine day choose to walk out of the European Union, let us not be quite too sure about this. If Europe fails to meet the expectations of us Maltese, then as all good Islanders do, we will swim upstream and do the unthinkable.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2003/12/14/editorial.html>)

To provide a wider perspective of the metaphors found in the data, it is necessary to list the basic patterns detected in the discourse of each political party for the two target domains Malta and the European Union. The PN and MLP share several conceptual metaphors, although the linguistic manifestations of these metaphors contrast sharply.

First let us examine the MLP’s conceptual metaphor field:

#### *Metaphors conceptualising the EU:*

- EU INTEGRATION IS A JOURNEY finds manifestations in the MLP discourse in its negative variant, i.e. as a futile journey. Thus, the anti-EU camp speaks of Malta “being driven into a dead end alley” and about its commitment to “get Malta out of this cul-de-sac”. ([www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html))
- THE EU IS AN ENGULFING MONSTER/ A NEGATIVE FORCE highlights the threat the EU poses to Malta, a threat which is almost impossible to oppose: “Is the rest of the EU, therefore, the enemy threatening to swallow us up?” ([www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/opinion3.html))

- THE EU MEMBERSHIP IS MEMBERSHIP IN A CLUB emphasises the exclusive and regulatory nature of membership as well as the negative implications of joining, as in: "...when you join a club, you must accept all the rules of the club. (...) Truly, the full application of EU rules to Malta will create huge new burdens and costs, without providing equivalent new opportunities." (*The Malta Independent*, 6 March 2003).
- THE EU IS A BUREAUCRATIC MACHINE stresses the mechanical functionality of the complex ensemble of institutions and shows that member countries are more important for their role within the system. An alternative metaphor, EU IS A FACTORY visualizes the EU as "a factory which produces tons of directives and tons of regulations." (<http://www.congressfordemocracy.org.uk/bonnici%20speech.html>)
- THE EU IS A SUPERSTATE warns against Malta's losing its state status after joining the EU: "Within the EU itself islands are given regional status because of certain inherent disadvantages." ([www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/01/18/interview.html](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/01/18/interview.html)).
- THE EU IS A BOGEYMAN highlights the negative consequences of joining and their unpredictability. "The general impression conveyed is that Labour's eight are best suited to defend Malta from the EU bogeyman." (<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/30/interview.html>)
- THE EU IS A FOOTBALL LEAGUE allows a hierarchisation of the EU members and positioning Malta according to the users' interests: "European Union accession will lead to relegating Malta to third division." (<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2001/1111/editorial.html>)
- EU MEMBERSHIP IS LOSING CONTROL stresses that joining the EU dilutes Malta's control of its own domestic affairs. "Retaining control over our affairs so that we can guide them forward according to our circumstances, in order to build a better future, is no pipedream." (*The Times* , 5 March 2003)

*Metaphors conceptualising Malta within the EU context:*

- MALTA IS WHITEBAIT highlights the lack of importance of the country within the European Union. “Labour leader Alfred Sant said that Malta would be like "a white bait among whales" once it joins the EU [...].” (<http://www.doi.gov.mt/en/commentaries/2000/12/ind17.asp>)
- MALTA IS A COLONY serves to picture the EU as a colonist, as a self-centred agent. “[...] Malta’s membership of the EU will mark a ‘return to the politics of colonialism’ [...].” (The Times Magazine, 6 April 2003)
- MALTA IS WARE highlights the evaluation of the pro-EU camp within the selling frame: the EU is a buyer and the pro-EU camp is a vendor. “Calling the PN ‘traitors’ for selling Malta to the European Union, Mintoff called on his public to vote for the party that would keep Malta independent.” (*Maltatoday*, 16 March 2003)

Next, I will examine the PN’s metaphorically expressed views:

The pro-EU camp also exploits the advantages of the metaphor EU INTEGRATION IS A JOURNEY. However, unlike their opponents, the journey conceptualised by the PN is open-ended: “the road has only just begun” (<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2004/05/09/e3.html>). In the PN discourse, openness has a very important role: “We stand on the threshold with the door open” (<http://www.alternattiva.org.mt/speeches.html#SELFACtstud>), “The door of opportunity will be open if we do our part” (*The Times*, 2 January 2004) or “membership is not just opening borders but opening minds to the reality of the new situation” (<http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=5460>).

*Metaphors conceptualising the EU:*

- THE EU IS A POSITIVE FORCE, as in “He paid further tribute to the EU for serving as a catalyst and stimulating countries to embrace reform” (<http://www.di-ve.com/dive/portal/portal.jhtml?id=226106>), serves to picture the EU as an advantageous agent.

- THE EU MEMBERSHIP IS MEMBERSHIP IN A CLUB (“Joining the EU would put us on a par and in the same club as Spaniards, Latvians, Danes and Poles and we want to associate with these people”, *Malta Today*, 2 March 2003) stresses the advantages offered by the club membership.
- THE EU MEMBERSHIP IS STARTING A NEW LIFE emphasises the chance and new beginning that membership represents for Malta.
- THE EU IS A PROTECTOR/ A CATERER ontologises the EU’s actions and portrays its financial aid as an act of benevolence.
- THE EU IS A FOOTBALL LEAGUE allows a hierarchisation of the EU members and positioning Malta according to the users’ interests: “the Maltese would choose a place in Europe’s premier division rather than a place in the second division” (*The Times* , 6 March 2003).
- THE EU MEMBERSHIP IS A NATURAL STEP invites the interpretation that the righteousness of the decision to join the EU cannot be doubted and therefore that it is unwise to oppose it: “[...] EU membership was a “*natural and logical*” next step for Malta, which shared the Union's aspirations.” (<http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/malta-eu-membership/article-116980>)

*Metaphors conceptualising Malta within the EU context:*

- MALTA IS AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE FAMILY emphasises that Malta will not be treated differently by the other EU members: “With the signing of the Treaty Malta is fully and unequivocally confirming its destiny as an important member of a European family of nations.” (<http://eu.alert.com.mt/page.asp?p=738&l=1&i=1336>)
- MALTA IS A MISSIONARY underlines Malta’s contribution as a Catholic country and its influence in the campaign against paganism.

As the “quack case” has shown, a typical feature of the Europhobes’ discourse is to make use of the metaphors normally employed by their adversaries and to exaggerate them with the purpose of creating exactly reversed pictures and thus subverting those

metaphors. In my view, this technique could implicitly lead to the subversion of the point of view (or worldview) connected to, encoded and mediated by the metaphors. If one compares, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the metaphors used by the Labour Party to the ones used by the Nationalist Party, it is obvious that the former makes larger use of metaphors, especially novel and controversial ones. No doubt, it is difficult to explain this difference regarding the choice of metaphors.

In my opinion, there is a connection between the usage of metaphors and the politicians' confidence in their chances of success. Thus, the interpretation of one journalist's words: "If Alfred Sant had chosen to jump on the Europe bandwagon he, and his party, would be in power now" unfailingly leads to the conclusion that the mere support of the EU membership is capable of guaranteeing success. Further on, knowing that they are in the possession of the best 'card', the Nationalist Party can afford to take a more distant stance and offer a more 'objective' view of events. Conversely, the Labour Party has to employ all the tools available in order to render their position more convincing and that is why they are likely to use a larger number of novel metaphors than their more fortunate opponents. To put it briefly, it seems that the fewer the chances of success in elections or generally within the political landscape, the more novel and provocative metaphors the politicians are likely to employ.

## **14.2. Utopias vs. Dystopias**

New metaphors, like conventional metaphors,  
can have the power to define reality.

Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 157

Before the EU accession became reality, the "EU issue" was an unknown phenomenon for the whole Maltese population (both politicians and lay people) and was thus in need of elucidation. This unknown phenomenon delighted part of the population (its supporters) and scared others. Politicians proceeded to draft scenarios aimed at explaining the supranational institution and the consequences of a potential European integration. As the two main political parties in Malta had utterly opposite stances, conflicting scenarios were created that focus either exclusively on advantages or on disadvantages of the integration process.

The staunch supporters of the EU membership (especially the Nationalist Party and its sympathisers) expressed their idealism by creating utopias, whereas the grouchy opponents tried to destroy the formers' visionary projects by creating nightmare scenarios. Thus, the Nationalists believe in a "European dream" that becomes true once Prime Minister Eddie Fenech Adami signs Malta's EU accession treaty in April 2003. This event, covered in *The Times of Malta* under the title "PM flies off to Athens to fulfil EU dream", is described by the Prime Minister as follows: "The dream we've all had for several years is finally translated into reality. I think all of us are extremely satisfied. It's no longer a case of whether we will make it or not. It's certain. This is a historic event for our country," he said (*The Times of Malta*, April 16, 2003, quotation marks in the original).

Notwithstanding the presence of this metaphor in other discourses, I consider it to be culturally embedded. The *European dream* is in this case not a supranational, but a national dream, so that instantiation of this blend can be expected to differ from one discourse to another, depending on the nationality of the hearer or reader.

This metaphor can be read at different levels depending on the context: supranational, national, sub-national (e.g. groups or political parties) or even individual. The EU dream in the quotation above can be seen as a national dream in which the "dream template" is filled with the Maltese nation's expectations, although a mixture of Nationalist (party-related interests) and national expectations would be more plausible.

It would be interesting to have a look at the motivation for choosing the source domain of dreams. The use of the verb "to fulfil" indicates that the "dream" is a desire or a goal. However, to use one of the latter would have meant that some of the implications of saying that the EU enterprise is a "dream" would be lost. Unlike a desire or a goal, a dream implies that for the dreamers (i.e. Maltese people) everything seems possible and the world of the dream mixes with reality. The dreamers feel safe and enjoy a sense of happiness. However, if having a goal presupposes active involvement and pursuit, having a dream downplays involvement and determines a rather passive attitude. Fulfilling a dream also depends on external influences rather than only on one's active and continuous efforts.

The EU dream not only concerns joining, but also Malta's welfare as a member. The collocation *European dream* recalls the *American dream* and the encyclopaedic

knowledge of the American dream helps us to understand more easily what the EU dream is about. Therefore, it can be asserted that this metaphor, like the American dream, is a public intercultural product propagated via political speeches, newspaper articles and TV shows.

