National Socialist metaphors in the discourse of the *Alternative für Deutschland*: Exploring a leaked WhatsApp chat

Hanna Bruns, University of Bonn (h.bruns@uni-bonn.de)

Abstract

The *Alternative für Deutschland* (*AfD*) is a German party on the right end of the political spectrum that exhibits strong xenophobic and nationalistic viewpoints. Their move into the German federal parliament in September 2017 as the third strongest party was a wake-up call about the influence that the party has on the public. The current study aims at uncovering one way that the *AfD* uses to position itself in the political sphere: the use of metaphors. An analysis of a leaked WhatsApp group chat between members of the party reveals that despite the party's claims of being opposed to xenophobia and racism, members of the party make active use of metaphors that are very typical of these discourse traditions.

Die Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) ist eine rechts eingestellte Partei, die einen starken ausländerfeindlichen und nationalistischen Standpunkt vertritt. Als sie im September 2017 in den Bundestag als drittstärkste Kraft eintrat, wurde der Einfluss der Partei besonders bewusst. Die aktuelle Studie hat das Ziel eine Art und Weise aufzudecken, durch die sich die AfD in der politischen Sphäre positioniert: Die Nutzung von Metaphern. Die Analyse eines veröffentlichten WhatsApp Chats, welcher von Mitgliedern der AfD geführt wurde, zeigt, dass Mitglieder der Partei Metaphern nutzen, welche sehr typisch für den rassistischen und ausländerfeindlichen Diskurs sind, obwohl die Partei sich selbst nicht in dieser Tradition darstellt.

1. Introduction

Conceptual metaphors and how they are used in discourse have been studied in several fields, for instance with regards to racist and xenophobic ideology. Studies such as Musolff (2010), Santa Ana (1999), and Charteris-Black (2006) have focused on representations of immigrants in the media.

Following this line of research, the current study is concerned with the use of metaphors that are typical of xenophobic, racist, and nationalistic discourse in a private chat group from members of the German party *Alternative für Deutschland*. The party *Alternative für Deutschland* (*AfD*) has, over the course of the last years, displayed xenophobic, racist, and especially Islamophobic attitudes, while maintaining the self-representation as being not xenophobic or racist (cf. Lewandowsky 2016: 41 and Grigat 2017: 16).

The data analysed in this study, WhatsApp chat data from a group chat of approximately 200 members of the *AfD*, was leaked on a left-extremist website

in 2017. For the purpose of this study, metaphors which are identified in the literature as typical for xenophobic and nationalistic discourse were pre-defined as categories for analysis of the chat data. The imagery that is created through the use of these metaphors is then discussed.

In this paper, I will address the following questions: What are typical metaphors in racist and xenophobic discourse? Do the members of the *AfD* use metaphors commonly found in racist and xenophobic discourse? Do members of the *AfD* use explicitly National Socialist metaphors in this context? My hypothesis is that metaphors typical of racist, but also specifically National Socialist, discourse that de-humanise and de-individualise immigrants and political oppositions and that represent the *AfD* as saviour of the German people can be found.

In chapter 2, I will first give a short introduction into how metaphors make use of conceptualisations to create a specific imagery in ideologies. Next I will give an overview over the metaphors that are typically found in racist, xenophobic and nationalistic discourse and provide a more detailed insight into the nation as body metaphor and its implications and the contexts in which they can specifically be defined as following the National Socialist tradition (cf. Musolff 2012). Next, I will talk about the *AfD*, its agenda and its self-representation. Chapter 3 will be dedicated to more details about the data and the process of analysis.

In my results and discussion, Chapter 4, there will be a general overview over the metaphors used in the chat that are commonly found in xenophobic discourse, and then give detailed insight on how the nation as body metaphor and its implications are used in the data. In doing so I will pay attention to specific examples and describe how the ideological imagery is created through these metaphors. Chapter 5 will summarise the study.

2.   Theoretical Background

Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) can be positioned within the paradigm of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with political contexts often in focus. Critical Metaphor Analysis is concerned with the way metaphors are used in discourse and the effects they achieve. Metaphor is seen as "a part of human conceptualisation and not simply a linguistic expression that occurs especially

frequently in oratory and literature" (Chilton 2004: 51). It is therefore a feature of normal and everyday language, not a deviation from it (cf. Pörksen 2005: 216). This cognitive approach to metaphors has its beginnings in Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (cf. 2003). Their book *Metaphors we live by*, first published in 1980, "became the foundation text for a new, 'cognitively' oriented theory of meaning" (Musolff 2012: 302). In it, Lakoff and Johnson describe metaphor as one of "our principal vehicles for understanding" the world (Lakoff/Johnson 2003: 159), and argue that metaphor "is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff/Johnson 2003: 5, emphasis omitted). This is achieved by transferring ("mapping", Musolff 2012: 302) concepts that are easily understood in clear terms ("source domain", Musolff 2012: 302) onto abstract ideas which we wish to understand ("target domain", Musolff 2012: 302; see also Lakoff/Johnson 2003: 115). Specific semantic features of the source domain are accentuated in this process, while others are suppressed (cf. Pörksen 2005: 217).

In CDA, "[r]acist and xenophobic discourse in particular have been extensively analysed" (Hart 2010: 13), and also in CMA, the focus of analysis has often been on the "investigation and exposure of racist metaphor" (Musolff 2012: 301). The goal of these investigations is to identify and expose "latent racist ideologies" (Hart 2010: 13) and to make people more aware of the way language influences our perception of the society.

2.1 Common metaphors in xenophobic and nationalistic discourse

National Socialism is a radical ideology which is based on racism, xenophobia (often with a particular focus on Anti-Semitism) and nationalism – with the word 'radical' being pertinent here. While several racist and xenophobic movements exist, these do not necessarily subscribe to the radical views which stand in the National Socialist tradition. National Socialism as an ideology nevertheless continues to exist today (cf. Piper 2018: 7). Especially with the radical component of the National Socialist ideology in mind, it is therefore important to show in how far specifically National Socialist language tradition continues to exist today.

In any world view, metaphors play an important role. As Kövecses (2015: 60) points out, a number of concepts influence the way people think and see the world. This in turn then influences the metaphorical conceptualisations

formed. Through the use of metaphors, specific features of social reality can be highlighted, while others get suppressed or ignored. Since ideologies wish to portray a specific picture of the world, the focus on the 'right' semantic features is crucial. Therefore, "[i]deological patterns [...] arise when text-producers select one set of metaphors instead of alternative ones" (Hart 2010: 127).

A central aspect of racist and xenophobic ideology, then, is the representation of the native people as positive (cf. Charteris-Black 2006: 566), while the 'other' is represented as a threat to the native people (cf. Charteris-Black 2006: 565). The well-being of the native people is supposedly threatened by a perceived enemy, who is ascribed the role of the guilty party for any social injustices (cf. Kellershohn 1998: 24). This perceived enemy is constructed in two different ways: the first is the foreigner, who supposedly comes to the country to destroy it. The second is the enemy within, the disloyal citizen ("illoyale Bürger", Kellershohn 1998: 24), who does not follow the ideals set forth by the racist ideology. It is through this perceived image of the nation, and thereby the native people, that is in danger, that racism, xenophobia, and the ideal of the 'strong nation' that needs to fight the enemies, is rationalised (cf. Kellershohn 1998: 24). Making use of metaphors is a very effective way for racists to legitimise their ideology. One of their core strategies in doing so is to de-humanise the perceived enemies. This is achieved by several different themes.

