



Journal of Intercultural Management and Ethics

JIME

ISSN 2601 - 5749, ISSN-L 2601 - 5749

published by

Center for Socio-Economic Studies and Multiculturalism

Iasi, Romania

www.csesm.org

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THE ETHICS OF REPRESENTING THE OTHER: FROM BACKSTAGE TO FRONTSTAGE RACISM?

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Abstract

Metaphors are central discursive strategies that can be employed in the Othering process and identity construction. As such, although Trump's rhetoric has already provoked a cottage industry of books, the role of his ideologically motivated metaphors in detecting his perception of American national identity has remained largely undiscovered. Therefore, the aim of this research is to investigate the highly racialized dimension of Trump's metaphors and their role in marginalizing undocumented immigrants from the nation's popular imagination. This study met its research objectives through using the cognitive approach developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In the pursuit of such aim, the research achieves the following findings: it illustrates that Trump often conceptualizes undocumented immigrants as liquid, threatening animals, and un-welcomed guests that should be combated. Trump's rhetorical strategies are highly effective not only in dehumanizing undocumented immigrants and proving their incompatibility with his vision of Americanism but also in fanning the flames of fear and anxiety and communicating a sense of axiological urgency to act against them. Most importantly, the dysphemistic aura of the then president's metaphors justifies the dramatic shift in acceptable appeals to race and ethnicity among many Americans and, consequently, casts doubt on the idea of a post-racial America. It demonstrates his association of patriotism with plain hostility towards the out-group and his endeavor to erect impermeable and well-defined boundaries that filter out these groups out of the popular national imagination.

Keywords: CDA, Conceptual Metaphor, political discourse, undocumented immigrants. Caravan, imagined community, political correctness.

Introduction

A growing number of researchers across disciplines have scrutinized the major components and premises of American national identity (Jones-Correra et al, 2018). However, the task of defining Americanism has necessitated great skill, as it encompasses the dilemma of who is to be included? What values are to be pursued? Who are the 'real' representatives of Americanism (Devos & Banaji, 2005)? Along similar lines, Schildkraut (2007, p.597) outlines four major components of American national identity, including liberalism, "the understudied civic republican tradition, the contested ethnocultural tradition, and the equally contested incorporationist tradition", which are described by Smith (1993) as the "multiple traditions". These divergences about the meaning of nationness are often echoed in everyday social interactions, policy issues, and public discourse (Schildkraut, 2003).

Although many researchers emphasize the importance of both the civic and ethnonational definitions of American national identity and their tremendous influence on the larger processes of nation-building, a wide range of surveys investigating the major elements

that construct a “true” American have overlooked components like civic republicanism¹ and incorporationism² (Schildkraut, 2007). Accordingly, when investigating American national identity, a plethora of surveys, including the General Social Survey, often ask respondents whether certain ascriptive characteristics like “ancestry, being born in the United States, having American citizenship and speaking English” are important in defining Americanness. Indeed, although many Americans show respect to the major principles embedded in the constitution and their significance in determining American national identity, large segments of respondents lay emphasis on the importance of speaking English, being born in the U.S. and Christianity in defining Americanness (Schildkraut, 2011).

Besides, social scientists, including Huynh, Devos, and Smalarz (2011) emphasize the salience of race as a key factor in defining American national identity, as some ethnic groups, particularly European Americans, are seen as more American than others. In a recent survey, Bonikowski and DiMaggio (2016) show that “no fewer than one half of Americans espouse views of the nation that restrict legitimate membership on the basis of native birth, Christian faith, and linguistic fluency”. Indeed, the association of American identity to a set of “ascriptive features” such as whiteness leads to a subtle and sometimes blatant privilege of the U.S.-born and European immigrants over the foreign-born and non-European immigrants (Hafsa & Devos, 2014). Hence, Jones-Correra et al. (2018) suggest that the tendency of U.S.-born to perceive nonwhite immigrant newcomers as “them” rather than “us” justifies the argument that “the more ascriptively similar immigrants are to U.S.-born whites in regard to race, the more likely they may eventually be accepted as American, as one of us”.

In other disciplines, particularly in sociology, a wide range of researchers place a premium on the role of the “contexts of reception”, including governmental policies, public opinion, and demographic trends in facilitating or hampering the integration of immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). As such, demographic categorizations can be considered as an important factor in determining attitudes towards immigrants, given that in the last half century the intensive influxes of immigrants have caused tumultuous demographic changes. In effect, by 2016 immigrants and their U.S-born children represented 25% of the American population that is approximately eighty-six million people. These immigrants were mainly from Latin America and Asia. Accordingly, between 1970 and 2015, the non-Hispanic white population in the United States declined from 83 to 62 percent, whereas the Hispanic population increased from 4 to 18 percent during the same period and Asian groups grew from 1 percent to 6 percent. Such demographic mosaic also includes black immigrants namely from Africa and the Caribbean, as nearly 10 percent of blacks in the United States are now foreign-born. These groups, hence, have remarkably altered the contours of the U.S. demography in both urban and rural neighborhoods (Foner et al., 2018).

The incremental presence of these groups has ignited heated debate among political leaders about the different policies they should pursue in dealing with future immigration. Nevertheless, apart from these legal measures, the reality of increasing diversity in the U.S. has caused a stir over issues of identity definition and group categorization. Such laments were further intensified with the findings projected by the U.S. Census Bureau (2012) which revealed that the national population of non-white racial groups will outnumber that of Whites before the middle of this century. In this regard, a plethora of White Americans in the U.S. perceive race relations as “zero-sum,” in which status gains for minorities are coupled with status loss for Whites (Wilkins & Kaiser, 2014 in Major et al., 2017) and less bias against minorities is inevitably meshed with more bias against Whites (Norton & Sommers, 2011 in Major et al., 2017).