The EU dream can be read in two ways: a) as a metaphor with a source domain “DREAM” and a target domain “EU INTEGRATION”; b) as an intertextual blend with two input spaces “American dream” and “EU”. However, EU dreams also take the form of religious visions.

In order to construct future scenarios, religious metaphors (both positive and negative) are also commonly used, which is not at all surprising as religion holds a very important place in Maltese society: “He [Fenech Adami, MP] said the EU had been born out of a vision of three great Christians who led Germany, Italy and France after the war. They wanted peace and strove to eliminate cruelty.” (*The Times of Malta*, 5 March 2003); and again:

Others like the Prime Minister make the absurd claim that the Maltese have the mission to reconvert the continent back to its Latin-Christian roots! These ignore the reality of a secularised and multicultural Europe enshrined in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2001/0408/opinion.html>)

Expressing the role of Malta in the EU metaphorically as a mission to evangelise the Continent is supposed to forcefully appeal to the Maltese as faithful Christians. This metaphor is imperative and it should hardly be possible for a Christian people to refrain from taking action. Moreover, in view of the people’s veneration of St. Paul as a national patron, “Father of the Maltese”, and the importance afforded to St. Paul’s feast, I would argue that the “mission” mentioned is not just ‘a’ mission, but that this would be decoded as a reiteration of St. Paul’s mission, who taught the teachings of Jesus Christ to many communities and also to the Maltese after his shipwreck on Malta.

St Paul’s feast is celebrated on 10<sup>th</sup> of February and ends with the parade of the massive statue of St. Paul through the parish, during which songs are played (and sung by the crowds) and fireworks and petards are released. The statue is a very important symbol of Christianity and is perceived during the *fešta* as an embodiment of the Saint himself:



*Pawlini* have no doubt as to the importance of the statue, referring to it habitually as a national treasure – part of the national patrimony. [...] The form of *festa* serves to embue<sup>86</sup> the statue with value – it serves as a focus of celebration, becoming a tangible embodiment of the saint himself, rather than mere representation (Mitchell 2002: 214; italics in the original).

The statue is a religious and cultural symbol that dominates the Maltese mindmap so much that it is worth analysing it more closely.

The statue in Figure 16 (as well as other statues of St. Paul in Malta) represents St. Paul and was created as a symbol of Malta's conversion to Christianity:



**Figure 16:** St. Paul ([www.maltagozoguide.com](http://www.maltagozoguide.com))

St. Paul appears with his right arm stretched out and with his fingers pointing towards the sky. Despite the vertical orientation of the arm, it seems to lean forward, which can be interpreted as pointing to a future after conversion to Christianity. The outstretched arm reminds us of the religious iconography, especially of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>86</sup> *Embue* is used in the original.

However, it should be noted that pointing in the forward direction distinguishes St. Paul's stance from the position of the arm in Jesus' case. The book is another element that is always present in all versions of the St. Paul's statue. The pictorial metaphor contained is: CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY IS KNOWLEDGE (implying LACK OF RELIGION IS IGNORANCE).

Detractors of the Nationalist Party would repeatedly use the metaphors "heaven on earth", "manna" in order to stress that the promises made by the pro-EU camp are illusive:

He [Zarb, general secretary of the General Workers Union, MP] said that although people were being promised heaven on earth with EU membership, the reality was that Europe was losing its social conscience. Poverty in the EU was on the increase, the number of homeless was growing and there were 15 million unemployed. The Maltese did not want this Europe.

*The Times of Malta*, 5 March 2003

And again:

The people are fed up of political parties who promise manna from heaven before an election, say will (sic!) receive 100 million euros annually if we reactivate our EU application, and then promptly forget this promise after election." Mr Buhagiar said. I believe that the people understand the country's problems much better than we give them credit for and they will vote for the party which will map out, in an honest and serious manner, the way forward to overcome our problems without depending on any EU or other miracle."

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2002/0609/people.html>)

Critics of the opposition camp and of their partnership proposal resort to the religious metaphor of "limbo" as in the quotation below.

We are at a crucial period in our history. By 2004 we can either be EU members or retire to limbo. The limbo or plan B scenario is no plan at all. The limbo or plan B strategy is something projected by the Labour party. It has no frills to it other than the simple message that it offers to stay out and build on a partnership agreement with the EU. The same as the EU has formulated with Arab nations and developing countries.

*Malta Today*

(<http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2002/11/24/editorial.html>)

As we will see in the next section, the history of colonisation is also relevant to understanding the Maltese worldview.

### **14.3. Colonial Heritage = Cognitive and Emotional Heritage?**

Colonisation is still very present in the Maltese worldview and a rich source domain for the metaphorical conceptualisation of the European Union.

A widely-held tenet in cognitive linguistics is that the source domain is usually concrete, graspable, and that the target domain is abstract. According to Kövecses (2002: 20), “Target domains are abstract diffuse and lack clear delineation; as a result they ‘cry out’ for metaphorical conceptualisation.” Source domains are not always concrete, but they are – at least at the time of metaphorical creation – more clearly delineated and have a perceivable structure.

It may be argued that the target domain, the European Union, also had an obvious structure at the time of the metaphor creation. However, taking into consideration that the COLONISATION source domain has been widely used by politicians in order to put forward their point of view on the geopolitical phenomenon, one can assume the existence of two various knowledge levels between the politicians and the potential voters at that particular point in time: the level of the knowledge transmitter does not coincide with the level of the knowledge receiver. It is in this process of knowledge transmission that metaphors are valued as essential heuristic tools in a whole range of sciences and also in politics.

Via metaphors people are offered ‘shortcuts’ to their stored experiential knowledge and based on the association source – target, inferences about the target domain are triggered. In politics, metaphors are an affect heuristic tool because emotions are put to use to guide understanding, judgement and future action. The experience of colonisation in Malta is a source domain par excellence in which experiential knowledge cannot be separated from (negative) emotions. It is therefore not surprising that the Europhobes resort to this source domain.

Reference to the colonisation period is made either directly or indirectly. In other words, THE EU MEMBERSHIP IS A FORM OF COLONISATION emerges both as a linguistic and as a conceptual metaphor. In the following examples, reference is made in a direct way and the inferences are triggered by means of an analogy between the EU and colonisation:

Through such “partisanship”, it seems, the Maltese want “to go back to the situation that prevailed in these islands in the days of Monroy, of the Knights of St. John, or of the British”. Although he [Alfred Sant – my addition: MP] concedes that “the EU is not Monroy”, he is saddened by the fact that Malta’s membership of the EU will mark a “return to the politics of colonialism”, as a result of which we Maltese would give up “our independence and freedom”.

*The Times of Malta*, 21 April 2003  
(quotation marks in the original)

The analogy linking the EU integration and the politics of colonisation invites a whole range of inferences, e.g. EU accession has a direct impact on Malta’s independence, Malta will not be treated as equal, the Maltese will be exploited, the Maltese culture will be destroyed, etc. The basic idea is that Malta’s relations with the EU will be understood by means of this analogy in terms of power relations. If one has not experienced colonisation directly, all these inferences are either immediately dismissed or they are not made at all. However, if the psychological effects of a colonisation process are taken into consideration, it cannot be denied that the analogy projects such inferences.

Due to the psychological aftermath of colonisation, an analogy of this type may unwittingly be applied, i.e. without thinking about its plausibility. It might thus become natural to conceive of the EU as a colonist and of the integration as a renewed colonisation process. As a consequence, fallacious conceptions emerge and these can influence our future action. This can occur in science as well, but in the field of politics the effects of misconceptions induced by metaphor are even more pervasive, owing to the emotional effect that the source domain is apt to create.

This interpretation is in line with Lakoff and Johnson’s (2003: 139) assumption that creative and imaginative metaphors are able to confer a new understanding, to add new meaning to our set of beliefs and convictions. According to Lakoff and Johnson, a coherent network of entailments is created which may be in consonance with our previous experience of the target domain (LOVE, in their example), and if this is the case, “What we experience with such a metaphor is a kind of reverberation down through the network of entailments that awakens and connects our memories of our past love experiences and serves as a possible guide for future ones.” (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 140)

The same interpretation is felicitous if applied to the source domain. In the EU MEMBERSHIP IS A FORM OF COLONISATION metaphor, the target domain has future effectivity and it is consequently unknown. However, the source domain is known and is capable of producing the same kind of reverberation and of providing a comprehension frame for the target domain. Importantly, it can be asserted – in agreement with Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 142) – that the metaphor acquires truth value if the new meaning matches with our pre-existing experience and that it will be able to influence our future decision-making process.

Politicians also resort to the COMMERCIAL EVENT frame in order to conceptualise the integration process. As will be shown below, this frame is connected with the colonisation frame.

“What is the next government going to do when it has to obey the orders coming from Brussels for five whole years? The first thing you have to tell yourselves is that you must not vote for the Nationalists,” Mintoff roared.

No vote for PN

Calling the PN ‘traitors’ for selling Malta to the European Union, Mintoff called on his public to vote for the party that would keep Malta independent. [...]

KM’s warm-up

In his initial speech, Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici said that despite the fact that the majority of the electorate had not voted for the treason of the country, Malta still faced another danger.

*Malta Today*, 16 March 2003  
(quotation marks in the original)

In the quotation above, the verb “selling” evokes the commercial frame, whereas the adjective “independent” together with the noun “traitor” activate the “colonisation frame”. These are intermingled and therefore difficult to tell apart.

It is helpful to evaluate the colonisation frame in view of the “commercial event” as described by Fillmore (1982: 116). Fillmore visualises the “commercial event” as consisting of four elements called participant roles: the person interested in exchanging money for goods (the Buyer), the person interested in exchanging goods for money (the Seller), the goods that the Buyer wants to acquire (the Goods) and the money that the Seller receives or expects to receive (the Money). In such a typical commercial

situation, the Nationalist Party would be the Seller, the EU the Buyer and Malta the Commodity. The Money element is absent, or it is not clear what the benefit for the PN would be. The commercial frame put to use in order to understand the above quotation is a metaphorical one. However, exactly like a literal “commercial frame”, the metaphoric commercial frame guides the understanding: the verb *to sell* (if used literally or metaphorically) activates the commercial frame and all the elements associated with it. Thus, the verb selected delineates a particular ‘route’ through the frame: certain roles are foregrounded, others are backgrounded, and consequently particular aspects of the frame are highlighted.