One of those themes is presenting immigrants as a NATURAL DISASTER which endangers the nation, most often as "a threatening amount of water or snow in which we may drown" (Van Dijk 2008: 179), made concrete in words such as 'flood', 'waves', or 'flow' of immigrants (Pörksen 2005: 237). Humans are not represented as individuals, but rather as inanimate concepts, especially as masses which are a threat to the nation (cf. Pörksen 2005: 237). This metaphor is connected to another, which conceptualises the NATION AS CONTAINER. The nation is represented here as a schema of "an interior and an exterior defined by a boundary" (Hart 2010: 131). The boundary, in this conceptualisation, can be penetrated from outside (cf. Charteris-Black 2006: 577), and in order to prevent this invasion or flooding, the boundaries need to be secured. Besides the general conceptualisation of the NATION AS CONTAINER, the nation is also frequently represented as a SHIP (cf. Van Dijk 2008: 180) in nationalistic

discourse. A common anti-immigration slogan is 'the boat is full' ("Das Boot ist voll"; Van Dijk 2008: 180).

The same effect of presenting immigrants and oppositions of the ideology as de-individualised threats to the native (in this case German) people can be achieved by using the metaphorical frame of MILITARY AND WAR. A distinction is thereby made between 'enemies' and 'allies', the two positions seen as two fronts (Pörksen 2005: 247). In this visualisation, immigrants are often described as invaders of the country (cf. Pörksen 2005: 248). Occasionally, enemies might even be conceptualised directly as weapons against the native people (cf. Pörksen 2005: 247).

The NATION AS A HOUSE metaphor is another, if not very frequently used, metaphor found in xenophobic and National Socialist discourse. Its implications, however, are quite wide reaching. In this conceptualisation, the German nation is an object of concern, as it might be destroyed, for instance by fire (cf. Pörksen 2005: 239). Furthermore, the house is often portrayed as in need of cleaning. One wishes to clear out the dust and dirt, whereas the political opposition, and immigrants, are conceptualised as the dirt, garbage and filth that needs to be cleaned up (cf. Pörksen 2005: 240–241).

Commonly linked to right-wing discourse is also the metaphorical frame of the THEATRE. Special attention in the use of this metaphor is paid to the representation of the (political) reality as only a staging of events, behind which another reality is hidden (cf. Pörksen 2005: 241–242). Politicians are represented as puppets and actors, and unspecified 'forces' are supposedly leading and controlling them from behind the curtain (Pörksen 2005: 242).

Another metaphorical sphere which is used in xenophobic language makes use of the RELIGIOUS source domain. Targets are often seen as manifestations of the 'evil', which can be conceptualised in a variety of ways (Pörksen 2005: 245). This image is seen as opposed to the 'good', as which the ideologists represent themselves. The domain of religious metaphors may, however, also refer to the use of imagery from the bible (cf. Pörksen 2005: 246).

A special focus of this paper is the NATION AS BODY metaphor and its implications. Generally, the NATION AS BODY metaphor is also used in a variety of contexts and does not necessarily indicate a nationalistic or xenophobic imagery. It is used in many different cultures to refer to different concepts

concerning politics and the state (cf. Musolff 2010: 1). However, when used in the German context, this metaphor is stigmatised and its use problematic. It therefore becomes relevant for the analysis of xenophobia (cf. Musolff 2010: 1). While the other metaphors mentioned appear in a variety of xenophobic contexts, not necessarily bound to National Socialism as such, the NATION AS BODY metaphor (under specific circumstances) is. Especially the word *Volkskörper* (people-body) is associated with the National Socialists and their ideology (Musolff 2010: 121). The *Volkskörper* is the object to be concerned about (Pörksen 2005: 224): it is an entity which is constantly threatened by, and may decay due to, outer influences (Pörksen 2005: 224). In this imagery, specific parts of the nation may be referred to as organs.

The implications of this metaphorical category are especially characteristic of xenophobic discourse. These include the idea that the body may fall ill: immigrants and other perceived enemies are represented as DISEASE or "disease-carrying and -spreading agents, e.g. 'parasites'" (Musolff 2012: 303). The *Volkskörper* then requires therapy to heal it. Using this metaphor to refer to the threats to the well-being of the 'body' gives ideologists an advantage:

> Instead of laboriously having to demonstrate and back up their claims with facts, which could be critically tested and challenged, the speaker/writer invites the hearer/reader to access knowledge about the undesirability of illness and the necessity for therapy by referring to generally known illnesses and agents of disease (Musolff 2012: 303).

The DISEASES in question are most often conceptualised as 'cancer' and 'ulcers' ("Geschwüre", Pörksen 2005: 226), but can also be other, mostly deadly, illnesses as well as poisons (cf. Pörksen 2005: 226). Targets of this metaphor are opinions which are perceived as destructive to the *Volkskörper*, as well as specific groups of people (typically political oppositions and people on the left end of the political spectrum, as well as immigrants). A concrete example of this is given by Pörksen (2005) in which politicians, journalists, and judges are denoted as metastases of 'cancer', 'plague-spots' and 'pus blisters' ("Krebs-metastasen", "Pestbeulen", "Eiterblasen"; 228).

The proposed solution to the problems that befall the *Volkskörper* is the THERAPY of it. In National Socialist discourse specifically, a person or group of people might be represented as the therapist, who offers a solution to the problems plaguing the body (cf. Pörksen 2005: 228). The method proposed by

the National Socialists to keep the body healthy and to prevent its 'death' is drastic:

> just as it is imperative for a successful medical therapy to eliminate all agents of disease in case of a serious illness, so any socio-political elements of the nation that threaten its existence have to be eliminated (Musolff 2012: 303).

Similar to the disease metaphor, the metaphorical category of ANIMALS conceptualises the threat to the *Volkskörper*. It describes primarily immigrants, but also supposed inner enemies, as parasites and scroungers ("Schmarotzer"), people from the political left often as ticks (Pörksen 2005: 232), which are commonly known to be distasteful and threatening. Within the metaphor, these parasites may befall the *Volkskörper* and affect it negatively (Pörksen 2005: 233). Musolff (2014: 18) terms this conceptualisation of "human beings who allegedly live at the expense of wider society" *socio-parasites*, however, argues that in Nazi propaganda the concept was widened to include all sorts of "disease-carrying organisms" (idem: 25). This imagery seemed to legitimise the holocaust, and is still a common imagery in racist discourses, used especially to denounce immigrants (idem: 26–27). Moreover, the immigrant may not only be conceptualised as distasteful animal, but also as the carrier of actual 'bio-parasites' (cf. Musolff 2014).

The second sub-conceptualisation of the ANIMAL metaphor is representing perceived enemies and immigrants as animals in a similar fashion to the first, however, makes no reference to the NATION AS BODY metaphor. Here, the targets of the metaphor are being de-humanised by making use of the

> systematic conceptual framework of the *Great Chain of Being* (Lovejoy 1936) that allows racists to denigrate their respective targets by 'demoting' them from humankind's central position in the Chain down to the 'lower' ranks of animals, plants, disease-engendering organisms or inorganic material (Musolff 2012: 302).