¹America as an energetic participatory democracy with loyal citizens

²America as a highly diverse nation of immigrants

Moreover, social psychological theories of identity and intergroup relations prophesize that these demographic changes are not only likely to be threatening to many White Americans, but also will cause them to embody more conservative political stances and discriminate more against immigrants (Thompson, 2009 in Major et al., 2017). For instance, social identity theory envisages that people are motivated to preserve a positive social identity, and they do so by making a comparison between the status of groups with which they identify and that of other groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986 in Major et al., 2017). When they feel that their own group's higher status relative to other groups is unstable or slipping, they experience "group status threat", that is they worry about their own group's status and leverage. Thus, such feelings of threat and insecurity may exacerbate prejudices against immigrants (Stephan & Stephan, 2000 in Major et al., 2017). In this context, Craig and Richeson (2018) emphasize the strong belief among many Americans living in regions with large racial minority groups that their advantageous position is under jeopardy. For this reason, many scholars suggest that Trump's appearance as a candidate for the 2016 GOP nomination and his victory were epitomes of the deeply anchored anger and anxiety among white Americans. On a deeper level, in investigating the major reasons behind the rise of Trump, Bhambra (2017) emphasizes the role of Trump's electoral campaign in bringing to the fore a racialized form of identity politics" where "whiteness trumps class position".

Echoes of such argument are found in Cohn's (2017) assertion that Trump's story of "a once-dominant country in decline" found resonance among many voters during the 2016 election, comprising some who had formerly supported Democrats. Accordingly, the 2015 American Values Survey revealed that the view that "America's best days are behind us" has increasingly come to the fore in the run up to the 2016 election, contending that in 2012 only 38% of Americans had this view, whereas, in 2015, the percentage of respondents sharing this view reached 49% (the respondents include Republicans, Tea Party movement members, white Protestants, white working-class Americans) (Jones et al., 2015). In this vein, Hochschild (2016) suggests that the factual accuracy of such chilling picture of America does not matter, but what really matters is that "it felt true" to large segments of the American population. As a result, weeks after the victory of Donald Trump, hate crimes had intensified and they were often accompanied by blatant references to the President-elect or his "make America great again" campaign slogan (Anderson & Gharabaghi, 2017). Accordingly, the Southern Poverty Law Center revealed over 800 hate incidents against Muslims, Jews, African Americans and immigrants just 10 days after the election.

The argument here is not to establish a direct link between the election and these incidents of discrimination and violence or to suggest that there is no alternative or competing view for Trump's gloomy picture of the U.S (Braunstein, 2018). This alternative view, as Braunstein (2018) suggests, is held by the majority of Democrats, white college-educated and non-whites who believe that the country's "best days are ahead of us". However, as Anderson and Gharabaghi (2017) underscore, there is "one thread that links the movement rightward across the global north and west: a rhetoric that "we" are threatened by "them," and "we" can no longer sit idly by and watch as "they" destroy "our" way of life". This "they" indeed differs across settings, as it can be immigrants, the religious other, or the elites. To encapsulate, Bonazzi (2003 in Ferrari, 2007) powerfully argues that if "the actual exclusions from the "circle of insiders" in American history are in each case traceable to and determined by concrete historical reasons', it should be noted that "it is the special spin of public discourse which fully legitimates them".

Although Trump's rhetoric has drawn a great deal of attention among a wide range of researchers since his candidacy, we still lack an understanding of the mechanisms that he employed to assert his definition of American national identity and to leverage his audience (Duban, 2018). As such, applying Metaphor Theory can offer insights into Trump's

understanding of American national identity and unveil the propensity of his language to “define in significant part what they take as reality” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Accordingly, Duban (2018) emphasizes the heavy presence of metaphors in Trump’s discourse and their role in making his political message “memorable, inspiring and comprehensible for the audience”. He goes on arguing that Trump’s metaphors are of paramount importance in manufacturing his political identity in a way that appeals to most voters and therefore in representing him as “authentic, and relatable”. As such, Duban (2018) identifies the following metaphors in Trump’s rhetoric: “the battle/military metaphors, construction/ build metaphor, machine/ process/ technology metaphors, illness/health metaphors” and mainly the “drain swamp” metaphor.

Moreover, Pilyarchuk and Onysko (2018) analyze the metaphors that Trump used in his acceptance speech, victory speech and inaugural speech. Their study indeed identifies the different metaphors Trump employed in addressing issues related to economy, politics, and immigration. Although their research points at the role of metaphors in exacerbating fear of the “Other”, it does not thoroughly analyze the different ideological dimensions of these metaphors. Similarly, Stamenković (2017) emphasizes the heavy presence of metaphors in Trump’s discourse and their salience in addressing the issue of terrorism. More recently, Duggan and Veneti (2018) study certain rhetorical features, including metaphors and mythology, and their role in crafting Trump’s and Clinton’s brand identities during the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. Compared to Clinton’s discursive strategies Trump’s metaphors are more powerful in crafting his brand identity and conveying strong affective messages.

Nevertheless, given Cammaerts’ (2012) argument that metaphors can be considered as “discursive weapons in a war of positions between often divergent and conflictual conceptions of the organization of society and in relation to identities and citizenship”, one can argue that Trump’s metaphors are rarely understood, if at all, within the framework of national identity. In this regard, the main research aim of this dissertation is to explore the ideological dimension of Trump’s metaphors and the role they play in excluding the “Other” from “the nation’s popular imagination” (Wodak, 2015). This literature review will scrutinize notions like imagined communities and symbolic boundaries which are part and parcel of the debate surrounding the construction of nations and national identities.