In the above quotation, despite the use of the verb *sell*, the *seller* is called a *traitor*, and this is the point at which the frame shifts away from the typical commercial frame. It is important to mention that the conceptualisation of *treason* as *selling* is widely-recurrent and not specific to this situation. Within this new context, not selling Malta means that the country preserves its independence, whereas selling means that Malta becomes dependent. It follows that selling has consequences for the Goods itself, contributing to a change in status. The dichotomy dependence/independence determines that the two frames, the commercial event and the colonisation frame are superimposed. Thus, the *EU is a Buyer*, but also a *Colonist*, *Malta is the Commodity*, but also the *Colony*, *PN is the Seller*, but also the *Traitor*.

Notwithstanding the importance of emotions in each “learning” process, metaphor in science and metaphor in politics as heuristic tools must be considered separately, because in the former the emphasis is laid on experimenting whereas in the latter the affect is given more prominence. There can therefore be a distinction made between metaphors as heuristic tools and metaphors as affect heuristic tools. Certainly, the usefulness of metaphors as heuristic tools cannot be denied. Nevertheless, people should be alerted to the danger of naive metaphor comprehension. People should be alerted to the metaphors’ power to create reality, which is to create both beauty and monstrosity, according to the creator’s whims. Botting (2003) pleads on the “monstrosity of metaphor” as follows:

[...] metaphor, a constituent of poetic language, makes beauty, enhances expression in its substitutions and comparisons. But it also makes monsters, gives repellent form to unformed entities. Metaphors shape reality, framing the world that is inhabited. At the same time, they distort

what is real, substituting figures in place of objects and things (that language, of course, distinguishes), thereby demonstrating the entanglement of linguistic figures in the ordering of the world as it is lived and perceived. As metaphor, monsters reflect back on metaphor's necessity in the very constitution of human reality. (Botting 2003: 346)



## 15. Concluding remarks and Future Impetus

In the present dissertation I set out to illustrate that metaphors can offer a glimpse into people's worldviews; they can enable insights both into individuals' and nation's attitudes and beliefs. However, I suggested that in order to assure a greater validity of results a flexible methodological approach needs to be adopted, or, more precisely, a combination of methods is almost indispensable. With the risk of departing from the typical approach of conceptual metaphor theory and occasionally even from linguistics as such, I opted for a mixture of corpus (based on a journal research), sociocultural information gained from sociological studies and a questionnaire method in order to seek authentic (to the extent that this is possible) ways of conceptualisation of the EU, but also ways of conceptualising of prevalent source domains in the EU debate.

As the reader might recall, one of the hypotheses was that cases of both *overt* and *covert* variation can be detected throughout Europe in the discourse on the European Union. The close analysis of EU metaphors recurrent in the Maltese discourse on the basis of the corpus and a consideration of the findings of previous studies on the EU within the framework of linguistics have led to the conclusion that it is difficult to detect clear cases of *overt variation*, i.e. of unique metaphors, in the discourse on the EU. It has been suggested that there undoubtedly are cases that can be treated as original metaphors from the perspective of the sociocultural and historical circumstances, but that holding them to be unique might be a pitfall. Consequently, it should be emphasised that the frequent instances of cultural variation, the metaphors indicated as culture-specific and thus as distinguishing the Maltese discourse from the discourse of other countries, are likely to occur in the discourse of other nations that tend to share some of Malta's distinctive features, such as geographical and socio-economic or historical characteristics.

Furthermore, the results of the analysis have indicated that many metaphors prevalent in the Maltese public discourse overlap conceptually with metaphors occurring in the European public discourse in general. One explanation, which has been suggested to account for the existence of what I defined as "European" metaphors (EU-specific metaphors that can be identified in the EU-discourse of various countries), is the transfer of metaphors from one language to another, e.g. via translations (Šaric

2005:3). It can further be maintained that the emergence of a so-called EU discourse can also account for the existence of shared metaphor. The “ pan-European discourse can be held to have a ‘cohesive effect’ in national discourses on the EU. However, even in such cases of similarity, a thorough analysis indicates that these shared metaphors are characterised by different metaphorical conceptualisations and entailments. These covert differences can be explained on the basis of sociocultural and even environmental differences: as suggested by Kövecses, generic level schemas are filled out with sociocultural substance and thus multiple instantiations are achieved at the specific level (2005:68).<sup>87</sup>

The source domains discussed to support this argument are HOUSE and FAMILY, two source domains that seem very prolific in the discourse on the EU. It has been shown that the family frame can lead to the emergence of competing metaphors even within the same culture due to co-existing worldviews. Worldviews may determine the preference for a certain metaphor and thus determine a certain course of action. In turn, the preference for one metaphor and the rejection of another can presumably be demonstrated on the basis of people’s concrete actions, and can indicate a reframing or value reappraisal. In the present case, one example of concrete action is voting for a political party. From the Lakoffian perspective of this thesis, voting for a political party equals voting for a political vision, which in turn has been framed by a metaphor: belief in the idea conveyed by the metaphor or in the frame turns the idea itself into a firm belief. As in advertising, people often buy because they believe in the vision the advertiser nurtured by means of a frame, by means of a metaphor.

No doubt, these are strong arguments that are however difficult to support with concrete findings. I took only one step in this direction (testing worldviews experimentally) and that is why I made the corpus/questionnaire compromise. As already mentioned, in order to avoid relying only on introspection or sociological studies that might reflect an obsolete reality, I considered it imperative to combine views from cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics. Access to authentic content of folk models was achieved through a questionnaire survey conducted at the University of Malta in October 2006. The folk models gained via the questionnaire were an essential tool for ensuring a reliable metaphor analysis and for assessing metaphor

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<sup>87</sup> The generic-level metaphor was introduced by Lakoff and Turner (1989).

comprehension within a certain social group. The respondents' conceptualisation of the EU and of other basic domains of everyday life (such as *house* and *family*) has indicated that values are not static, but under review, and that consequently a dynamic instead of a static approach to metaphor analysis should be adopted.

A few central findings of the questionnaire need to be summarised at this point. Among others, the results of the questionnaire have revealed that an unconscious reframing of the conceptualisation of the family has taken place: a new system of values and beliefs seems to have replaced the old system, but the new paradigm does not surface when people are asked directly to state their opinion on sociocultural values (such as family or religion).

Alongside the tendency of secularisation of the Maltese family it is also worth mentioning that a colonisation frame came to the surface in the respondents' ways of personifying of the EU. Notwithstanding that the questionnaire was given to only a minute fraction of the Maltese population (and may thus not be completely representative), the results indicate that we might be dealing with a simplified and abstract colonisation frame that is merely used to conceptualise power relations. Certainly, my evaluation of the questionnaire results on this issue requires a word of caution and, ideally, further research.

Close attention has also been given to the metaphors that are apt to distinguish the Maltese discourse from the discourse of other countries. In this respect, it has been demonstrated that not only the long history of colonisation has formed the source domains in Malta, but that the country's geographical situation also surfaces in the discourse devices in use. Insularity and smallness account for a number of metaphors and other tropes, so that one can speak of a Maltese discourse of smallness and insularity in the EU-membership debate. At the level of metaphors, the insularity and small size are reflected in a range of expressions conveying the lack of national importance sensed by the inhabitants. Depending on the speaker's EU stance, insularity constitutes a characteristic to be preserved for the sake of self-sufficiency and implicitly national sovereignty in the context of EU enlargement, or something to be discarded, if standing by itself is considered to contribute to the country's vulnerability. It should, however, be mentioned that the discourse of insularity is not only an attribute of the discourse on the EU, but is also a feature of the discourse regarding Maltese identity. As

a matter of fact, it is the Maltese identity as a whole that entered the arena of the EU membership negotiations. Throughout chapter 9, “The EU and the Maltese Identity: Smallness, periphery, phobias and identity verification”, it was emphasised that in the space of the EU membership debate the idea of national identity generated immense fear of succumbing to the influence of the European supernationality.

Another aspect that was discussed in respect to Malta’s insularity was the extent to which this geographical feature is apt to structure people’s mindmaps and to influence their decision-making. As I suggested in Chapter 8, “Man and Island: Being ‘In’ and ‘Around’ the Body”, basic image schemas are likely to undergo an accretion process under the influence exercised by the environment. At this point, I proposed that the basic container schemata, which people acquire in early childhood, is prone to be recast by the superimposition of new subtle strata as a consequence of incessant interaction with the sociocultural, but also geographical environment. Although this is merely a hypothesis that is based exclusively on the corpus data, sociocultural knowledge and introspection, I contend that it would be important and stimulating at the same time to test this idea empirically.

In Section 7.4., “Metaphor and the EU”, I outlined my theory of the career of European metaphors, and their five stages of development. This theory implies that European metaphors are not fixed within time, but are subject to modifications due to a series of factors. It goes without saying that the most important factor in this respect is the frequent use of certain dominant metaphors. Due to their efficacy, these metaphors are overused both synchronically (in various situated discourses) and diachronically.

In a similar vein, I suggested that affect heuristic can be used to explain the incremental modifications that metaphors undergo. It is my conviction that the process of the conventionalisation of metaphors implies not only “semantic bleaching”, but also “affective bleaching”, i.e. the affective mappings become weaker and, subsequently, mute. This is again an aspect that could not be demonstrated in the present study, but testing experimentally the affective implications of the processing effort could be a productive future research.