Political enemies are often denoted as 'rats' (Pörksen 2005: 232), but other conceptualisations also exist. These often focus on either the repulsiveness or the inferiority of the represented target.

2.2 The *Alternative für Deutschland*

The *Alternative für Deutschland*, which is the source for the data used in this study, is a German party that was founded in 2013 in Berlin and has had electoral success very quickly in the state parliaments in Germany. Originally founded as a party with primary anti-euro focus (cf. Grabow 2016: 174), the party soon started to take up nationalist, xenophobic, and especially Islamophobic stances (cf. Lewandowsky 2016: 41).

However, the party seems to be split in many regards, with several wings of the party representing more or less radical points of view, which is said to be responsible for the wide spectrum of voters that they have gained (cf. Walther/Isemann 2019: 11). Nevertheless, what hides underneath these different agendas, is most often a racist and nationalist programme of exclusion ("Exklusionsprogramm"; Walther/Isemann 2019: 11).

Quite often, prevalent members of the party have proven to be radical in their views. Frauke Petry, a former party leader, demanded the use of weapons to stop refugees from entering the country (cf. Grabow 2016: 177), Alexander Gauland, a party chairman for the *AfD*, racially "attacked German soccer player Jérôme Boateng" (Grabow 2016: 178), and André Poggenburg, chairman for the *AfD* in Saxony-Anhalt, made use of *explicit* National Socialist language by describing protesting students as cancer on the German *Volkskörper* ("Wucherung am deutschen Volkskörper"; Grigat 2017: 16).

Even though members of the party openly make such statements, the party represents itself on the political continuum somewhere between "liberal" and "conservative" (Fedders 2016: 166), while trying to emphasise the point that they are not xenophobic or racist. One such exemplary claim can be found in a speech for the party congress on 22 April 2017 by Jörg Meuthen (a party chairman of the *AfD*) in which he said:

> […] dann bin ich für diese Leute also ein Ausländerfeind, ein Rassist gar? Nein, meine Freunde, das bin ich ganz sicher nicht, nicht einmal ansatzweise, das bin ich nie gewesen und werde ich aufgrund all meiner Überzeugungen niemals sein, ebenso wenig wie irgend-jemand in diesem Saal. Ich bin nur elementar vernünftig, und ich sehe, was hier geschieht. Und weiß meine tiefe Sorge, nicht etwa plumpe Angst, sehr präzise zu begründen (Meuthen 2017).

([…] then I am a xenophobe for these people, a racist even? No, my friends, this I am surely not, not even a little bit, I have never been, and based on my conviction will never be, just as everyone in this room. I am only fundamentally reasonable and I can see what is happening here.)

Not only does the party present itself as not xenophobic, but it sees itself as the only party that is not corrupted by outer influences and the only voice for the German people. It construes the other parties as political establishment which should be fought against (cf. Lewandowsky 2016: 40). Their justification comes from the viewpoint that the German people (and their prosperity) are being threatened from the outside, especially through Islamic influence, and that they are the only party trying to defend the will of the German people (cf. Lewandowsky 2016: 40 and Fedders 2016: 165). This shows a clear nationalistic stance.

In the 2017 parliamentary election, the *AfD* was able to move into the German federal parliament as the third strongest party and have since managed to be represented in all state parliaments as well (cf. Walther/Isemann 2019: 2).

3.   Data and Analysis

In the following section, the data used in this study will be presented and the coding scheme for the analysis will be explained. The approach used in this paper stems from the field of CMA. Specifically, the metaphors described as indicative of xenophobic belief systems were used as categories for the analysis of the data.

3.1 Data

The data used in the analysis is the transcript of a WhatsApp group chat called "*AfD* Info LSA" (i.e. "Alternative für Deutschland Info Land Sachsen-Anhalt"), which dates from 04 February 2017 to 29 May 2017. The group chat was created on 19 May 2016 by Andreas Mrosek, who was a member of the state parliament of Saxony-Anhalt for the *AfD* at that time (cf. Vorndran 2017). Approximately 200 members of the right-wing German party participated in the chat. The chat was illegally leaked online on a left-extremist website called "linksunten.indymedia.org" on 21 June 2017. The transcript was online until 25 August 2017, when the Federal Ministry of the Interior closed down the

website due to its extremist messages (cf. Reisin 2017).[1] Personal data, such as names and telephone numbers of the members, were present in the chat, which makes the use of this data for the study a sensitive matter. For these reasons, names and telephone numbers are omitted in this paper.

The entire chat contains 8.795 messages that originally constituted a mixture of written data, shared pictures, videos, documents, voice messages, and internet links as well as emoticons. Due to the format of the chat transcript, media such as spoken messages, pictures, and videos are not displayed and therefore not accessible.

The nature of this data is especially interesting since it constitutes (relatively) private conversations by members of the *AfD* in Saxony-Anhalt. However, conversations in this group cannot be characterised as completely private, with some members warning others about this, e.g. "[…] Das hier ist fast öffentlich, also vorsichtiger agieren! […]" (18.02.17, 08:42:47). Nevertheless, the members of this group share their political beliefs relatively freely without fear of repercussions from others, which gives a unique insight into the members' actual beliefs instead of what they purposefully present to the public. The chat is also quite representative of the party in Saxony-Anhalt as active members of the group include André Poggenburg (at that time chair of the *AfD* in Saxony-Anhalt and member of the state parliament of Saxony-Anhalt) and a number of other members[2] of the state parliament of Saxony-Anhalt.

3.2 Analysis and Coding

The data was searched manually for representations of the metaphorical cate-gories found in the literature (cf. 2.1). The instances were marked and sorted into the respective, predefined, categories.[3] After sorting the data into cate-

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[1] Debates about whether the decision to close down the website was lawful have since sparked. A decision regarding this has not been made at the time of writing.

[2] Other members will not be named here, as the names have not been made public by journalists. André Poggenburg and Andreas Mrosek, who I discuss as members here, have been identified as belonging to the group by others (cf. Vorndran 2017).

[3] One message is defined as one instance of a metaphor, even if it contains the metaphor several times. If instances from different metaphor categories were found within one

gories, the instances were checked for relevance.[4] Table 1 shows the different categories of metaphorical conceptualisations and examples from the dataset.

Category	Description	Example[5]
BODY (cf. Musolff 2010)	Metaphors representing the German nation/people as a body	Ich sage nur Metastasen des Geschwürs am *Volkskörper*. Und immer wieder als Argument irgend ein Artikel der AfD-feindlichen DuMont-Presse. (18.02.17, 18:53:04) (I'm just saying metastases of the cancer at the *people-body*. And as proof, some article of the anti-*AfD* press agency DuMont.)
DISEASE (cf. Musolff 2012)	Metaphors representing immigrants, or (other) perceived enemies of the *AfD* as diseases	Scheint ein *bösartiges Geschwür* am Volkskörper zu sein, das da seine *Metastasen gestreut* hat... (19.02.17, 20:24:36) (Seems to be a *malignant ulcer* at the people-body whose *metastases have spread* into our party…)
ANIMALS (cf. Musolff 2014; Pörksen 2005)	Metaphors representing immigrants, or (other) perceived enemies of the *AfD* as animals, including disease carrying agents	Die Linken *beißen* wieder *wild um sich*.....[emoticons left out] (03.03.17, 06:49:15) (The Left [political party] are *biting at each other wildly*.....)
CONTAINER (cf. Van Dijk 2008)	Metaphors representing the German nation/people as a container, including metaphors that represent the German nation/people as a ship	[…] Wenn deutschland nicht sofort die *grenzen dicht macht* und mindestens den österreichischen weg geht, dann sehe ich hier schwarz […] (16.04.17, 23:38:25) (If Germany does not immediately *seal up the borders*, and at least goes the same way as Austria, then I am pessimistic [lit. seeing black])

message, the message was sorted into both categories, and is therefore represented in the categorised dataset twice.