The value of examining the above areas of research will be to offer the reader an analysis and a thought-provoking discussion of the different issues raised and hence facilitate a critical understanding of how the “Other” is constructed in political discourse. In this regard, a sensible starting point is to succinctly study what is meant by the term national identity and to highlight the contested nature of such a concept. Given Michael Billig’s (1995) definition of national identity as ‘banal’, that it is taken for granted, how can we determine people’s definition of it in their everyday lives? Can we consider national identity simply as not being something? In other words, is national identity “a label, an empty box, which defines what is outside, rather than its contents” (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015, p.7)? As the subsequent scholarship on national identity shows, this concept is highly complex and therefore cannot be considered simply as “a badge” given at birth (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015). In this regard, Miller (1995) observes that national identity is bent upon “mutual recognition” of the different group members. Nevertheless, he states that “the attitudes and beliefs that constitute nationality are very often hidden away in the deeper recesses of the mind, brought to full consciousness only by some dramatic event”. For him, most people do not pay considerable attention to their national identity in their everyday lives and that their identity is brought to the surface only in “an emergency”, or as Miller puts it, during “some dramatic event”. For instance, the belief in the existence of common bonds between Americans was strongly present after the “terrorist” attacks of September 11, 2001, as the number of flags had considerably increased. However, what is more revealing was the

symbolic dimensions of these flags and their role in bolstering and rejuvenating the sense of community and comradeship among Americans (Theiss-Morse, 2009).

The main point behind this argument is that people “buy passively and willy-nilly into the nation as ‘imagined’, limited, sovereign and as a community” (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015). This indeed implies that national identity is, to a large extent, discursively crafted by certain hegemonic discourses. Along similar lines, Wodak et al. (1999, p. 22) contend that national identity is “constructed and conveyed in discourse . . . A nation is a mental construct, an imaginary complex of ideas . . . this image is real to the extent that one is convinced of it, believes in it and identifies with it emotionally”. Hence, digging deeper into Anderson’s conception of national identity as “imagined, limited, sovereign community” is of paramount importance to this research.

Literature Review

Imagined communities

Despite the criticisms leveled at Anderson’s concept of imagined community, his framework has proven to be enduring and significant in contemporary political and social science and particularly in relation to the definition, application, and reconfiguration of national identities within local and global challenges (Abbas, 2017). In this regard, the Pakistani American sociologist, Abbas (2017) states that Anderson’s book was first published in a period during which the world was fissured between the two major forces of Communism and Capitalism. It was also a period when modernist scholars like Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm had initiated “a radical” approach to world history based on the rise and fall of nations. However, for Anderson (1983), since the end of World War II national conflicts have “defined themselves in nationalist terms”. As such, he states that the argument of the end of nationalism has been faultily presumed, as nationalism still “maintains itself in the light of globalization, internationalization, and the challenges of ethnic diversity” (Abbas, 2017). In defining the nation, Anderson (1983) contends that it is a replica of “cultural artifacts of a particular kind”. In this vein, he pinpoints that a nation “is an imagined political community”. It is imagined because the “members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson, 1983).

Another pillar of Anderson’s conceptualization of nations as imagined communities is that nations are horizontal entities united by their mutual sense of fraternity and solidarity. Indeed, for him, such sense of fraternity “makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings” (Anderson 1983, p.7). Hence, it can be inferred that Anderson’s theory of imagined communities emphasizes the profound “emotional legitimacy” and the sense of coherence and social proximity that people, “even if they have never met,” feel towards each other (Anderson, 1991). Therefore, regardless of the disunity and injustice that may afflict a nation at any historical juncture, the nation still rekindles deep personal sentiments among its members that are mainly seen through their willingness to preserve a sense of loyalty towards such nation (Anderson, 1983). This, indeed, entails that Anderson’s concept of imagined community is mainly predicated upon “the feeling” of belonging. In this vein, Anderson (1983) states that imagined or constructed feelings of national belonging are of paramount importance in enabling the members of a particular community to have a shared sense of camaraderie and pride in a country as diverse, huge, and, at times, divided on political and social concerns as the United States.

Although imagined communities extend across time as well as space, “no nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind” (Anderson, 1991). In effect, this entails that an imagined community is characterized by well-defined boundaries that filter out those who do

not fit within a particular imagination of the nation. In this regard, some scholars suggest that Anderson's definition envisions strong linkages between nationalism and racism. However, Anderson refutes such criticism arguing that nationalism:

"Thinks in terms of historical destinies, while racism dreams of eternal contaminations, transmitted from the origins of time through an endless sequence of loathsome copulations: outside history ... The dreams of racism have their origin in ideologies of class, rather than in those of nation: above all in claims to divinity among rulers and to "blue" or "white" blood and "breeding" among aristocracies" (Anderson, 1983).

As a response to Anderson's thesis, some critics, including Abbas (2017) declare that the erection of barriers that exclude particular groups of people and fence them out of the imagined geographical vicinity of a particular nation is often framed in racial and cultural terms. Along similar lines, Desai (2009, p.8) contends that although Anderson was right when he declares that racism has its roots in class, his claim that racism has nothing to do with nationalism overlooks the deeply seated national inequality that has been productive of racism within perennial communities, namely the U.S.