Another challenge for future research is to explore the axiological and moral aspects of the EU-membership debate in Malta from a linguistic point of view, and to include the reverberations of the debate in the period following the EU accession. In

Malta the EU-membership debate was dominated by axiological issues and ethical considerations. This part of the debate can be referred to as the “axiological debate”. It is necessary to divide this “axiological debate” into two subsections: the first one is structured by positive arguments and makes sense of the Europe Union as the natural destination at the end of the axiological quest, whereas the second one conceptualises the European Union as a “destroyer of values”. According to the latter view, Malta has values that distinguish the island from other countries and which are in danger of being lost under the uniformisation process in the European Union.

Ultimately, it is the fear of losing its national identity that appeared pervasively in many of the metaphors that emerged as Malta moved toward membership in the European Union. How becoming a member is actually beginning to affect a change in the personal and political perception of the Maltese today may be suggested by the linguistic results presented in this study.

## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. A **child** wants to know what the 'European Union' is. Think of ways to define the 'Union' for them. What would you say?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Malta's EU membership? Explanation should be given to people who received poor education.
3. Imagine that the European Union and Malta are **human beings**. What adjectives would you use to describe each one of them?
4. A foreign visitor is coming to Malta. He/ She wants to know something about the most common or the favourite type of housing in Malta. Can you describe a **typical Maltese house**?
5. Is **family** important for the Maltese people? Explain.
6. It would be very useful for my study to have your personal details. However, including the required data is not compulsory.

Age:

Sex:

Occupation:

Location (town/ village):

European Union: Are you **in favour** or **against**?

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire Respondents

1. Student, female, 18, Naxxar, in favour)
2. . Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour
3. Student, female, 22, Kappara San Gwann, in favour
4. Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far
5. Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour
6. Student, female, San Gwann, against
7. Student, female, 18, X, in favour
8. X, female, 18, X, X
9. Student in winter, and teaching English to foreign students in summer, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour
10. Student/ part-time telephone advisor, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour
11. Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour
12. Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X
13. Student/ Bartender, male, 18, Masta, in favour
14. Student, male, 18, Mgarr, in favour
15. Student, male, 18, Marsascala, in favour
16. Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Melheha, in favour
17. Student, female, 29, Swiegi, in favour
18. Student, female, 20, Attard, in favour – but there are disadvantages
19. Student, female, 19, Rabat, in favour
20. Student, female, 18, Qormi, in favour
21. Student, female, 20, St. Andrews, in favour
22. Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour
23. Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour
24. Student, female, 20, Balzan, in favour
25. Student, female, 18, B’Bugia, against
26. Student, female, 18, Balzan, in favour
27. Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour
28. Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour
29. Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour



30. Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour
31. Student, female, 18, Swieqi, in favour
32. Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour
33. Student, female, 18, Hamrun, in favour
34. Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against
35. Student, female, 18, Fgura, in favour
36. Student, female, 18, B'Kara, in favour
37. Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X
38. Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour
39. Student, male, 18, St. Julians, in favour
40. Student, female, 21, Sliema, in favour
41. X
42. X, female, 18, Sliema, in favour
43. Student, female, 19, St. Julians, in favour
44. Student, female, 19, Sliema, in favour
45. Student, female, 17, Mellieha, Don't know
46. Student, female, 17, Swiegi, in favour
47. Student, female, 17 ½, Gharghur, I have no straightforward opinion as there are many advantages + disadvantages to overlook. Yet overall I believe the EU has opened up many doors for Malta!
48. Student, female, 18, Luliegi, in favour
49. Student, female, 17, Victoria Gozo, in favour
50. Student, female, 17, Fgura, against

### Appendix 3: The Portrayal of the EU

Respondents	Physical Appearance	Personality	Miscellaneous
1.	grand, tall	knowledgeable, responsible	elite, bureaucratic
2.	(suave)	suave, polite, cultured, cold, distant, a bit severe, very powerful	
3.	(well-fed)		well-fed, rich
4.		"a helper, but deep down with bad intentions"	
5.		smart, open-minded	businessman
6.		selfish, scheming	
7.		composed	
9.		Fierce, tough, oppressive, liars	
10.	strong, tall	knowledgeable, experienced, outgoing, wise	
11.	grey-haired	experienced, intelligent	powerful
13.	tall, well-built, strong	organised, shrewd	formidable, welcoming, attentive, yet easily disrupted
14.		powerful	important, influential
15.	big, strong		
16.		mature, benevolent, understanding	
17.		proud	
18.	strong	powerful	
19.		responsible, strict	"fatherly figure" secure, risky at times, good benefits
20.		strict, cold, distant	modern, rich, full of opportunities
21.		helpful, unselfish	resourceful, rich
22.		mild	motherly
23.			useful, innovative
24.		sociable, helpful, friendly	multicultural, motherly

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Physical Appearance</b>	<b>Personality</b>	<b>Miscellaneous</b>
25.		powerful	rich, has connections
26.		helpful, understanding, strict, intelligent	
27.	large/big	helpful	
28.		interesting, pleasant	exciting, fast way of life
30.	large, strong	strict, empowering	bureaucratic, resourceful
31.		powerful	
32.	strong	organised, powerful, money-minded	financially demanding
33.	massive	dominant	united
34.			united
35.		dominant, cooperative	democratic
36.	giant	wise, powerful	rich
37.	big/vast	stronger, powerful	plentiful
38.	big		structured, united
40.	large	clever	organised
41.	vast	slightly threatening	resourceful
42.			united
43.		powerful	organised, complex, independent, essential
44.	large	powerful, strong	bombastic, important, independent
45.	huge		united, wealthy, developed
46.		intelligent, strict, helpful	cultured
47.			interactive, informative
50.		powerful	"has a sense of leadership"

## Appendix 4: The Portrayal of Malta

Respondents	Physical Appearance	Personality	Miscellaneous
1.	small, strong, stocky	able, easygoing, naive	with potential
2.	short, dark, sweaty	eager to please	
3.			poor, full of potential
6.		gullible, "silly enough to be taken in by the lies of someone who wants to take advantage of him/her"	
7.		striving	
9.		sensitive, shy	amazing
10.	small	naive, friendly, uncertain	has unknown ability
11.		child	not so well-read
13.	short	lazy, ignorant, irresponsible, timid	old-fashioned
14.			"not so significant internationally"
15.	small, weak	nimble	
16.	small	talented	promising
17.			competitive
18.	beautiful		poor
19.		confused	Inferior, "trying to make it/fighting the odds"
20.		lenient	old-fashioned, conservative, dependent on others
21.		stubborn	old-fashioned, unique, financially unstable, dependent
22.		servile, yet headstrong, shallow	bureaucratic
23.	small	nice	
24.			traditional, cultural
25.	small		"not rich but caters for the real needs of people"
26.		simple	inferior

Respondents	Physical Appearance	Personality	Miscellaneous
27.	small, tiny		
28.	lovely	kind, warm, relaxed	
30.	tiny	confused, full of character, laid back, ambitious, opportunist	
31.			developing
33.	small	hard-working	
34.	small		
35.		humble, hard-working	"inconsistent sometimes"
36.		ambitious	young, with potential
37.	small		
38.	"small (but significant)"		
40.		rude, impatient	dirty, primitive, savage
41.		brave, full of character	"essence in a small bottle"
42.	small		
43.		determined, insecure	"willing to strive", powerless, dependent
44.	small	weak, ambitious, helpless	dependent, insignificant
45.	small		developing
46.		simple	inferior
50.	small, fragile	unpowerful	

## Appendix 5: Questionnaire Results

1. A **child** wants to know what the ‘European Union’ is. Think of ways to define the ‘Union’ for them. What would you say?

(1) “The world is divided into continents, one continent is Europe. Malta is part of Europe as are many other countries and together they form part of the EU so that us Europeans can work together and live together in peace.” (Student, female, 18, Naxxar, in favour)

(2) “I would explain to the child that after a great war many years ago, some countries decided that it would be better for everyone to join forces – to become like one giant country.” (Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour)

(3) “It’s a group of countries who decided to make friends and share all the good things that they have. Like at school, you make friends and you give out your sweets.” (Student, female, 22, Kappara San Gwann, in favour)

(4) “A group of countries from the same area in the world have formed a kind of ‘club’ so that they can easily share their help and money, to help each other become better. Every few years, countries who work hard are allowed to join.” (Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far)

(5) “A ‘union’ is a word that means working together. It’s just how a soccer team has to work to win the match, passing the ball and helping each other to score goals and defend their post.” (Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour)

(6) “I would say that the European Union is where the most important people gather to try to take advantage of silly people.” (Student, female, San Gwann, against)

(7) “A Network between countries situated the EU who work hand in hand so as to ensure a better future, as well as to improve the present situation.” (Student, female, 18, X, in favour)

- (8) “The EU is made up of many european (*without capital in the original*) countries who join hands to help each other. One country benefits from the other. It discusses important issues like <education>.” (X, female, 18, X, X)
- (9) “It is like a group of people who work together to improve Malta’s situation where finance, business, education and culture is involved.” (Student in winter, and teaching English to foreign students in summer, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)
- (10) “A group of countries which are united in ways to help and support eachother (*written together in the original*), making it easier for younger generations to travel in order to obtain an education abroad and also shared currency.” (Student/ part-time telephone advisor, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)
- (11) “It is a bond/relationship between countries in Europe so that they could work better together, to improve one another.” (Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour)
- (12) “A group of people that help each other out with different ideas and decisions in order to help the country or a larger group (association).” (Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X)
- (13) “Plenty of countries in Europe each joining forces to provide a safer environment in which we can live in.” (Student/ Bartender, male, 18, Masta, in favour)
- (14) “A group of countries who get together to talk about things that are important to them, and who help each other when needed.” (Student, male, 18, Mgarr, in favour)
- (15) “The European Union is a ‘congregation’ of countries which co-operate with each other in political and financial (or monetary) matters.” (Student, male, 18, Marsascala, in favour)
- (16) “The European Union is a family of European Nations working together to make life better for all its members.” (Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Melheha, in favour)
- (17) “All European countries such as Italy, France, etc. united.” (Student, female, 29, Swiegi, in favour)



(18) “I would say that the European Union is like a ‘family’ of countries who do their best to help each other.” (Student, female, 20, Attard, in favour – but there are disadvantages)