[4] Instances were only coded when reference was made to the country Germany, the *Alternative für Deutschland* (and its self-representation), the perceived enemies of the *AfD* (namely other parties in Germany, the press, left-wing people, and immigrants/refugees), the perceived allies of the *AfD* (e.g. the right-wing movement *PEGIDA*), and actions taken by the *AfD*, its perceived enemies and its perceived allies. The last point includes perceived or supposed actions which influence the *AfD*, such as perceived manipulators of the party *AfD*, supposedly deployed by other parties. Instances were also removed from analysis when the shared content was not originally produced originally by the sender of the message. This includes, for instance, reproduced extracts from speeches of other people, forwarded messages, and shared parts of news articles. Messages were furthermore excluded from analysis whenever it could not be identified who the target of the metaphor was.

[5] All examples used in this table stem from the data. Due to formatting issues, emoticons displayed in the original transcript cannot be displayed here.

NATURAL DISASTER (cf. Van Dijk 2008)	Metaphors representing immigrants and perceived enemies of the *AfD* as natural disasters, especially floods	Ich fürchte nach der Bundestagswahl im September werden uns die Politiker wieder mit Asylanten *überschwemmen*. […] (07.02.17, 18:13:24) (I fear that the politicians will *flood* us with immigrants again after the parliamentary elections in September.)
RELIGION (cf. Pörksen 2005)	Metaphors from the religious sphere, including representations of immigrants and perceived enemies of the *AfD* as evil	Ich glaube der *Antichrist* tritt morgen um 18:30 Uhr in weiblicher Form in Magdeburg auf. (13.03.17, 00:40:09) (I think the *antichrist* is performing tomorrow at 6:30 pm in female form in Magdeburg.)
THEATRE (cf. Pörksen 2005)	Metaphors from the theatrical sphere, especially the representation of the political sphere as staged	Vielleicht doch vom System *inszeniert* damit das dumme Volk denkt eine Alternative zu haben [emoticons left out] (01.04.17, 10:44:44) (Maybe it is *staged* by the system so that the stupid citizens think they have an alternative)
HOUSE (cf. Pörksen 2005)	Metaphors representing the German nation/people as a house, including the representation of immigrants and perceived enemies of the *AfD* as dirt or as possible destruction-risks of the house	[…] Sicherlich haben innenpolitische Dinge "Vorrang„, d. h., *den eigenen Stall sollte man sauber halten, bevor man draußen putzt*. Aber dennoch ist es wichtig, zu wissen, was links und rechts von einem passiert. […] (18.02.17, 13:10:53) (Surely, domestic policy issues have "priority", i.e., *one should clear out one's own stable before cleaning up outside*. But it is still important to know what is happening (to your) left and right.)
WAR (cf. Pörksen 2005)	Metaphors from the military sphere as well as metaphors of war, including the representation of immigrants and perceived enemies as weapon	Daran kann man auch immer schön exemplarisch sehen, wie diese *Truppen als ad-hoc Armee agiert*. Da wird sich *organisiert, vorbereitet, ausgerüstet, ausgekundschaftet, geprobt* usw. (17.02.17, 09:29:16) (You can see here as a nice example how these *troops operate as an ad-hoc army*. They *organize themselves, prepare, equip, scout, practice, etc.*)

Table 1: Coding categories with examples from the data

4.   Results and Discussion

As discussed in 2.2, members of the *AfD* present and perceive themselves as not xenophobic. In this chapter, I will first present further indications of this stance that can be found in the dataset. Then, a general overview over the different metaphorical concepts used in the chat will be given, before I go into detail discussing the nation as body metaphor and its implications.

In official speeches of the *AfD*, members of the party speak about the issue of racism and represent themselves to the public as not being racist (cf. e.g. Meuthen 2017). What is more, in the private messages in the chat, the members of the *Alternative für Deutschland* also show that they perceive themselves this way and do not only present this image as a front to the public.

(1) Meuthen hat eine fantastische Rede gehalten und spricht uns aus dem Herzen [emoticons left out] (22.04.17, 13:56:17)

   (Meuthen has given a fantastic speech and is saying what all of us feel)

(2) Kein Kölsch für Nazis? Ja super! Gut das wir keine sind! (23.04.17, 19:54:27)

   (No Kölsch for Nazis? Ok great! Good that we are not Nazis!)

(3) Oh man [emoticons left out] die sehen überall nur noch Nazis krank absolut krank [emoticons left out] (27.05.17, 11:19:11)

   (Oh man they see only Nazis everywhere sick absolutely sick)

(4) Das sehen nicht nur die (meisten) Leute hier so, wenn nicht sogar alle. Die NS-Keule ist seit Jahren abgedroschen. Sie wird nur durch die Etablierten genutzt, um "richtig tickende" deutsche Staatsbürger zu demontieren. Sie wird genutzt um auf uns zu lenken, damit die ihre blödsinnigen eigenen Interessen in den Vordergrund rücken können. Ich liebe mein Land und ich kämpfe um dieses Land, damit es unser Land bleiben kann. [emoticons left out] (09.04.17, 21:12:37)

   ((Most) people here see it this way, if not all. The Nazi-accusation [lit. NS-bludgeon] has been a cliché for years. It's just used by the well-established ones to take down "correctly functioning" German citizens. It is used to blame us, so that they can put their own stupid interests into the foreground. I love my country and I fight for this country, so that it can stay our country.)

The first instance refers back to the speech for the party congress made by Jörg Meuthen (Meuthen 2017, cf. 2.2) in which he claims to not be a racist. He also identifies 'everyone in this room' ("irgendjemand in diesem Saal", Meuthen 2017), meaning members of the party *AfD* as not racist. Members of the chat-group clearly side with his statement and justify their self-image as not xenophobic by claiming that everyone who refers to them as Nazis is wrong.

They are arguing that people are trying to 'take down 'correctly functioning' German citizens' ("'richtig tickende' deutsche Staatsbürger zu demontieren", 09.04.17, 21:12:37). The fact that these messages were posted in a private group chat, in which they do not have to fear repercussions for their opinions, shows that *AfD* members do not only try to present themselves as not racist, but they actually believe that they are not. In the following sections, their use of metaphors which stand in the National Socialist tradition as well as others commonly used racist metaphors will be discussed.