In addition, Abbas (2017) adds that with the increasing power of capitalism, which reinvents itself in the light of the challenges that it faces, it is not that easy to separate race from nation, or racism from nationalism. He goes on arguing that there is "an element of ethnocentrism permeating the conceptualizations of the idea of imagined communities". Even within a civic understanding of nationalism, most or perhaps all imagined communities, however, encompass strong elements of ethnic nationalism. Accordingly, strong forms of nationalism can be strongly associated with nativism. In an attempt to define this concept, Mudde (2007) contends that it "holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group ("the nation") and that nonnative elements are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state". As such, Anderson suggests that the style of imagination is what distinguishes nationalism, contending that "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined". This, indeed, implies that nationalism is an invention or as Anderson describes it, a "product" of a "creation," a product of the "imagination" of the individuals and not "a pre-given social state". Hence, a wide range of researchers including Breuilly (2016) suggest that Anderson's framework on nationalism falls within the constructivist camp. Consequently, a plethora of researchers propose that the concept of national identity emanates directly from the broader social psychological theory of social identity (Theiss-Morse, 2009), which perceives identity "as an awareness of one's objective membership in the group and a psychological sense of group attachment" (Huddy & Khatib, 2007). Such arguments, thus, assert the power of imagination in the creation and re-creation of nationhood.

Nevertheless, Anderson's emphasis on imagination is staunchly criticized by Yael Tamir (1995) in one of his essays. In this regard, he suggests that Anderson overestimates the power of imagination when declaring that the act of imagining can be sufficient in the creation of nations of communities. Aware of this argument, Breuilly (2016) states that "the work of the imagination, here, consists not in making things up but envisioning something that we cannot see, but which is nonetheless real". Hence, Breuilly's statement justifies Jenkins' assertion that Anderson's conceptualization of nations as imagined should not be read as "imaginary", as the emotional allegiance of the in-group members is often translated into concrete actions. Indeed, when members of the in-group feel that their community is threatened by certain groups, they often resort to enact prejudiced policies and violent militaristic measures aimed at protecting the nation from this perceived threat. This, as I already mentioned, brings to the fore the argument that national identity does not appear as a result of "some deeper, long-enduring identity", but rather as a result of certain situations in

which the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ are reciprocally crafted. As a corollary, Triandafyllidou (2007) rightly argues that national identity is not only defined from within, that is from shared features among fellow nationals, but also from without. In fact, the longing for the validity and legitimacy of the national “Self” cannot be separated from the conception of the “Other”. As such, in his foundational book *Nationalism*, Kedourie (1992) contends that ‘there is a duty laid upon us to cultivate our own peculiar qualities and not mix or merge them with others’. Thus, it is through differentiating and distancing themselves from the “Other” and erecting boundaries that exclude this “Other” that individuals can come to be seen as one people. In this context, Wodak et al (2009) powerfully argue that in order to investigate how national identity is discursively constructed, there should be a focus on the different discursive strategies employed in political discourses, including the positive self-presentation and possible negative other-presentation

Racially divisive appeals

Mendelberg (2001) suggests that before the Civil Rights Movement, political candidates were allowed to run electoral campaigns on overtly racist platforms that supported policies of legal segregation and win the elections. Nevertheless, Mendelberg goes on arguing that things have changed after the Civil Rights Movement which supported racial equality and defended an integrationist perception of American national identity. As such, many argue that the election of Obama signaled the US entry into a post-racial era. However, empirical evidence proves that racial attitudes have retained their salience even after the election of Obama. In line with this argument, Tesler and Sears (2016) underscore that during Obama’s presidency, racial attitudes had much more influence on whites’ policy preferences than in the past. This, indeed, justifies the argument that many white Americans experienced high levels of “racial resentment” during the so-called “post-racial era”. In this regard, Haney Lopez (2014) emphasizes the role of certain politicians in activating racial resentment among many white voters. He backed up his argument by referring to the “law and order, “tough on crime” rhetoric of the 1990s.

However, as the racial priming theory entails, racial appeals should be communicated implicitly, as voters may reject these appeals when they are explicit. In this vein, by referring to the subtle racist undertone of the Willie Horton advertisement, Mendelburg illustrates the role of implicit racial appeals in hinting to race without breaking the norms of racial egalitarianism defended by champions of the Civil Rights Movement. Although the ad was highly effective in harnessing support for George HW Bush, the heated criticism raised at its racist undertone faltered its effectiveness among voters. For Gale (2004), this technique is a replica of “dog whistle rhetoric” which is predicated upon the usage of implicit visual cues. Such cues are mainly meant to denigrate minority populations “but do so obliquely enough to allow the speaker room for deniability if challenged” (Brown, 2016). In addition, Philpot (2007) suggests that while Democratic candidates are often portrayed as paying special attention to racial matters, Republicans are frequently portrayed as racially insensitive. For this reason, when delivering their racial appeals, white Republican candidates tend to be more “constrained in their ability to use explicit appeals”. Indeed, as Bonikowski (2018) suggests, one should not lose sight of the fact that certain political candidates have had a troubled history of racially hostile rhetoric which was seen by many Americans as intensifying racist speech. For instance, Trent Lott, in 2002, was forced to resign from the Senate after expressing his endorsement of “a former segregationist”, Strom Thurmond. Indeed, he states that “when (he) ran for president, we voted for him. We’re proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn’t have had all these problems over the years, either” (Valentino et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, Stephen (2013) convincingly argues that this theory, to date, may have overemphasized the salience of racial appeals as implicit without testing the contexts in which explicit appeals may be highly efficient. In line with this argument, Valentino et al. (2018) suggest that after Obama's election, "anecdotal evidence has suggested a shift in the acceptability of explicit and often hostile racial political rhetoric". Hence, they conclude that the explicitness of racial appeals is no longer a criterion for their rejection among voters, as an incrementally large group of citizens start to perceive themselves as "an embattled and even disadvantaged group, and this has led to both strong ingroup identity and a greater tolerance for (overt) expressions of hostility toward outgroups". Although Valentino et al. attribute this shift to the election of Obama, they insist that determining its exact timing in political discourse cannot be easily identified, for there have been "no continuous survey measures of tolerance for (overt) hostile racial rhetoric over the past decades". As such, since their study was conducted during 2010 and 2012, they assume that such shift is not solely caused by the rise of Donald Trump.