(19) “The European Union is an association where different people representing countries from Europe discuss ways to improve their countries in a peaceful way so as not to create more wars.” (Student, female, 19, Rabat, in favour)

(20) “The ‘Union’ is a group of persons or countries that work together for a better future. It is like a big family where everyone co-operates together.” (Student, female, 18, Qormi, in favour)

(21) “A Union is when a group forms a family where all members of a group help each other.” (Student, female, 20, St. Andrews, in favour)

(22) “It is a club with exclusive membership for thriving countries within the boundaries of the European continent.” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour)

(23) “Union is a group of something or someone that are joined together to fulfil a mission.” (Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour)

(24) “I would describe it as, the countries around us become friends so they have to share and get to know each other. One could also describe it as a way of getting to know other people who live in a different country.” (Student, female, 20, Balzan, in favour)

(25) “The EU is a kind of team where different countries from Europe are its members. They might share resources, legislation and work together to try and improve their countries.” (Student, female, 18, B’Bugia, against)

(26) “A Union, consisting of the leaders of some of the European countries. During the meetings held, the leaders discuss the ongoings of their countries and try to find solutions to problems which arise. Funds are given to the countries most in need, in order to help them with their problems.” (Student, female, 18, Balzan, in favour)

(27) “A group of countries who, together, try to make life easier by discussing and therefore coming to a joint decision about the way to go about the matter. It enables

people from countries within the EU to travel freely within the EU itself.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(28) “A union is a group of people, who gather together to share their values and beliefs, in order to protect and look out for one another.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(29) “A number of countries within the European Continent that share similar laws and have equal goal and work together to improve its members’ lives.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(30) “A group of countries in Europe which have reached an agreement between them in order to go by one set of rules and live like one big happy family.” (Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour)

(31) “A gathering and association of a number of countries/ people having one common goal.” (Student, female, 18, Swieqi, in favour)

(32) “A union is similar to the family. At home, the parents are the leaders but all of the family pitches in to do all the work and make the home a better place to live. The union is similar: leaders of countries work together to make the countries’ life better and bring them closer to each other. The leaders involve their countries to bring them closer together, like a big family.” (Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour)

(33) “A group of 25 countries which work together to develop the countries found in this Union. The EU tries to improve the quality of life of all EU members.” (Student, female, 18, Hamrun, in favour)

(34) “A group of 25 countries who are members of the same union. They work together with the best interests of the country in mind.” (Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against)

(35) “A group of countries (25) who are joined together to cooperate in order to improve the quality of life in their countries. This is done by deciding things which will hopefully help each country.” (Student, female, 18, Fgura, in favour)

(36) “The Union is a group of countries from Europe which joined together for peace in Europe and so that they could improve and help each other in all ways (work, money).” (Student, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(37) “One could define the European Union as a group of countries, or rather, the people from these countries, who have come together with a common set of aims in mind. Then I would simplify the aims and mention them to the child as simply as possible.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascale, X)

(38) “The European Union consists of a group of countries in Europe which have joined together in a kind of partnership to support each other politically and economically.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(39) “Countries sharing similar values, cultures, and traditions.” (Student, male, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(40) “A group of countries in Europe which work together to find solutions to national problems and try to achieve a better economy and quality of life for all involved.” (Student, female, 21, Sliema, in favour)

(41) “A group of countries in Europe working together to progress & develop.” (X)

(42) “The ‘union’ is the bond between organisations, people, or in this case, countries, in which they support one another in business, education and culture.” (X, female, 18, Sliema, in favour)

(43) “An organisation where many countries from Europe gather to discuss important matters.” (Student, female, 19, St. Julians, in favour)

(44) “A group of people who work together to create a special group that will have a special job of talking about important things.” (Student, female, 19, Sliema, in favour)

(45) “A group of European countries who unite together in order to solve issues concerning each European country.” (Student, female, 17, Mellieha, Don’t know)

(46) “A group of people who stay together because they all believe and stand up for the same idea.” (Student, female, 17, Swiegi, in favour)

(47) “A ‘Club’ where a person from 25 countries meet to discuss certain points.” (Student, female, 17 ½, Gharghur, I have no straightforward opinion as there are many advantages + disadvantages to overlook. Yet overall I believe the EU has opened up many doors for Malta!)

(48) “The European Union unites a group of countries in Europe, where they can work together in unity and share ideas and regulations to work in a better world.” (Student, female, 18, Luliegi, in favour)

(49) “A group of countries which help each other.” (Student, female, 17, Victoria Gozo, in favour)

(50) “A group of united countries in Europe which have an aim of helping each other.” (Student, female, 17, Fgura, against)

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Malta’s EU membership? Explanation should be given to people who received **poor education**.

(1) “One advantage is that we can work in whichever EU country we please. However foreign businesspeople can set up businesses here and thus the increase in competition may at first prove detrimental to local businesses. Yet we now benefit from EU funds which aid in development of our country.” (Student, female, 18, Naxxar, in favour)

(2) “The advantages would entail more job opportunities, a reinforced economy (more security with our cash), more tourism (we could go abroad easily). The disadvantages include the possibility of a ‘brain drain’ – smart people will leave Malta, and the loss of cultural identity. (Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour)

(3) “Work abroad, better pay. Malta is only 1 country so the demand for labour is lower than that of 25 countries put together. EU is helping in reducing unemployment by

giving opportunities to all of its citizens.” (Student, female, 22, Kappara San Gwann, in favour)

(4) “So far thanks to membership I have been given many opportunities to visit other european (*without capitals in the original*) countries for student exchanges, educational and political experiences, etc. (Many times for free). I think the adult tax/ bill payers may tell you more about the disadvantages since I have not yet experienced any. (except maybe for removal of duty-free at airports!!) (Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far)

(5)

- ✓ Financing to aid large and needed projects.
- ✓ Broader opportunities
- ✓ Higher standards will be achieved by time.
- ✓ To have a voice about Europe.

X Malta has to be careful not to be overstepped by the emerging world. We are a small country after all. (Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour)

(6) “The advantages are that people with extensive opportunities and money will be more at leisure to go abroad. The disadvantages are that it will be harder for uneducated people to find work and earn a living, still having to pay extra taxes: in short it will run less economically advantaged people.” (Student, female, San Gwann, against)

(7) “The advantages of Malta’s EU membership are: more jobs, funds from other European, better links with more powerful countries, facilitation of import export. Disadvantages are: constriction and limitations.” (Student, female, 18, X, in favour)

(8) “Advantages: Malta can benefit from factors such as new job opportunities being in other countries.

Disadvantages: The loss of Maltese currency -> identity, foreign people working in our country, taking up our jobs.” (X, female, 18, X, X)

(9) “Advantages: reduced prices for students where education is involved

better quality of life in general

Disad (*abbreviated in the original*): other people from other countries can come to work here and are able to take your job.” (Student in winter, and teaching English to foreign students in summer, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(10) “Malta’s EU membership makes it easier to study abroad and provides the ability to excel in areas of study which may not be offered here or that do not go into enough depth. A disadvantage may be that a lesser amount of jobs is available to Maltese citizens as foreigners would also be able to study here.” (Student/ part-time telephone advisor, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(11) “Adv: more job opportunities abroad, access to higher forms of education, improvement of Malta’s infrastructure (roads, facilities, etc.)

Disadv: work taken by others (possibly), our autonomy/identity could be lost.” (Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour)

(12) “Advantages: Malta has become more well-known, interaction universally is more possible.

Disadvantages: certain factors are not up to standard when compared to other countries due to our smaller population.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X)

(13) “Advantages => ability to learn and study abroad

Totally new experience

Chance to make new friendship

Enhancement of new subjects

Disadvantages => an excess of students is a possibility.”

(Student/ Bartender, Male, 18, Masta, in favour)

(14) “Advantages: Financial help if needed, Malta has a voice. Disadvantages: Country not completely free to do what it likes.” (Student, male, 18, Mgarr, in favour)

(15) “Malta’s EU membership lets us travel freely within Europe and facilitates the use of money. However this means that we may have to change our monetary system.” (Student, male, 18, Marsascala, in favour)

(16) “EU membership gives Malta a voice in Europe and this helps the country’s economy.” ((Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Mellieha, in favour)

(17) “Advantages are improvement due to competition, whereas disadvantages are that due to competition, Malta increases expenditure, therefore higher or more taxes. Malta has a voice in Europe.” (Student, female, 29, Swiegi, in favour)

(18) “Advantages: Easier for students to study abroad; introduction of the Euro (exchange rates); Funds from Europe; Laws which would be of advantage to Maltese.

Disadvantages: foreigners come to Malta & may take jobs which Maltese could otherwise have.” (Student, female, 20, Attard, in favour)

(19) “An advantage is that Malta gets financial support & a good leading path so as to improve our country, however, a small country like ours has to compete with major countries which we might difficult to keep up.” (Student, female, 19, Rabat, in favour)

(20) "Adv: we can work and live in the other European Union countries. The Maltese Gov. has to obey the European regulations. Dis: many new taxes have been introduced.” (Student, female, 18, Qormi, in favour)

(21) “All the countries can come together and solve this problem with appropriate funds.” ((Student, female, 20, St. Andrews, in favour)

(22) “Advantages. Better job opportunities abroad, national powers are subject to pressure from continental powers and experts in all fields. Disadvantages: the second advantage mentioned above is a force; government still headstrong in implementing unethical policies (e.g. hunting laws, extension of development boundaries).” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour)

(23) Advantages: More opportunities for people to go abroad to study. More interaction with other EU countries hence more trade. Disadvantages: Malta is considered part of the Union, so decisions must be discussed with other EU countries.” (Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour)



(24) “Adv -> career opportunities, one family with different cultural exposure + backgrounds. Disadvantages -> people might take time to get used to new systems.” (Student, female, 20, Balzan, in favour)

(25) “Advantages: - Monetary funds are given to Malta in order to improve it. These are used for various reasons, from roads & buildings to education. - one does not need a passport to travel to other EU countries. Disadvantages: - The people working in factories suffer, because many factories are being closed down.” (Student, female, 18, B’Bugia, against)