All categories presented in the literature as typical of National Socialist and broader racist and xenophobic discourse existed also in the discourse between *AfD* members in this chat. Figure 1 gives a general overview over the frequency of metaphors across the whole data set.
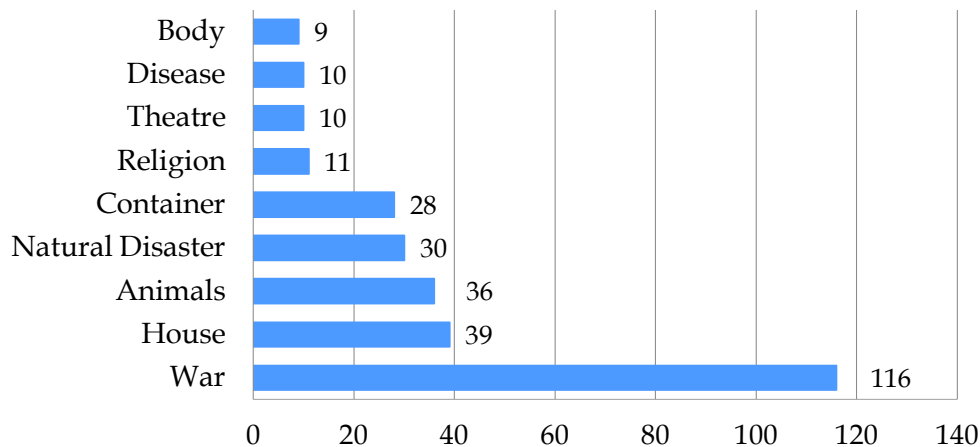

Fig. 1: Frequency of metaphors found in the chat, in total numbers

The metaphorical domain of WAR AND MILITARY is the category used most often in the chat. The use of this category here is very varied, as the following examples show:

(5)   Nun heißt es Ruhe in der *Truppe* halten und den *Kampf* auf die externen politischen *Gegner* fokussieren. […] (07.05.17, 19:33:06)

   (Now we need to keep the *troops* calm and focus the *fight* on the external political *enemies*.)

(6)   […] Nur zusammen sind wir stark und *ein kleines Bollwerk gegen die, die uns kaputt machen (wollen und sollen)*. (24.02.17, 22:04:30)

   (We are only strong together and a *small bastion against those who (want to and must) destroy us*.)

Political oppositions as well as left-wing people are represented as 'enemies', and the political actions taken by the *AfD* as a 'fight'. The party itself is often represented as 'troops'. In one instance, the party is conceptualised as a 'bastion' against the enemies attacking the German nation.

The common imagery of the immigrant as invader of the country is also present in this dataset. This, as well as other terms from the WAR metaphor used here (e.g. representing immigrants as hordes) achieve the effect of de-individualisation which is a well known xenophobic theme:

(7) Ich bin gerade in Nürnberg am Hauptbahnhof und komme mir fremd im eigenen Land vor, über all nur *Invasoren* aus Afrika oder aus arabischen Ländern (28.02.17, 16:21:08)

(I am at the main station in Nuremberg and feel like a foreigner in my own country, there are only *invaders* from Africa or from Arabic countries everywhere)

(8) Aber *Horden* von ausländischen Kulturbereicherern, die unsere Frauen angrabschen und anpöbeln, dürfen natürlich kriminell durch die Straßen ziehen! (25.05.17, 22:56:05)

(But *hordes* of foreign cultural enrichers who grope and accost our women are of course allowed to wander criminally through the streets!)

Another striking example of the war metaphor used against immigrants is the conceptualisation of the immigration process as weapon used against the well-being of the German nation and people. The exact impact and threat that is posed by this weapon is not outlined:

(9) Stichwort: *Migration als Waffe* (09.02.17, 13:58:16)

(Keyword: *Migration as weapon*)

The metaphor used second most often is that of the NATION AS HOUSE and its implications. Even though there is no direct and explicit imagery of the nation as house in the data, the nation is described as being 'ramshackle', and reference is made to the threatened destruction by fire while political figures are labelled 'arsonists'.

(10) Die Grünen müssten bei einem reibungslosen Funktionieren unseres Systems schon lange der Überwachung durch den VS [Verfassungsschutz] unterliegen. Das dem nicht so ist, zeigt einmal mehr den *maroden Zustand* unseres Staates. […] (05.04.17, 12:06:28)

(If the system was working smoothly, the Greens [political party] would have long been put under the surveillance of the office for the protection of the constitution. That this isn't so shows the *ramshackle condition* of our state.)

(11) Die *geistigen Brandstifter* dieser politisch motivierten Gewalt heißen Stegner, Schulz, Maas &Co. (02.03.17, 07:47:43)

(The *mental arsonists* of this politically motivated violence are called Stegner, Schulz, Maas & Co.)

Another implication of the HOUSE metaphor is the need to clean the house. In this implication, the opposition of the party is described as 'dirt' which needs to be disposed of and cleaned up.

(12) Danke an die Spender und unsere Polizei . [emoticons left out] Der *schäbige Rest in die Tonne* [emoticons left out] (23.04.17, 16:55:51)

(Thanks to the donors and our police. The *shabby rest of them can go in the trash can*.)

Representations of the NATION AS A CONTAINER can also be found in the chat. Members of the chat talk about the need to 'seal up' the borders. Even more often can the direct conceptualisation of the NATION AS A (sinking) SHIP be found, in which the Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel is conceptualised as the captain of the ship. Moreover, the very explicit anti-immigrant phrase "Das Boot ist voll" (cf. Van Dijk 2008: 180) can also be found in the data:

(13) […] Wieder ein gutes Beispiel dafür, warum das Mittelmeer *dicht gemacht werden* und aufgegriffene Flüchtlinge sofort zurückgeschickt werden müssen. […] (17.03.17, 12:05:19)

(Another good example of why the Mediterranean Sea must be *sealed off* and why the refugees that were collected must be sent back right away.)

(14) Man kann es eigentlich nicht mehr sehen und auch ertragen...! Hoffentlich hat es bald eine Ende mit diesen *Narrenschiff* und dieser *Kapitänsfrau*…. (12.02.17, 13:12:20)

(One can't really look at it or bear it anymore…! Hopefully it will soon be over with this *ship of fools* and this *captain-woman*….)

(15) Noch dazu *in einem Boot was voll ist*. Wir haben alle dasselbe Ziel. (03.05.17, 08:31:10)

(And that in *a boat that is full*. We all have the same goal.)

Furthermore, the NATURAL DISASTER category, which interacts with the NATION AS CONTAINER metaphor, is quite widely used and consists of several different types of conceptualisations, such as floods and storms. Immigrants are hereby portrayed as a 'flood' or as 'waves' because of which the country may drown. The political and immigration situation is describes as 'chaos' and 'catastrophe'. Moreover, the metaphor stands in direct connection to the SHIP metaphor, as the floods are perceived to be the cause of the ship sinking.

(16) Diese Menschen sind wie *Wasser*-das findet auch immer seinen Weg. Und wenn man den nicht schnell genug *dicht macht, dann heißt es schnell Land unter*! (17.02.17, 09:36:03)

(These people are like *water* – it always finds a way. And if we don't *close it up quick enough, then we will soon be under water [lit. land under]*!)

(17) Genau diese bevorstehenden *Flüchtlingswellen* müssen wir bei den Stammtischen thematisieren. [...] (17.02.17, 10:13:06)

(Exactly these oncoming *refugee-waves* must be topicalised at the regulars' table.)