In addition, negative presentation of the "Other" might also be communicated through the way certain groups are described, or the traits attributed to them. These negative traits can be associated with individuals who are sorted into a particular category. Moreover, the expressions chosen to describe these groups can be both literal and metaphorical (Boreus, 2006). For instance, various studies, including that of Flowerdew et al. (2002) have investigated the discriminatory use of burden, flood and influx metaphors and their role in contributing to the "negative mental models, stereotypes, prejudices and ideologies about the "Other" (van Dijk, 2001).

Methodology

From a social constructionist vantage point, "nationalism is an eminently discursive phenomenon" that plays a paramount role in the erection of symbolic and real boundaries between people (Wodak, 2015). In this process, particular subjects may get labeled as "Other" and therefore set in stark opposition to those seen as the true bearers of a shared national identity. Hence, negative "other" presentation is perceived by a plethora of researchers as part and parcel of the discursive construction of nationalism (Van Dijk, 2001). Therefore, Critical Discourse Analysis, particularly Critical Metaphor Analysis could be highly helpful in scrutinizing the ideological positioning and dichotomized nature of Trump's metaphorical expressions and their effectiveness in framing issues related to immigrants. In this vein, in their book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) Lakoff and Johnson state that a metaphor is a replica of conceptual mapping from one semantic source domain, which often includes "handy and familiar" parts of the physical world, to a different semantic target domain.

Additionally, Musolff (2007) accentuates the power of metaphor in activating prejudice or acting as "sleeping poison". In this regard, Taylor (2018) emphasizes the ability of metaphor to unveil "non-obvious meanings" and to "zoom out above the level of the text" to scrutinize aggregated meanings. As such, he emphasizes the strong linkages between metaphor and Critical Discourse Analysis, which is "critical in the sense that it aims to show non-obvious ways in which language is involved in social life" (Fairclough, 2001 in Taylor, 2018). Consequently, from a critical framing background, Cammaerts (2012) suggests that the political use of metaphors can be perceived as part of 'framing wars', as it epitomizes the scuffle between different meanings and worldviews. It plays a paramount role in constructing us/them dichotomies "by associating features like good and evil, just and unjust to the various subject-positions". Thus, as Cammaerts (2012) points out, the strategic use of metaphors in political discourse is a highly effective "discursive practice" that is mainly meant to "hegemonize" people's attitudes, ideas, and ideologies and to "temporarily fix meaning". As

such, hegemony is not considered as an absolute and fixed notion; rather, it “has to be fought for constantly in order to maintain it” (Giroux, 1981 in Cammaerts, 2012). This implies that the strategic use of metaphors can be highly productive in creating political myths that develop certain hegemonic strategies and leverage the audience to adopt political leaders’ preferred beliefs about particular issues, including immigration.

To serve the analysis, this research will focus on the Caravan of 2018. Indeed, in various instances, Trump blatantly declared that the caravan “represented a grave threat to the sovereignty of the United States,” and that “our country is being stolen ... by illegal immigration” (Semple, 2018). Additionally, as the caravan headed to the U.S. border, the executive administration enacted various xenophobic measures to prevent these groups from entering the U.S. Thus, in order to block the caravan’s entry, the Trump administration warned to call the National Guard and threaten the ongoing North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations in case the caravan passed freely through Mexico (Macias, 2018 in Silva and Toro-Morn, 2019). The executive pressures to stop the caravan reached their peak by the end of November 2018. In this regard, the Office of the president declared that “the lawlessness that continues at our southern border is fundamentally incompatible with the safety, security, and sovereignty of the American people. My Administration has no choice but to act” (The Office of the White House 2018 in Silva and Toro-Morn, 2019). As shown above, Trump’s reactions to the caravan reveal much about his stance on undocumented immigrants and zoom on his staunch refusal of the entry of such groups to the U.S. Therefore, trying to dig deeper into Trump’s statements on the caravan will allow an in-depth investigation of his attempt to depart from the conceptualization of the US as a nation of immigrants. Indeed, his response towards the recent caravan of immigrants from Central America provides a good example of his use of immigration policies to reinforce cultural and ethnic divisions that make coexistence impossible. Before digging deeper into such argument, it should be noted that the immigrants who crossed the US/ Mexico border were mainly women and children from Central America. Some of them were seeking asylum, while others were looking for family reunification. Such caravan was preceded by many other caravans; nevertheless, “this was the first to garner a response from a sitting U.S. President” (Silva and Toro-Morn, 2019). As such, Donald Trump blatantly states that the caravan “represented a grave threat to the sovereignty of the United States,” and most importantly to the American way of life.

Findings and Discussions

A plethora of critical metaphor scholars, including Taylor (2017) suggest that “there is not a distinct line between the metaphors of country and metaphors of people who move in migration discourse. For instance, “the nation is a family home” metaphor asserts immigrants as “guests” or as “invaders of the family home” (Bruke, 2002 in Taylor, 2017). Likewise, in “the nation is a body” metaphor, Santa Ana (2002) argues that migrants can be seen in relation to the nation-body as a “disease” and/or as a “physical burden” that the nation must shoulder. The metaphors detected in this study are Hence, as the analysis will show the investigation of the metaphors used to address immigrants cannot be accomplished in isolation from the metaphoric conceptualization of the nation. In this regard, it should be noted that the categorization of the metaphors detected in Trump’s statement on the caravan is based on their source domains.