(26) “Advantages: - offers help, fortifying union, poor people are never forgotten. Disadvantages: - Must abide with the rules of the union, euros soon compulsory for Malta.” (Student, female, 18, Balzan, in favour)

(27) “Being a small country, Malta can receive aid/help from the European Union in order to help improve Malta’s system -> roads, economy, education.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(28) “Advantages: more opportunities for jobs, better understanding of other cultures, makes us keep up with EU standards of work + education. Disadvantages: may lead to globalisation, where countries may lose their individuality; Malta may become more and more expensive.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(29) “Part of a union, Maltese people can work, study i (*like this in the original*) live in any country that’s part of the EU. Malta isn’t a completely autonomous & independent country.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(30) “One currency, like that when you go abroad you can pay in your currency and won’t get confusing. EU funding will make the country more beautiful. On the other hand, foreigners can open up businesses and destroy the local market.” (Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour)

(31) “Advantages: greater and vaster opportunities for education and work related matters. Disadvantages: lack of work in the country as they are....” (Student, female, 18, Swieqi, in favour)

(32) “The EU membership means more taxes, and the price of most things – needs as well as luxuries – will, therefore increase. In this case, people receiving poor education are generally thought of as working class – the working class does not benefit from this membership as it cannot afford to travel & study overseas and cope with the tax increase. The benefit is that of an overall improvement in the quality & systems of the state & country.” (Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour)

(33) “Advantages include the fact the people are given the opportunity to study in countries found in the same Union, while disadvantages include that we have to abide by certain EU laws.” (Student, female, 18, Hamrun, in favour)

(34) “The advantages include freedom of movement to countries in the same union. Disadvantages include the fact that Malta is still a developing country when compared to other countries of the Union.” (Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against)

(35) “The advantages include money which is given to us to help us with projects. People and goods can also move freely throughout all the countries. The disadvantages include having to obey certain laws.” (Student, female, 18, Fgura, in favour)

(36) “Malta was given more money to help with improving the streets, schools, and public facilities. The Maltese people can now go and work or study in European countries more easily. On the other hand possibly people could come and work in Malta, thus reducing Maltese jobs.” (Student, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(37) “One advantage would be the opening of more opportunities abroad, especially for students wishing to travel, and perhaps even finding jobs and living in a foreign country.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X)

(38) “The advantages are that Malta will now be ‘closer’ to the rest of the world especially Europe. Thus people from Malta and from Europe will be more mobile and have more opportunities. The disadvantages are mainly that now Malta has to abide by the rules of the E.U. and it will also be expected to ‘give back’ to the E.U.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(39) “Advantages include job opportunities in other EU countries; financial aid to poorer countries (including Malta); a cultural bond; free market. The main disadvantage is mainly the fact that independence is somehow, to a certain extent, lost.” (Student, male, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(40) “The advantages are that the more countries there are involved the greater the power of the E.U., therefore a lot can be achieved. Also the opportunities for people to live and work in other E.U. countries. Trade is made much simpler. Disadvantage: the possibility of countries losing their identity.” (Student, female, 21, Sliema, in favour)

(41) “It should open up more opportunities for Malta, especially in recognition of its culture & history and make it easier for other Europeans to visit, work or live here.” (X)

(42) “Advantages: - Money/ financing for many projects such as new roads and educational facilities. – More liberal travelling to EU countries. Disadvantages: - small (Maltese) businesses are struggling.” (X, female, 18, Sliema, in favour)

(43) “More opportunities in general are given to citizens whose countries are in the EU. With special reference to education, where academic fees are reduced. The quality of the educational system would be better.” (Student, female, 19, St. Julians, in favour)

(44) “There are a lot of opportunities for people to work abroad, and Malta gets support/help from countries that are bigger. People from other countries however can come and work here which makes it harder for Maltese people to find work.” (Student, female, 19, Sliema, in favour)

(45) “Malta’s popularity (as a country) increased and Maltese citizens have more opportunities to work abroad. On the other hand, the Maltese have to get used to EU standards and regulations.” (Student, female, 17, Mellieha, Don’t know)

(46) “Advantages would be that: in a union the population would be considered as a whole, poor & rich people alike would have the same rules. Disadvantages: The rules might not be fair to poor people or rich but they would be compulsory.” (Student, female, 17, Swiegi, in favour)

(47) “Advantages: more opportunities of work, travelling between EU countries is much easier, financial help to EU members. Disadvantages: loss of culture and language, the loss of the Maltese currency.” (Student, female, 17 ½ ,Gharghur, I have no straightforward opinion as there are many advantages + disadvantages to overlook. Yet overall I believe the EU has opened up many doors for Malta!)

(48) “Advantage – Malta will get to improve and evolve, both in economic experience, tourism, and allow the citizen to interact much more with members from other countries. Disadvantage: Malta might lose certain important factors from its culture, such as the Maltese language.” (Student, female, 18 ,Luliegi, in favour)

(49) “Advantages: The EU provides Malta with funds + new ideas so as to improve our society. Disadvantages: The decisions regarding Malta, taken by the EU may not be likeable to all the Maltese citizens.” (Student, female, 17 ,Victoria Gozo, in favour)

(50) “Advantages: as we are a small country, help from foreign countries could be useful for us. Disadvantages: some matters and laws which cannot be changes because of the EU (like the laws about the illegal immigrants).” (Student, female, 17 ,Fgura, against)

3. Imagine that the European Union and Malta are **human beings**. What adjectives would you use to describe each one of them?

(1) “EU: grand, tall, elite, knowledgeable, responsible, bureaucratic (original: beaucrocaratic); Malta: small, strong, stocky, able, easygoing, naive, with potential.” (Student, female, 18, Naxxar, in favour)

(2) “The EU would be soave, polite, cultured, cold, distant, a bit severe but very powerful. Malta would be short, dark, sweaty and eager to please.” (Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour)

(3) “Malta is the poorer one, but full of potential whilst EU is a robust well fed rich person who wants to gain political strength through financial investment.” (Student, female, 22, Kappara San Gwann, in favour)

(4) “The father and children; or the bully and the little brother! The EU -> a helper, but deep down with bad intentions. The businessman and all the different levels of his workers.” (Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far)

(5) “EU – A smart open-minded business man. Malta- foreign child who is being educated in the methodology of the business man’s world without losing his own culture. The child is the businessman’s step-son.” (Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour)

(6) “The European Union would be selfish, scheming kind of person, thinking only of him/herself and not about others. Malta would be a guillable (sic) kind of person who is silly enough to be taken in by the lies of someone who wants to take advantage of him/her.” (Student, female, San Gwann, against)

(7) “EU: composed

Malta: striving” (Student, female, 18, X, in favour)

(8) “Co-operative, hard-working, busy and creative.” (X, female, 18, X, X)

(9) “EU: fierce, tough, oppressive, liars

Malta: sensitive, shy, amazing.” (Student in winter, and teaching English to foreign students in summer, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(10) “European Union: strong, knowledgeable, experienced, outgoing, wise, tall

Malta: small, naive, friendly, uncertain, has unknown ability.” (Student/ part-time telephone advisor, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(11) “EU: experienced, gray-haired (sic), powerful, intelligent

Malta: child, not so well-read.” (Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour)

(12) (Student, female, 19, Marsascula, X)

(13) Malta => lazy, old fashioned, ignorant, irresponsible, timid, short

European union => tall, well built, formidable, strong, organised, attentive, yet easily disrupted, welcoming, shrewd.” (Student/ Bartender, male, 18, Masta, in favour)

(14) “EU: important, influential, powerful

Malta: Not so significant internationally, but still has a right to be heard.” (Student, male, 18, Mgarr, in favour)

(15) “A mother and child

A giant and an ant

Big, strong and powerful to small, weak and nimble.” (Student, male, 18, Marsascale, in favour)

(16) “European Union: mature benevolent, understanding

Malta: small promising talented” (Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Mellieha, in favour)

(17) “European Union – proud

Malta – competitive.” (Student, female, 29, Swiegi, in favour)

(18) “Malta: Beautiful but poor

EU: Strong and powerful.” (Student, female, 20, Attard, in favour)

(19) “European Union – fatherly figure, responsible, secure, risky a (sic!) times, strict, good benefits. Malta – inferior, confused at times, trying to make it/ fighting the odds.” (Student, female, 19, Rabat, in favour)

(20) “EU -> modern, rich, strict, full of opportunities, cold, distant.

Malta -> old-fashioned, lient (sic!), conservative, dependent on others. (Student, female, 18, Qormi, in favour)

(21) “Malta – old fashioned, stubborn, unique, financially unstable, dependent.

EU - resourceful, rich, helpful, unselfish.” (Student, female, 20, St. Andrews, in favour)

(22) “European Union: motherly, mild, blind;

Malta: bureaucratic, servile, yet headstrong, shallow.” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour)

(23) “European Union: useful, innovative

Malta: small, nice.” (Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour)

(24) “EU -> an adjective to describe it; sociable, multicultural, helpful, friendly, motherly.

Malta -> an adjective to describe it; traditional, cultural.” (Student, female, 20, Balzan, in favour)

(25) “EU: Powerful, rich, has a lot of connections, close and distant.