(18) […] Aber ebend nicht als FDP oder CDU 2.0 und auch nicht mit so einer CDU in Koalition, die unserem Land *katastrophale Zustände* mit Mord und Totschlag importiert hat. (11.05.17, 18:27:24)

(But not as FDP or CDU 2.0 and also not with such a CDU in coalition, which has imported *catastrophic conditions* with blood and thunder [lit. murder and manslaughter] into our country.)

In the THEATRICALLY themed metaphors used in the chat, elections are presented as 'staged' (cf. 01.04.17, 10:44:44; Table 1), politicians are portrayed as 'actors', and the press is supposedly controlled and 'led' by others. The objective of the *AfD* is to expose the truth behind the charade.

(19) Die *Politikdarsteller* der Kartellparteien gehören zu den aktuellen Lebensrisiken des deutschen Volkes. […] (24.05.17, 07:12:50)

(The *political actors* of the "cartel-parties" are one of the current life-risks of the German people.)

(20) […] dass sich einige antifaschistische Gruppierungen und *linksgesteuerte* Medien in den Schatten gestellt fühlen müssen […] (24.03.17, 08:22:16)

(Some antifascist groups and *left-controlled* media must have felt overshadowed.)

(21) Klasse [Name] , gut gemacht . Die *Maske vom Gesicht reißen* [emoticon left out] (08.02.17, 17:20:06)

(Great [name], well done. *Rip the mask off the face*.)

The RELIGIOUS metaphors used in the chat are applied rather broadly. Most prominent in this category is the conceptualisation of enemies as evil creatures, such as 'antichrist' to describe Anetta Kahane[6] (cf. 13.03.17, 00:40:09; Table 1), 'witches' to refer to members of other parties, and 'vampire' to denote Angela Merkel (cf. Example 23). Moreover, the members compare themselves to David in his fight against Goliath, clearly taking up themes from the bible.

(22) […] Die Einzigen , welche hier profitieren sind die *links/rot/grün/gelb/schwarzen*[7] *Hexen* , welche sich vor Freude kaum einkriegen . (11.04.17, 00:40:58)

(The only ones who profit here are the *left/red/green/yellow/black witches* who cannot contain their happiness.)

(23) Oh gott [emoticon left out] Man bringe mir *Silber und Knoblauch* [emoticon left out] (04.03.17, 10:36:06)

(Oh God, bring me *silver and garlic*.)

(24) […] Außerdem ist das durch die Erfahrung der Berufspolitiker, die Teilweise 30 und mehr Jahre Politikerfahrung besitzen und 20x so viele Mitglieder, ein ganz anderen *Goliat*. […] (01.03.17, 13:10:30)

(And, because of the know-how of the professional politicians, of which many have 30 or more years of professional experience and 20x as many members, they are a completely different *Goliath*.)

The metaphors represented above show a general tendency towards xenophobic and nationalistic discourse within the chat. While these metaphors are commonly used by groups with these ideologies, they do not necessarily

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[6] Anetta Kahane is a German journalist and activist against right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism.

[7] Political parties are often represented by colours: red=SPD, green=Bündnis90/Die Grünen, yellow=FDP, black=CDU.

represent a National Socialist stance. For this, we will now turn to the NATION AS BODY metaphor.

4.1 The NATION AS BODY Metaphor

In the following subsections, a more detailed overview over the NATION AS BODY metaphor and its implications of DISEASES and ANIMALS will be given. As discussed in 2.1, the NATION AS BODY metaphor can be used in several contexts that do not necessarily imply a xenophobic ideology. Such instances can also be found in the data:

> (25) […] Der hat auch mehrfach Informationen an die lokale Presse gegeben, nur um seinen ungewuenschten Vorstand zu denunzieren. Alles **auf dem Ruecken der Partei, der Waehler und der Buerger**. (27.04.17, 14:10:24)
>
> (He also gave information to the press several times, only to denounce the unwanted board. All on the **backs of the party, the voters, and the people**.)

However, Kellershohn (1998) identifies the equation of the people with the nation to a homogeneous entity as one of the 'core ideologemes' ("Kernideologeme"; 1998: 23) of National Socialism. In example 25, specific people are being portrayed as not belonging to the NATION/BODY. The body in this particular message consists of German citizens and the party *AfD*, which excludes the government from this definition. The metaphor therefore refers in this case to the German citizens, in the sense of a *Volkskörper*, rather than the government and state, which would commonly be the case in other, not xenophobic, contexts (cf. Musolff 2010).

While the use of the NATION (or in this case people) AS BODY metaphor is not directly indicative of a National Socialist tradition, the use of the word *Volkskörper* is. This term can also be found in the data:

> (26) Medizinisch kann man folgende Diagnose in den Raum stellen: Das Geschwür am **Volkskörper** streut bereits seine Metastasen in das **Organ AfD** (18.02.17, 15:03:48)
>
> (Medically, we can make the following diagnosis: The cancer at the **"people-body"** is already spreading its metastases to the **AfD organ**.)

This is one of three instances in which the specific term *Volkskörper* is used in the chat. Moreover, in this particular instance, the 'Organ *AfD*' is mentioned, which positions the party directly as vital part of the body of the German people. This is in line with its self-representation as being a part and the voice of the German people (cf. 2.2).

The direct use of this overtly National Socialist term is indicative of the fact that (at least some members of) the *AfD* support a National Socialist stance. Although the open use of this term by André Poggenburg in a speech (cf. 2.2) is (partially) criticised as being provocative (cf. example 27), members of the same group continue to use the term, being fully aware that it is a National Socialist term, as can be seen in example 28.

> (27) Wahlkampf lebt von provokanten und überspitzten Aussagen. Wichtig ist, denen aber konkrete Lösungswege folgen zu lassen. André's „Volkskörper" war provokant, seine Forderung, die Finanzierung der Linksextremisten mit staatlichen Geldern einzustellen der Lösungsvorschlag. (18.02.17, 12:27:11)
>
> (The election campaign is living from provocative and exaggerated statements. It is just important to follow those up with concrete solutions. André's "Volkskörper" was provocative, his demand to shut down the funding of left extremists with money from the government is the solution.)
>
> (28) Achtet mal innerhalb des Artikels auf folgende Passage...
> […] „Am 3. Februar hatte Poggenburg dort Linksextremisten als „Wucherungen am deutschen Volkskörper" bezeichnet, die es loszuwerden gelte. Solche Vokabeln gehörten unzweideutig zur Sprache der völkischen Bewegung. Sie gehörten allerdings auch zur Sprache der Nationalsozialisten. […] (15.02.17, 15:04:01)
>
> (Pay attention to this passage from the article…
> "On 3 February, Poggenburg had described left extremists as "growth at the German *Volkskörper* [people-body]", who should be removed. Such vocabulary unequivocally belongs to the language of the völkisch movement. It also belongs to the language of the National Socialists.)

This awareness and the continued use of the word (as well as the fact that André Poggenburg's use of the term was not denounced but merely declared 'provocative') shows that members do not reject the idea of following National Socialist language tradition. While not everyone uses this term, no one in the

group speaks up against it either. What is more, each time the *Volkskörper* is mentioned, it is directly linked to the concept of an ulcer/growth ("Geschwür"). This suggests that the metaphor is used only in the specific context of a perceived threat. This implication of the NATION AS BODY metaphor will be discussed in the next section.