Container and liquid metaphors

Chilton and Ilyin (1993) note that the concept of the state and its borders is not easy to imagine. Therefore, political leaders often employ metaphors to help their audience or potential voters understand and visualize such concept. In this regard, Charteris-Black (2006) suggests that the container and liquid metaphors can be highly effective tropes in defining the

boundaries of a nation-state and hence in deciding who is to be included in or excluded from the popular imagination of the nation. As such, Charteris-Black (2006) emphasizes the link between water and container metaphors, as the former is often associated with fluid and the latter generally includes fluid. As such, he (2006) states that “the emotion of fear can be aroused by disaster and containment scenarios through the perforation of a boundary around the container allowing the inflow or outflow of liquids”. Thus, the large influxes of fluid in a “bounded space” escalate the fluid level and therefore the pressure within the container. Accordingly, it can be inferred that water metaphors are mainly meant to present immigrants as coming with alarming numbers and therefore, to give rise to the implication that they are out of control and in need to be regulated. This argument is evidenced through the following examples which emphasize Trump’s frequent conceptualization of immigrants as “wave”, “flow”, and “influx”.

Based on the above examples, it can be observed that a remarkable number of Trump’s metaphorical expressions fell under the highly complex conceptual metaphor “immigrants are natural forces”, which is closely associated with the image of water. The most frequently used word in these examples is “flow”. Indeed, through conceptualizing immigrants as water and flood and denying them agency, Trump seeks to communicate a dehumanized lexicalization of these groups and therefore, block any empathy towards them. In line with this argument, Kainz (2016) suggests that associating people with water dehumanizes them “due to the substance’s lack of shape and color and the impossibility of distinguishing one drop from another”. The chief goal behind the use of such a metaphor, hence, is to reinforce the implication that immigrants are uncontainable just like natural catastrophes and to convey panic-inducing notions to the audience and encourage restrictive political action. In this regard, Trump frequently states that for the nation to be in full control of the ‘national container’, “a big, beautiful wall” should be built, as open borders “are an altar for ritual sacrifice”. As such, Trump portrays America as a container that has to be shielded from the flood of “aliens”. Concomitantly, these “aliens” are conceptualized as violent and disastrous fluids that endanger the safety of the American people (the “container”).

Perhaps most importantly, the above-mentioned examples show that Trump uses the container metaphor to say that it is safe inside the container of the U.S and threatening outside, which underlies the physical manifestation of building a wall to “protect” the U.S (Chilton 2017, p.585). The feelings of threat that Trump seeks to communicate are mainly meant to define two contrasting spaces, a fearful external space and a secure internal one (Ferrari, 2007). Through such distinction, Trump goes as far as to caricaturize the external space as dark, fearful and replete with enemies. In this regard, Montgomery (2017) argues that Trump is highly skilled in “turning up the discursive volume” and allows no room for “turning the volume up further”, as he often amplifies and hyperbolizes certain political messages in order to make them more effective.

Thus, his response towards the recent caravan of immigrants from Central America provides a good example of his use of immigration policies to reinforce cultural and ethnic divisions that make coexistence impossible. It shows how Trump seeks to conceptualize the movement of immigrants as a single one-dimensional event. Indeed, he emphasizes the flood’s perilous qualities, while overlooking the fact that floods “often recede and leave fertile soil in their wake”. Accordingly, in her discussion of the use of water metaphors in Californian public discourse about immigrants, Santa Ana (2002, p.73) suggests that such metaphors do not refer “to any aspect of the humanity of the immigrants, except to allude to ethnicity and race” and tap immigrants into one essentialist group. Such monolithic and highly reductionist conceptualization of immigrants further justifies the argument that Trump uses mappings in a highly selective way in order to deliberately emphasize certain aspects of

the source domains, while ignoring others. As such, Trump's racialized representation of immigrants tends to overlook the contexts of migration, the considerable diversity among immigrants, and their cultural and economic contributions to the American society. Such argument, indeed, goes in tandem with Charteris-Black's (2012) concept of 'purposeful' metaphor which is reinforced by the fact that political speeches are not spontaneous forms of discourse. Santa Ana (2002) makes the same point contending that "to characterize the movement of people as moving water might seem quite natural, but such a formulation of movement of people is not the only possible image that can be employed". Indeed, associating particular noun collocates, like "flood", "flux" and "flow", to the word immigration contributes to the construction of certain collocations, which when frequently used, form distinct "semantic prosodies" (Stubbs, 2001). As such, Stubbs (2001) defines discourse prosody as a "feature which extends over more than one unit in a linear string". Hence, the frequent concurrence of expressions like immigrants with words like "flood" and "wave" contributes to the creation of certain negative and emotionally loaded discourse prosodies that portray immigrants as threats, undifferentiated mass and even as enemies who should be avoided and "dammed" (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008).

However, one cannot argue that water metaphors are always used to negatively portray immigrants or stimulate antipathy towards them, as there are certain instances where metaphors are used to generate a different 'conclusion rule'. Echoes of such argument are found in KhosraviNik's (2010) study of the UK media representation of refugees and immigrants, particularly those who are geographically distant from the UK. As such, the fact that these groups are located far away from the UK is seen as one of the major reasons behind the sympathetic portrayal of these groups. The same applies to political discourse, as when immigrants are geographically far away from a particular country, they are more likely to be presented in a more positive light. However, given the ample evidence for group status threat within the US and the role of the current political discourse in stimulating such threats and fears, one cannot argue that undocumented immigrants, particularly those entering the U.S., are seen in a positive light. Indeed, these groups are even compared to animals.

Animal metaphors

As the analysis will show, "animal metaphors" are part and parcel of Trump's political discourse. Indeed, as I already surmised above, the choice of such metaphors can be motivated by Trump's willingness to emphasize the negative aspects of immigration, while blinding out its merits. However, it should be noted that the conceptualization of immigrants as animals is not a new metaphorical mapping, as it is deeply anchored in Western culture. It has its roots in Aristotle and Plato's "the Great Chain of Being" which is bent upon certain hierarchically arranged elements, including "God, humans, animals, plants, and inorganic matter". In this vein, Lakoff and Turner (1989) contend that "the Great Chain of Being" can function as an example of metaphorical mapping used to justify the superiority of humans over other living creatures. It "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). Although such a notion of social determinism "long ago bankrupted its scientific credentials", the belief in this "moral ordering" is reproduced each time the metaphor "immigrants are animals" is used (Santa Anna, 1999).