Malta: Small, not rich like EU but caters for the real needs of people (i.e. before it joined EU), able to be independent.” (Student, female, 18, B’Bugia, against)

(26) “Union: helpful, understanding, strict, intelligent

Malta: - inferior, simple.” (Student, female, 18, Balzan, in favour)

(27) “EU – helpful, large/big; Malta: small, tiny.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(28) “Malta: kind, warm, lovely, relaxed; European Union: exciting, fast way of life, interesting, pleasant.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(29) “EU – > the manager or boss of a company. Malta -> an employer of a company.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)



- (30) “European Union: large, strong, strict, bureaucratic, resourceful, empowering. Malta: confused, full of character, laid back, ambitious, opportunist, tiny.” (Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour)
- (31) “European Union: powerful, ruler; Malta: ruled, developing.” (Student, female, 18, Swieqi, in favour)
- (32) “The E.U. is strong, organised, powerful, money-minded, financially demanding. It looks out for others’ best interest in the long run, making sacrifices now for their well-being in the future. Malta is suffering at present. However, it is developing & improving its quality of life. Malta is fighting hard, struggling to make ends meet, with the hope of providing a better future.” (Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour)
- (33) “EU – massive, dominant, united; Malta – hard-working, small.” (Student, female, 18, Hamrun, in favour)
- (34) “European Union -> united; Malta -> small.” (Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against)
- (35) “European Union – dominant, co-operative, democratic; Malta – humble, hardworking, inconsistent sometimes.” (Student, female, 18, Fgura, in favour)
- (36) “E.U. -> giant, wise, powerful, rich. Malta -> young, with potential, ambitious.” (Student, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)
- (37) “EU -> big/vast & plentiful, stronger, powerful (politically); Malta: small, part of EU family.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascalea, X)
- (38) “E.U. – united/ big/ structured. Malta – small but significant!” (Student, male, 18, Mellicha, in favour)
- (39) “EU: Parent, somewhat uncaring. Malta: Child, naive, immature, gullible.” (Student, male, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

- (40) “E.U.: organised, large, clever. Malta: Dirty, rude, impatient, primitive, savage.”  
(Student, female, 21, Sliema, in favour)
- (41) “EU: vast & slightly threatening & resourceful. Malta: essence in a small bottle, brave & full of character.” (X)
- (42) “Malta: small; European Union: united” (X, female, 18, Sliema, in favour)
- (43) “EU: Powerful, organised, complex, independent, essential. Malta: Determined, willing to strive, powerless, dependent, insecure.” (Student, female, 19, St. Julians, in favour)
- (44) “EU: large, bombastic, powerful, strong, independent, important. M: small, helpless, weak, ambitious, dependent, insignificant.” (Student, female, 19, Sliema, in favour)
- (45) “EU- united, wealthy, huge, developed; Malta: small, developing.” (Student, female, 17, Mellieha, Don’t know)
- (46) “Malta would be inferior, simple; EU: intelligent – cultured, strict, helpful.”  
(Student, female, 17, Swiegi, in favour)
- (47) “European Union: interactive, informative, a good leader. Malta: A loving and welcoming woman with a heart of gold.” (Student, female, 17 ½, Gharghur, I have no straightforward opinion as there are many advantages + disadvantages to overlook. Yet overall I believe the EU has opened up many doors for Malta!)
- (48) “European Union: complex, hardworking vs. Malta: improving, growing.”  
(Student, female, 18, Luliegi, in favour)
- (49) “The European Union is a tall, serious-looking man and Malta is a beautiful woman wearing a red and white (Malta flag colours) dress.” (Student, female, 17, Victoria Gozo, in favour)
- (50) “European Union: powerful, has a sense of leadership. Malta: small, fragile, unpowerful.” (Student, female, 17, Fgura, against)

4. A foreign visitor is coming to Malta. He/ She wants to know something about the most common or the favourite type of housing in Malta. Can you describe a **typical Maltese house**?

(1) “Built out of globigerina limestone which is a local stone, inhabitants usually aim for lavish furnishings, incorporating the classical and rustic styles. The kitchen and dining rooms are the cosiest and rooms are usually quite big.” (Student, female, 18, Naxxar, in favour)

(2) “A typical Maltese house has a flat roof, is usually two-storey, and on the whole, is usually airy, full of light and quite welcoming. (Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour)

(3) “A low level house made out of limestone. We have not that many high rise building. Our skyline is horizontal like north african (sic) and other hot countries. Most old houses have a 15 ft facet and wooden doors, 2 windows. The other type of common housing are maisonettes with aluminium windows.” (Student, female, 22, Kappara San Gwann, in favour)

(4) “In the town: larger houses to suit a family comfortably, with a backyard or garden and often a swimming pool/ fruit trees. Flat roof and limestone wall. Many houses have more than 1 floor, and a terrace/ roof for entertainment/ domestic purposes (drying clothes, etc.). (Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far)

(5) “All that is needed to explain a ‘typical’ Maltese house is the word ‘home’. Any place where one can live and feel warmth and welcome.” (Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour)

(6) “Typical Maltese houses are usually terraced houses, however nowadays it is more common to have a flat. So you basically get a kitchen/ dining room, a bathroom and two to three bedrooms.” (Student, female, San Gwann, against)

(7) “Warm, noisy, bustling with life, a united family.” (Student, female, 18, X, in favour)

(8) “The typical Maltese house is relatively <big>. It is fully equipped with domestic appliances. Basically we aren’t deprived from any comforts. A Maltese house is mainly made up of 3 bedroom (sic) and 2 bathrooms, a kitchen, a living and dining room.” (X, female, 18, X, X)

(9) “A typical Maltese house has usually 2 to 3 floors. On the first floor you’ll usually find the kitchen, a small yard, and a television room, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor you will find bedrooms, bathroom and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor you’ll find the roof where most people hang clothes.” (Student in winter, and teaching English to foreign students in summer, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(10) “A typical Maltese house would be made of the local limestone, square or rectangular in shape, with generally a flat roof (due to not so extreme weather conditions – no snow). Rooms are generally quite big, especially the family/ living room and dining room.” (Student/ part-time telephone advisor, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(11) “It doesn’t have a lot of storeys, 2 or 3 maximum, it has a flat roof and the store is usually golden brown with sunshine.” (Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour)

(12) “Old-fashioned – mother is a housewife; husband works Younger generation – both parents work” (Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X)

(13) “big, usually with a garage, made of stone, tiles everywhere, very damp in winter + cold, no drive way, expensive to us (?).” (Student/ Bartender, male, 18, Masta, in favour)

(14) “Quite large, with lots of ornate or antique furniture, and religious things such as crosses in almost every room!” (Student, male, 18, Mgarr, in favour)

(15) “A Maltese house is quite small, built out of limestone and very comfortable to live in. It reminds me of past ages of the Knights.” (Student, male, 18, Marsascala, in favour)

(16) “A typical Maltese house is up to now a terraced house, built in Malta limestone with a small verandah (sic) in front or straight on to the street. Windows often have

louvres and many houses have balcony.” (Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Mellieha, in favour)

(17) “Beautiful Maltese balconies, with a tidy layout. It is general to find plants around the house, as Maltese love greenery.” (Student, female, 29, Swiegi, in favour)

(18) “Usually has a kitchen and a living room as soon as you enter the house. Bedrooms are usually upstairs; a wash room on the roof; a small garden at the front. Also many Maltese houses have swimming pools.” (Student, female, 20, Attard, in favour)

(19) “Well a typical Maltese house usually includes bedrooms, a kitchen, a dining room, a living room and a washroom. However, an attic or a basement are not very commonly found. Usually a typical Maltese family includes parents, both probably, and their children.” (Student, female, 19, Rabat, in favour)

(20) “Big, well decorated, too many details sometimes, sometimes a bit old fashioned which I really don’t like.” (Student, female, 18, Qormi, in favour)

(21) “old fashioned, antiques, big and narrow, humid” (Student, female, 20, St. Andrews, in favour)

(22) “Built of stone. Small. Maisonettes and flats the rule of the day, especially for young couples. Very limited outdoor space.” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour)

(23) “Maisonette, small 2 to 3 bedrooms, 1 kitchen, 2 bathrooms.” (Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour)

(24) “A typical Maltese house -> made of stone, flat roof, artistic work made from the stone itself, balcony on the front.” (Student, female, 20, Balzan, in favour)

(25) “Terraced house: both sides touching other house, two/three floors.” (Student, female, 18, B’Bugia, against)

(26) “A common roof, separate room for each of the children & parents.” (Student, female, 18, Balzan, in favour)

(27) “3/4 floors, high ceilings, wooden, coloured doors/windows, tiled floor, flat roof.”  
(Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(28) “They use lime-stone to build a house. Big, spacious and airy rooms due to the heat. Open roofs, and generally small gardens.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(29) “It’s big, could be two stories. Lots of expensive furniture & lots of ornaments.”  
(Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(30) “Depending on the area. Central zones are mainly made up of apartments & maisonettes, compact, practical, space saving, whereas in the south where life is relatively slower houses are bigger and more focussed on impressing with excessive architecture.” (Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour)

(31) “Two storey, terraced building with a flat roof.” (Student, female, 18, Swieqi, in favour)

(32) “The Maltese house is nowadays mostly considered to be a flat, due to space restrictions. Malta is overpopulated and land is limited. Flats usually include 2 to three bedrooms & perhaps a yard. People tend to look for a sea view.” (Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour)

(33) “A typical Maltese house consists of a kitchen, a dining room, a sitting room, 2/3 bedrooms, 1/2 bathrooms, a living room, a toilet and a spare toilet.” (Student, female, 18, Hamrun, in favour)

(34) “A typical Maltese house consists of a kitchen, a bathroom, a main bedroom, a single bedroom, a living room; sometimes a dining room and a spare toilet.” (Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against)

(35) “It is usually large, with many rooms and traditional furniture. Usually has 2 floors.” (Student, female, 18, Fgura, in favour)

(36) “Flat roofed, spacious but not a lot of storeys. There are also many flats in Malta due to the decreasing land.” (Student, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(37) “A small, two storey house with a flat roof, balcony overlooking road or scenery. Either rustic or semi-modern furnishings, warm and welcoming.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X)

(38) “The typical Maltese house consists of usually 2 floors, a garage or a basement, a front garden or a terrace. Some of the houses also have a backyard. Maltese houses also have flat roof tops as we do not have snow.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(39) “A typical Maltese house is cluttered with (...) furniture, riddled with family frames, rarely with a large front or back garden. More modern housing include apartments which are usually professionally decorated.” (Student, male, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(40) “Built of limestone with wooden balcony. Open, flat roof. Usually 2 or 3 floors. Stone staircase, as main staircase, spiral staircase running from top right through to bottom floor.” (Student, female, 21, Sliema, in favour)

(41) “Houses of character, built with careful, practical craftsmanship in Malta stone. Usually having a stone spiral staircase from basement to roof, enclosed balconies, strong front doors which are left open during the day – revealing an ‘entre-port’, anti-porta (in Maltese). \*a second inner door usually made of wood with glass panes. (X)

(42) “A typical Maltese house is made of stone, it has vines on the outside walls and plants near the door. Inside there is a hall that leads to a kitchen and into a garden.” (X, female, 18, Sliema, in favour)

(43) “Rather sizable, spacious, usually with a roof, sometimes with a basement, with one or more balconies.” (Student, female, 19, St. Julians, in favour)

(44) “High ceilings, a balcony, a spiral staircase leading to a washroom on the roof, which is flat as opposed to tiled and slanting.” (Student, female, 19, Sliema, in favour)

(45) “A Maltese house consists of 2 floors, having a kitchen, bathroom, 2-3 bedrooms, a dining room, and a garage.” (Student, female, 17, Mellieha, Don’t know)



(46) “A typical Maltese would have open roof because of the warm weather, perhaps a garden, the parents would have a room to themselves and children may share.” (Student, female, 17,Swiegi, in favour)

(47) “A house of probably two or three stories made of limestone rock, having a drive-in or basement garage, two or three bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a well and a courtyard and a roof with a washroom.” (Student, female, 17 ½ ,Gharghur, I have no straightforward opinion as there are many advantages + disadvantages to overlook. Yet overall I believe the EU has opened up many doors for Malta!)