4.2   The DISEASE Metaphor

The majority of the messages in which a DISEASE is conceptualised contain the portrayal of some form of cancer of ulcer. Within xenophobic discourse, this imagery is used most often to describe the perceived enemies (cf. 2.1). It is also found most often compared to other disease metaphors in the data.

(29) *Medizinisch* kann man folgende *Diagnose* in den Raum stellen: *Das Geschwür* am Volkskörper *streut bereits seine Metastasen* in das Organ AfD (18.02.17, 15:03:48)

(*Medically* speaking, we can make the following *diagnosis*: *The cancer* at the "people-body" is already *spreading its metastases* to the *AfD* organ.)

(30) Und *dieses Geschwür müsste operativ entfernt werden* (18.02.17, 15:05:51)
Chemotherapie? (18.02.17, 15:06:06)
Von *Chemo* halte ich nichts (18.02.17, 15:07:17)

(And *this cancer should be removed with an operation*
Chemotherapy?
I think nothing of *chemo*)

The 'cancer' in this case is representative of some members of the party who caused turmoil in the party. It is included in this analysis, because they are suspected of being 'planted' into the party by the 'enemy'. Particularly interesting is the explicit use of the 'medical diagnosis' in example 29, which shows an awareness of the metaphor that is being introduced into the discourse here. Moreover, the discourse is being driven forward by another group member, who proposes the 'removal with an operation' of the ulcer, taking up another implication of the metaphor: the need for medical therapy. Another member then suggests 'chemotherapy', which is commonly used to treat cancer in the field of medicine. This idea, however, is shut down by the same member who suggested the 'removal with an operation', by saying that he disapproves of this method in favour of the more radical approach. It is a

common theme in National Socialist discourse to be very radical in the 'removal of the cancer'. While one member of the chat group suggests a (seemingly) more gentle method of ridding the *Volkskörper* of the ulcer, this idea is not welcomed by the other, who keeps in line with the National Socialist tradition. The concept of the ulcer is, however, also used in other instances. In example 31, the 'growth' explicitly refers to the left-extremist group Antifa, not merely an unspecified enemy:

> (31) […] Der linken **Wucherung** fehlt es nämlich an Hirn. Das geht LINKS rein und rechts wieder raus. Weil nix dazwischen ist [emoticons left out] (28.02.17, 20:41:28)
>
> (The left **growth** is missing brain. It goes in from the LEFT and back out the right. Because there is nothing in between.)

Other themes that keep in line with the common use of the DISEASE metaphor can also be found in the chat data. Example 32 represents a different conceptualisation of a substance affecting the 'health' of the NATION/BODY.

> (32) […] Was für uns ALLE **tödlich** ist, sind die durch die Presse teils verdrehten und gegenteilig behaupteten Tatsachen und Aussagen. **Das ist das Gift**. [...] (03.04.17, 11:38:37)
>
> (What is **deadly** for ALL of us are the facts and statements that have been partially twisted and turned around by the press. **That is the poison**.)

This message refers to statements by the press, which, according to the writer of the message, are twisted, and deadly for 'all of us'. By 'all of us' the sender refers to the party *AfD*. Pörksen (2005: 226) identifies the usage of 'poisonous substances' in xenophobic language. It is used to refer to opposed opinions or, sometimes even people who are considered a threat. In this case the use of this metaphorical poison is drastic, as it describes the press statements as being 'deadly'. Another, less specific, use of the DISEASE metaphor refers to politicians of the other parties:

> (33) Die Politikdarsteller der Kartellparteien gehören zu den aktuellen **Lebensrisiken** des deutschen Volkes. **Dieses Risiko zu mindern und auszuschalten** ist das oberste Ziel unserer politischen Arbeit. (24.05.17, 07:12:50)
>
> (The political actors of the cartel-parties are one of the current **life-risks** of the German people. **Minimizing and eliminating this risk** is the ultimate objective of our political work.)

This instance actually shows that metaphors from several fields may be combined to create one picture: politicians from other parties are presented as 'actors', a THEATRICALLY themed metaphor. Through the use of the term 'cartel-parties' the other parties are also presented as criminals, another common theme in this dataset. Making use of the DISEASE metaphor, the politicians are presented here as being one of the current 'life-risks' of the German people. In this case, no direct mention of a NATION AS BODY or any explicit description of a disease is made. Although the metaphor is not as overtly implemented as in other instances, it is still very direct and radical in its content: politicians from other parties are represented as threatening the life of the German people and therefore the nation. What is more, the sender of the message continues to present the *AfD* as the THERAPEUTIC solution for the problem, indicating that they are striving to 'minimize and eliminate the risk' that is posed by the others. This conceptualisation clearly shows a connection to past themes found in the National Socialist context of self-representation as therapists and healers of the *Volkskörper*, who are seen as the only solution to the perceived problems. The party hereby portrays itself to be the only group caring for the ill body that is plagued by the threats posed by other parties and immigrants.

4.3 The ANIMAL Metaphor

In this subsection, I will consider the metaphorical source domain of ANIMALS and how it is applied to its targets. First, the metaphor as part of the implications of the NATION AS BODY metaphor will be discussed:

> (34) Ich kenne eine Familie in der Nachbarschaft, da ist eine alleinerziehenden Mutter. Ihr Junge ist 8 Jahre und geht in die 2. Klasse. Er sagte mir, das er noch nie im Urlaub war. Es ist beschämend, wenn man diese *Schmarotzer* hier so sieht… (06.02.17, 16:02:11)
>
> (I know a family in my neighbourhood, there's a single mother. Her boy is 8 years old and is in 2nd grade. He told me that he has never been on holidays. It is disgraceful, when you see these *parasites* here...)

Example 34 shows the only case in the dataset in which the ANIMAL metaphor in the first sense is used to describe immigrants. Still, it presents a common theme within the use of this metaphor. The word 'Schmarotzer' is often used

to refer to immigrants who are perceived to be what Musolff (2014: 18) terms *socio-parasites*: people living on the expense of the native German people. The scrounger is represented as inflicting problems onto the German people, which is made very explicit in this example. The sender of the messages tells the story of a family which he personally knows and who have never been able to afford to go on holidays. By telling the story, he[8] picks an individual example of a family to communicate and obtain compassion with the family. He contrasts this individualised family with the immigrants, which he simply denotes as 'these parasites', de-humanising as well as de-individualising the group as a whole. While he is inciting compassion with the one, he is antagonising the other. More than that, he directly relates the two instances to each other. It suggests a connection between the 'scroungers', who live off the money of the German people, and the poverty of the German family that he describes. Other instances of this implication of the NATION AS BODY metaphor become apparent in describing left-wing people.

(35) Das Wort „*zeckenkärcher*" gefällt mir [emoticons left out] „Islamische Dusche" wäre auch nicht schlecht gewesen... Egal wofür man den Wawe benutzt, er macht sauber mit max. 9 Bar läuft einem das Wasser eiskalt den Rücken runter. [emoticon left out] (16.04.17, 12:56:09)

(I like the word *"high-pressure tick cleaner"*. "Islamic shower" would have been nice as well… No matter what you use the water gun for, it cleans up with max. 9 bar the water runs down your back ice-cold.)