The use of certain expressions like "brutally murdered", "released", and "roaming" allows the frame of a cage from which "wild", "aggressive" and even uncivilized animals are "released". The chief goal behind such (mis-) representation is to stimulate insensitive attitudes towards immigrants, magnify the seriousness of threats, and perhaps most prominently create an 'us' vs. 'them' division. Consequently, this metaphor creates an urgent need to exclude these groups and fence them out of the American territory, hence out of

Americans' national imagination. Along similar lines, Crespo-Fernández (2013) suggests that through such metaphor, politicians call for "the extinction" of immigrants and make it even a duty to avoid them. As such, the "vilification" and "demonization" of immigrant groups can be highly productive in justifying Trump's policies towards such groups, as it is "only when we degrade the enemy to the level of animals or construe them as alien or as a threat to 'our way of life', can we draft soldiers for a kill' (Fabiszak, 2010). Hence, it can be inferred that "immigrants are animals metaphor" entertains a highly dysphemistic effect, as it is often highly productive in generating an insulting discourse strategy that blatantly "dehumanizes" certain individuals (Kövecses, 2002). Arguably, it can be inferred that Trump's sermon on undocumented immigrants contributes to an indirect conceptualization of immigrants as "monsters" in order to intensify fear and antipathy towards these groups.

This metaphor does not only contribute to the creation of a dehumanizing narrative of immigrants, but also to the assertion of a "moral authority narrative" which has been widely referred to in different studies on migration discourses within the context of certain European countries. Indeed, Trump's suggestion that immigrants are intrinsically vehement, and inferior allows the implication of a particular moral order. Such moral judgment, nevertheless, is presented as a fact rather than a mere opinion. This, in effect, plays a paramount role in normalizing and popularizing (Bhatia, 2015) Trump's discourse and most importantly in reinforcing a concordance and singleness of purposes among his audience in order to resist the threat posed by these groups. Along similar lines, Hare (2001, 165, in Bhatia 2007) rightly argues that "our ultimate moral principles can become so completely accepted by us, that we treat them, not as universal imperatives, but as matters of fact; they have the same obstinate indubitability". This, indeed, justifies the power of metaphor in leveraging people's worldviews and even persuading certain groups to accept the unacceptable (such as the conceptualization of immigrants as animals).

Moreover, this metaphorical categorization does not only attribute to Americans the forces of good and forward their sense of moral superiority, authority, and integrity but also deny undocumented immigrants any (moral) right to provide any clarification. Thus, Trump's vilification of the "Other" contributes to the creation of a particular mythology where immigrants are seen as essentially bad and those who avoid them are seen as essentially good. In doing so, Trump casts undocumented immigrants in the mold of primitivism and wildness inflicting precarious physical, mental, and social pain. On a deeper level, Trump's galvanizing discourse creates the frame of a battle between two major forces of evil and good. Indeed, when political leaders perceive a particular issue in metaphoric terms, they often design policies that heavily draw on these metaphoric entailments. For instance, animal metaphors can be taken to convey various entailments, with a simple one being the approval of treating immigrants as animals. As such, Millar et al (2017) rightly argue that "metaphors could act as a transition from the argument 'migrants should be deported' to the conclusion 'any means are justified to do so'. Even more, this metaphor may sometimes exacerbate violence against immigrants, as words can have serious repercussions. In this regard, McGuire and Canales (2011) contend that abusive language is synonymous to murder and thus may lead to what he calls 'verbicide' "because of its potentially deadly consequences". Hence, the consequences of such metaphors may be reinforced with Trump's frequent use of physical suffering and disease metaphors.

Immigrants as Unwelcomed Guests Metaphor

Although "immigrants are unwelcomed guests/thieves metaphor" is not categorized within dehumanizing narratives about immigrants, it is highly productive in portraying these groups as criminals, drug dealers, and even terrorists. In this regard, as a wide range of scholars note, Trump often does not draw a clear distinction between immigration and

terrorism. In general, his argument that criminals and terrorists might enter the country through the border has led to the observation that the debate over migration is often adjacent to debates over crime and terrorism. Similarly, his stigmatization of the caravaners as foreign “invaders” evidences his racialized representation of these groups and his endeavor to challenge their legacy to stay in America. As such, this conflation of asylum seekers with “illegal” immigrants epitomizes Trump’s attempt to blatantly justify the administration’s ripple efforts to avoid the U.S. dedication to Human Rights and provides ample evidence for the “zero –tolerance” measures pursued in dealing with undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers. Perhaps most importantly, these measures stand in stark contrast with the deeply anchored idea that the U.S is a nation of immigrants, a land for the religiously persecuted. Hence, as a plethora of scholars note, the 2018 caravan represents an epitome of a new form of racism which is predicated upon the “insurmountable” cultural divisions between ethnicities and cultures that make living together impossible.