(48) “A typical Maltese house, normally extends throughout 3 levels. An average of 3 bedrooms, a dining/living room, a garage and a boxroom or other (...) rooms.” ((Student, female, 18 ,Luliegi, in favour)

(49) “A typical Maltese house is made of globigerina limestone which is a resource found in Malta. Maltese houses are usually very big, normally having two stories or sometimes more.” (Student, female, 17 ,Victoria Gozo, in favour)

(50) “A two-floor house with a balcony and a back garden. Usually it is a big house consisting of at least or about eight rooms.” (Student, female, 17 ,Fgura, against)

5. Is **family** important for the Maltese people? Explain.

(1) “It is. Most families are very big and often make up little communities in rural villages especially. They are a strong support system in themselves.” (Student, female, 18, Naxxar, in favour)

(2) “Yes, personally I consider the Maltese to be among the last Europeans with strong family values.” (Full-time student, female, 18, San Gwann, in favour)

(3) “Yes, because it is everything to any mediterranean (sic), catholic and traditional country. Of course, family is important for other cultures. But in Malta families are very tightly knit because of the small size of the country.” (Student, female, 22, Kappara San Gwann, in favour)

- (4) “It seems so, since Malta is physically small one cannot really live too far from the family so there is always that unity and sense of belonging in a family. One does not really leave the family unless he leaves the country (so we always feel close).” (Student, female, 17, Naxxar, as a youth – in favour so far)
- (5) “Yes family is very important. We believe that the bond of those living in the house has to be deeper than mere members of the household but common goal achievers.” (Student, male, 18, Msida, in favour)
- (6) “Yes, I believe that it is still considered important by most of the Maltese.” (Student, female, San Gwann, against)
- (7) “Yes, the Maltese firmly believe in family. In Malta, family is placed on a pedestal (sic) and regarded with fondness. (Student, female, 18, X, in favour)
- (8) “Yes, it is. Family for the Maltese means security and solidarity. For the Maltese the family is seen as a sacred institution due to our Roman Catholic views.” (X, female, 18, X, X)
- (9) “Yes, family is extremely important for Maltese people. Most Maltese stick together especially when there’s emergencies or any kind of natural / phenomenal disasters. Maltese families are united families.” (Student in winter, and teaching English to foreign students in summer, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)
- (10) “Yes, family is very united in Malta, all members look out for one another and concern themselves with the lives of all members of the family. Gatherings are held quite often.” (Student/ part-time telephone advisor, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)
- (11) “Yes, it is very important as they derive their values from it and it helps build their character.” (Student, male, 18, Attard, in favour)
- (12) “Yes, most of the Maltese citizens look for their relatives’ advice.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascala, X)

(13) “Yes, because relatives pop in a lot. Usually just to see what we’re doing (and neighbours). Important ceremonies like weddings, christenings, very important.” (Student/ Bartender, male, 18, Masta, in favour)

(14) “Yes, Maltese families often do things together, but sometimes take each other for granted.” (Student, male, 18, Mgarr, in favour)

(15) “Yes. Family is still considered important as proven by late censuses. However, there is an alarmingly steady increase in people who do not consider family as a necessity.” (Student, male, 18, Marsascalea, in favour)

(16) “Maltese people still cherish the family but the nature of the Maltese family is changing as more women go out to work and the number of one-parent families increases.” (Retired, formerly in education, female, 64, Mellicha, in favour)

(17) “Yes, Maltese seek to be close to the family. Due to the small island we live in, we consider ourselves lucky to be in touch with relatives.” (Student, female, 29, Swiegi, in favour)

(18) “I would say that family is the most important thing to Maltese people. Families (including extended family) are very close and keep in contact with each other. This is because tradition & the size of our country I suppose.” (Student, female, 20, Attard, in favour)

(19) Yes, I think it is. Even though life is moving quite rapidly people in Malta still value the idea of a family. Maybe it’s because we are a small country and so visiting our family is made easier and is done more often.” (Student, female, 19, Rabat, in favour)

(20) “A lot, the family members are very close. Usually each person tries to help any other family member especially parents with their children.” (Student, female, 18, Qormi, in favour)

(21) “Yes, because Maltese people tend to stay close to the family till they engage in wedlock.” (Student, female, 20, St. Andrews, in favour)

(22) “Family TOO important. Many alleged cases of favouritism towards close members of the family, especially filial relatives. Sometimes the family overshadows an individual’s personality and independence.” (Student, male, 18, M’Skala, in favour)

(23) “Yet it is important, as family in Malta is still seen as sacred.” (Student, female, 17, Ibragg, in favour)

(24) “Yes it is very important, being that Malta is a small island, we tend to meet the relatives quite often especially when living in the same village. Family is seen as the closely knit unit.” (Student, female, 20, Balzan, in favour)

(25) “Yes, a lot.” (Student, female, 18, B’Bugia, against)

(26) “Yes, for society.” (Student, female, 18, Balzan, in favour)

(27) “Yes. It is the group of people where after a hectic day at work or school, the individuals can relax, chat and enjoy the rest of the day with loved ones.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(28) “Yes, I think very much so, because Malta is a very small island in which our culture tends to surround our family and friends.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(29) “Yes, very important. Family is what people’s lives revolves around.” (Student, female, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(30) “Coming from a strong religious background, I’d think that it is essential, although the younger generation seems to be losing these values.” (Student, female, 23, San Gwann, in favour)

(31) “Undoubtedly, yes. As a matter of fact most institutions, festivities hold the importance of family gatherings.” (Student, female, 18, Swieqi, in favour)

(32) “The family is not as important as it was 50-60 years ago. Society has developed, although not as rapidly as 1<sup>st</sup> world/developed countries. Hence, the family is still given a lot of importance but has not remained people’s be all and end all. It is still considered

to be the key component of society (heavily influenced by the church) – hence the avoidance of divorce & abortion.” (Student/ Teacher of drama, dance and musical theatre, male, 19, San Gwann, in favour)

(33) “Yes, it is. It is the smallest form of society where people help each other through the everyday situation and provide love and sharing to each other.” (Student, female, 18, Hamrun, in favour)

(34) “Family is important for the Maltese since it makes them feel secure and loved.” (Student, female, 18, Zebbug, against)

(35) “Yes, it is seen as the basis of a sound society. However, as in other countries, the traditional family is being challenged.” (Student, female, 18, Fgura, in favour)

(36) “Yes a lot because Maltese people are very close with each other and family represents security and a place where one can share problems and be heard.” (Student, female, 18, B’Kara, in favour)

(37) “Yes, Maltese people regard family bonds as very important for the upbringing of their children. Older families are especially close to one another whereas newer ones tend to be the European way.” (Student, female, 19, Marsascalea, X)

(38) “Yes, it is very important to the Maltese. As we are a considerable small country everyone is bound to know each other. Thus everyone makes an effort to live in a safe and sound environment.” (Student, male, 18, Mellieha, in favour)

(39) “Yes, most Maltese people, being Christian, are traditionalists – therefore they believe in a traditional family.” (Student, male, 18, St. Julians, in favour)

(40) “Family is important compared to many larger countries maybe because Malta is such a tiny country and people are not used to living far apart, therefore the family unity remains quite strong.” (Student, female, 21, Sliema, in favour)

(41) “Yes it is. Since Malta is so small, families remain close, either living nearby or seeing each other regularly.” (X)

(42) “Yes because since it’s a small country families remain very close.” (X, female, 18, Sliema, in favour)

(43) “Yes, however I believe in the older days, it was given more importance as by times morals and values weren’t taken notice of so much.” (Student, female, 19, St. Julians, in favour)

(44) “Family is very important, because in Malta much of life in general circles around immediate and extended family.” (Student, female, 19, Sliema, in favour)

(45) “Yes, family is considered as first priority amongst the Maltese.” (Student, female, 17, Mellieha, Don’t know)

(46) “Family in Malta is important to certain extent, when the person is young a loving and protective background at home affects one’s well-being greatly. Later on the family is less imp. as the person becomes more independent.” (Student, female, 17, Swiegi, in favour)

(47) “The importance of the family is not as it used to be. However for a vast majority the family has still remained an important institutions on which they rely on for moral support and help.” (Student, female, 17 ½, Gharghur, I have no straightforward opinion as there are many advantages + disadvantages to overlook. Yet overall I believe the EU has opened up many doors for Malta!)

(48) “Yes very important. As a small island, we are very tightly knit families and we consider our relatives and friends very important members in our life.” (Student, female, 18, Luliegi, in favour)

(49) “Yes, family is very important for the Maltese people. We are Catholic, and thus value the family in a religious way.” (Student, female, 17, Victoria Gozo, in favour)

(50) “Yes, mostly because as it is a religious country people are more united and tend less to obtain a divorce. They try to keep their family united.” (Student, female, 17, Fgura, against)

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