(36) Ich würde sagen Farbe und dann könnte man lange sehen wer ne *Zecke* ist (16.04.17, 13:27:55)
Das war damals schon als wir im "Wawe 4" CN-Reizstoff untergemischt hatten. Der Mop wurde plötzlich so lebhaft... Aber mit dieser neuen *Zeckendusche*...interessant… [emoticon left out] (16.04.17, 13:40:43)

(I would say colour and then we can see for a long time who is a *tick*.
It was like this already when we mixed CN-irritant [chloroacetophenone] into the "water gun 4". The mob

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8   The male pronoun 'he' is used in this instance, as the sender of the message was referred to with a male name in a reply to his messages.

> suddenly got so feisty… But with this new *tick-shower*…
> interesting…)

This part can only be fully understood within context: the word ***Zeckenkärcher*** refers to a water cannon vehicle, which is used against rioters by the police. The first part of this word, *Zecken* refers to the left-wing rioters – 'ticks'. *Kärcher* signifies cleaning devices by a specific brand, most often high pressure cleaners and water blasters. This word therefore combines several metaphorical conceptualisations: through the word *Kärcher*, the image of the streets being cleaned is portrayed. What is more: the streets are being cleaned of ticks, which are, as 'bio-parasites', regarded as particularly unpleasant insects that suck the blood out of people and are carriers of diseases. This imagery of ticks is transferred onto left-wing rioters. This construction therefore invokes both the metaphorical fields of cleaning the HOUSE and ANIMALS that carry diseases which might harm the PEOPLE-BODY.

The second sub-conceptualisation of the ANIMAL metaphor conceptualises perceived enemies as animals, keeping in line with right-extremist language.

> (37) Sowas trauen die sich nur in der Nacht. Links, sagt es ja schon .
> Link und feige [emoticon left out] Abends kommen ***die Ratten***
> ***aus den Löschern*** (07.05.17, 10:12:55)
>
> (They only dare to do this at night. Left, that already says
> everything. Deceitful ["link" in German is similar to "links",
> meaning "left"] and cowardly. At night ***the rats come out of***
> ***their holes***.)

Using the term rats to refer to people on the left side of the political spectrum denounces them as being dirty and disgusting. Rats are also commonly known to be carriers of disease, which also creates a link to the NATION AS BODY metaphor. The theme is here further embedded into the discourse by referring to them as 'coming out of their holes', a phrase which is used in another instance to refer to immigrants:

> (38) Ne xD Jetzt kommen sie langsam ***auf ihren Löchern*** (23.02.17,
> 19:42:25)
>
> (No xD Now they are slowly coming ***out of their holes***.)

Although no direct reference to rats is made here, using the same image of 'coming out of their holes' implies a connection to the imagery of the

immigrants as dirty animals living in the ground. In a different instance, immigrants are also portrayed as 'rabid' animals:

(39) Das sind ***tollwütige Tiere*** , gesunde tun so etwas nicht [emoticons left out] (05.04.17, 09:27:54)

They are ***rabid animals***, healthy ones don't do something like that.

This specific instance refers generally to immigrants who are said to have murdered other people. The representation here is twofold: the immigrants are not only de-humanised by denouncing them as animals, but also portrayed as carrying a very dangerous and specifically very infectious disease. Other conceptualisations include, for instance, the conceptualisation of the party *Die Linken* as 'biting at each other wildly' (03.03.17, 06:49:15, cf. Table 1).

A different tone is struck in the representation of the *AfD* or the German people as animals. Some messages in the chat imply that other parties, or other perceived enemies, try to denounce members of the *AfD* or the German people as animals. The metaphor is here used as a representation of the opinions that perceived enemies supposedly have of the target-group. In these instances, the members of the group clearly show their discontent with being compared to animals:

(40) […] Die Pressepfeifen ***halten uns ein Stöckchen hin und die halbe Partei springt drüber***. […] (30.03.17, 21:02:27)

(The press-whistlers ***dangle a stick in front of us and half the party jumps over it*** [idiom. "jumping through hoops"].)

(41) […] Und dann räumt die ***deutsche "Köterrasse*** diesen "Flüchtlingen" noch den Dreck weg. Eine Schande !!!! (11.04.17, 22:25:39)

(And then the ***German mutt-race*** cleans up after these "refugees". A disgrace!!!!)

(42) Hochnotpeinlich! ***Mit dem Nasenring werden wir durch die Manage geführt***! (16.05.17, 08:34:18)

(Extremely embarrassing! ***We are being led through the circus ring by the nose-ring***.)

By using metaphors in these contexts, and overtly judging the ANIMAL metaphor as negative imagery, members of the group exhibit sensitivity towards the nature of the metaphor, the way it is used, and the effect it

achieves. The metaphor is consciously used to show how others supposedly de-humanise the party and the German people. This indicates that the group members are also aware of the same effect when they use the metaphor to refer to immigrants and the political opposition. The fact that the metaphor is used regardless of this awareness indicates that members of the group try to explicitly denigrate immigrants and political opposition.

5. Conclusion

In this study, a WhatsApp chat between members of the party *Alternative für Deutschland* was analysed in terms of metaphors typical of xenophobic and, what is more, National Socialist discourse. The categories for analysis were pre-defined by several researchers and used as basis for this study. The data was then discussed in light of these categories of metaphors.

Addressing the research question of whether these metaphors could be found in the data and how explicit they were, the following results were presented: All explicitly xenophobic and nationalistic metaphors that were discussed in the literature were also found in the data. Most of the instances were very explicit in their imagery and in conceptualising immigrants and political oppositions as enemies or threats. The effect achieved by the metaphors was to de-humanise and de-individualise the target groups. The German people and the *AfD* were portrayed as victims who are trying to defend themselves against the threat posed from the outside and the enemy within.

In a more detailed discussion of the NATION AS BODY metaphor and its implications, strong indications of National Socialist language tradition were presented and discussed in light of individual examples. It was shown that the explicitly National Socialist term *Volkskörper* was used, and that immigrants and left-wing people were conceptualised as DISEASES that risk the well-being of the NATION/BODY. Moreover, the *AfD* presented itself as the only solution to healing the people-body, again following specifically National Socialist discourse tradition. Furthermore, both groups were also represented as ANIMALS in two senses: firstly as parasites who directly affect the NATION/BODY, and secondly as other animals, that may, or may not, be carriers of disease that can harm the NATION/BODY. Therefore, the self-representation of the *AfD* as not xenophobic cannot be supported. The use of these definitively racist, xenophobic and in some cases explicitly National

Socialist metaphors demonstrates the ideology that informs the agenda of the *AfD*.

The results from the analysis support the hypotheses that typical xenophobic and nationalistic metaphors are used in *AfD* discourse in order to conceptualise immigrants and political oppositions of the *AfD* as a threat to the German people. The *AfD* positions itself as saviour of the people and represents others as evil.

Especially with regards to the quick success the party has established over the past years, exposing the *AfD* as xenophobic and nationalistic is an important task. Since the objectives of a party are represented not only in what they say, but also how they say it (Lewandowsky 2016: 42), raising awareness for the rhetoric used by the *AfD* is of extreme importance.

6.   References

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