Perhaps most prominently, the dysphemistic spirit that dominates Trump’s metaphors provides further evidence for the incremental acceptability of explicit appeals and their effectiveness in galvanizing racially resentful voters. Such adaptability with explicit racial appeals, indeed, represents a rupture with the deeply rooted traditions of politically correct and racially coded appeals. Most importantly, it brings racism from the backstage to the frontstage and “normalizes racist discourse as logical” (Shafer, 2017). Taking into consideration the literature reviewed on racial appeals, it should be noted that explicit racial appeals are not solely associated with the rise of Donald Trump. Nevertheless, this does not deny the fact that these appeals seem to reach their crescendo with the rise of this politically incorrect figure. Thus, Trump’s denial of “political correctness” and his willingness to “tell the truth plainly” is not a new argument. What is new about this argument is mainly its immense “popularization” during his electoral campaign. Additionally, for Trump, political correctness is no longer effective in facing the urgent problems plaguing the nation today. In other words, he states that commitment to political correctness can endanger American national security and American way of life. In his recent book *Identity: The politics of Resentment*, Fukuyama (2018), who once announced “the end of history” and hence the triumph of liberalism revisits his early conclusions. Indeed, he states that the world is entering a new phase characterized by the upsurge of what he calls “the authentic identity” embodied in the persona of Donald Trump, who voices people’s resentment of the “careful” language they have been abided by since the Civil Rights Movement. His major conclusion is that the endeavor of certain groups for recognition has evolved to become aggressive demands to be treated better than other groups. He goes on arguing that the incremental shift towards “personal identities” has faltered universal understanding of human dignity and hence has become highly effective in exacerbating antagonism between the different groups.

Besides, Shafer (2017) suggests that such normalization of frontstage racism and its acceptance as rational and objective rhetoric has perilous effects on the non-white other, mainly Latinx immigrants. Roger C. Rocha, Jr., president of the League of United Latin American Citizens makes the same point suggesting that “it is obvious that Trump’s vision of making America great does not include Latinos” (Llenas, 2015). The Southern Poverty Law Center states that Trump’s campaign and his popularity have considerably contributed to the recent escalation of white extremism and the normalization of white supremacy as a casual neoliberal reality (2016 in Shafer, 2017). Nevertheless, Shafer notes that “while it is difficult or even impossible to link findings directly to a specific cultural phenomenon like Trump’s rise to mainstream acceptability”, the available empirical reality “speaks to the notion that citizens and their children might learn vicariously via a successful public figure how to express racist sentiments in ways accepted or even rewarded in public”. What can be understood from such argument is that Trump’s discourse seems to widen the boundaries of

acceptable public discourse about racism, but at the same time tightens the boundaries of national belonging.

This does not deny the fact that many argued that Trump's longing to reassert group sentiment and express Americans' cultural belonging cannot be considered as "racist". As such, in various instances, Trump himself states that "people who want their immigration laws enforced, and their borders secured, are not racists. They are patriotic Americans of all backgrounds who want their jobs and families protected". In this regard, Kaufmann (2017 in Bhambra, 2018) has argued within the context of the UK but applicable also to the U.S. that racial self-interest revolves simply around identifying with one's own. It is a phenomenon of 'group partiality' that refers to shared aspects of group sentiment. He further contends that all other minority cultures are allowed to voice their cultural belonging. Therefore, for him, white majority populations should not be stigmatized if they wished to do the same. He suggests that "we must accept that groups will look out for their cultural, economic and demographic interests" and, although lamentable this might be, he goes on saying that such 'clannishness' "does not deserve the "racist" appellation".

However, Kaufmann misses the point that 'minority partiality' was rarely about the cultural expression of group sentiments or issues of diversity or difference (Bhambra, 2017). Along similar lines, Ipek Demir (2017 in Bhambra, 2018) contends that claims by minority groups took place in the context of structured racial inequality, intending to reduce that inequality and prompting more inclusive policies. As such, Kaufmann's resonance would lead to "a society of hierarchy and domination produced by opportunity hoarding along lines of difference". Hence, the difference between minorities and majorities voicing group sentiments is that minorities' group sentiments emanate from their longing for inclusion and equality, whereas majorities' group sentiments are motivated by their willingness to exclude and dominate (Allen, 2005 in Bhambra, 2018). Indeed, as the analyzed data suggests, Trump's interpretation of patriotism is one that is bent upon intolerance and plain hostility towards the out-group. This narrow imagination of national identity supports exclusive narratives about the past that override the oppressive history and the struggle of different groups within the American society. Thus, Trump's quest for a common culture emphasizes his backward-looking definition of national identity and places rigid and even insurmountable boundaries of identity that cannot be overcome by undocumented immigrants. Nevertheless, it should be noted that not all undocumented immigrants are fenced out of the American national identity. For instance, Trump rarely, if at all, talks about building a wall along America's border with Canada which facilitates the entry of many European undocumented immigrants into the U.S. It seems that Trump does not consider the flow of white immigrants as a threat that should be resisted. These groups are already part of the Western culture and do not need "an ideological certification" to ensure that they "share our values and love our people". Undocumented migration, in this context, is not referred to as a neutral or value-free term, but rather as a scapegoat for "a racialized identity politics".

Conclusion

To conclude, this research paper attempts to analyze the construction of immigrants in the US American political discourse and identify the different strategies employed by politicians in generating hostile attitudes towards the Other. Among the strategies identified are evaluative negative proclamation towards particular social groups, racially divisive appeals (implicit and explicit) and negative metaphorical constructions. Touching upon these productive analytical tools was instrumental in unpacking the different ideological motivations behind Trump's use of metaphors and their role in stoking feelings of anxiety and fear of the Other. His portrayal of immigrants as dangerous animals, floods, enemies and as unwelcomed guests is mainly meant to amplify both the moral and the physical threats

posed by these groups and therefore to instill the view that their exclusion from the popular imagination is a national and even a moral duty. Accordingly, these metaphors represent highly effective tropes in legitimizing the erection of well-defined boundaries of belongingness through social sanctioning, cultural marginalization and the militarization of borders. Most importantly, they illustrate the argument that hostility towards undocumented immigrants has escalated in number and virulence, as immigrants are blatantly seen as perilous threats to American culture and identity.

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