



I know, politics doesn't interest you, but, in spite of everything, perhaps it should ...



# Language Shapes Realities

## Discourse of Division: Politics



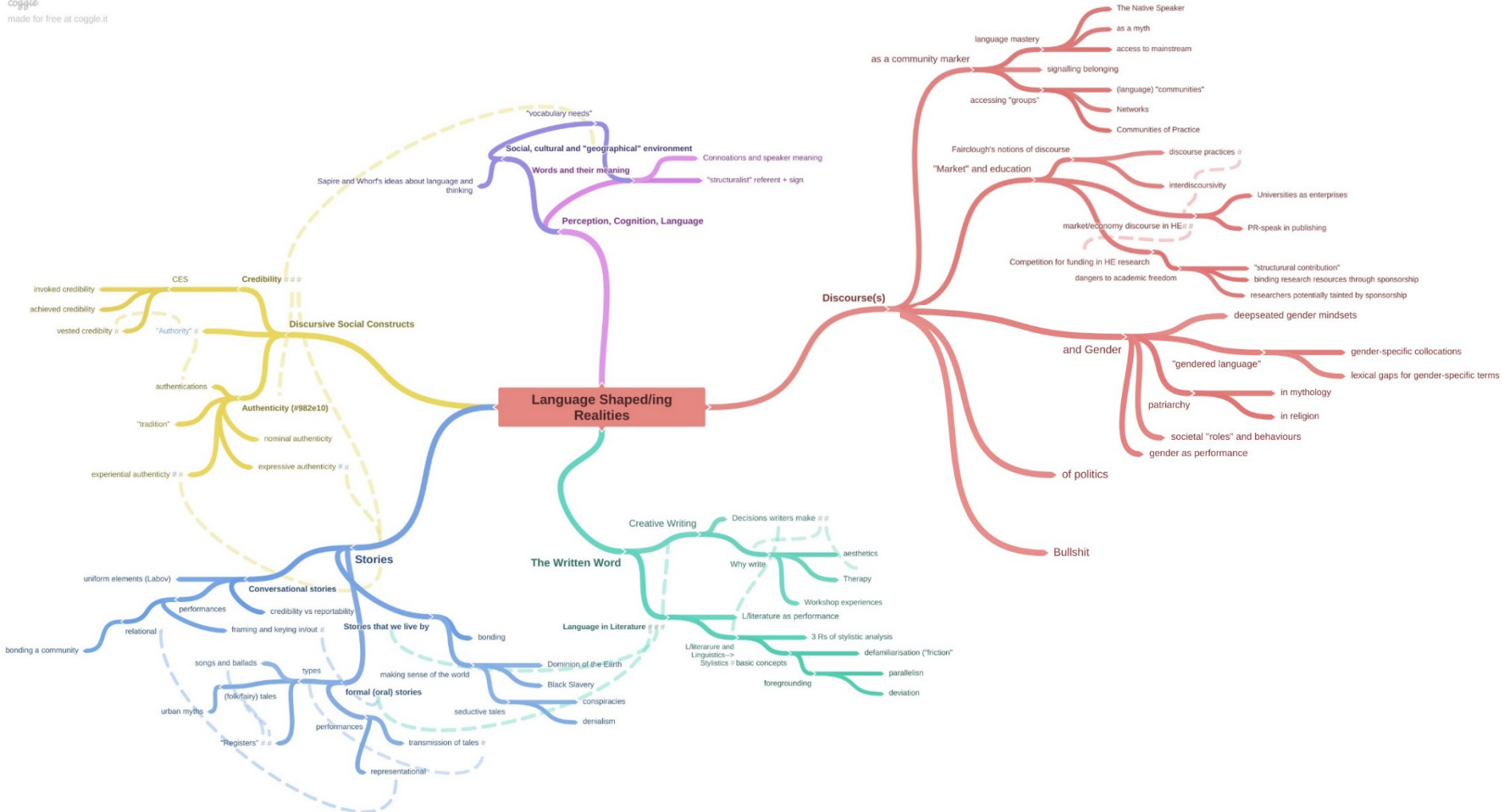
# What We Saw Last Week

- **How we seem to be thinking about sex and gender**
  - professions and assumptions about sex and gender
  - discourses of inequality
- **Gendered language and perceptions**
  - man/boy, woman/girl
  - collocations that signal subordinate status
  - equivalent terms for gender-specific expressions
- **Societal perceptions and conditioning**
  - patriarchy in mythology and religion
  - “colour-coding”
  - advertising children’s toys
  - behaviours and expectations
  - hierarchy of values in boys’ and girls’ behaviours
- **Gender as performance**
  - discourses of being vs performing
  - Heterosexual normativity
- **Women’s Rights are Human Rights**



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# The Plan for Today

- Terminology revisited and expanded
- Perceptions and realities
- Characteristics of political discourse
  - interpersonal and intrapersonal (re-)presentation strategies
  - how to talk the talk
- Creating and promoting division
  - siege mentality
  - dehumanising the opposition
  - normalising division
- And what can we do?



# Germany: Annalena Baerbock becomes prime target of sexist hate speech

Threats against politicians have sharply risen ahead of September's general elections. The leading candidate to replace Angela Merkel has rapidly become the prime target for misogyny, vitriol, and fake news.



<https://www.dw.com/en/germany-annalena-baerbock-becomes-prime-target-of-sexist-hate-speech/a-57484498>

It's been barely three weeks since [Annalena Baerbock was nominated as the Green party's chancellor candidate](#). But it took only a matter of hours after her nomination on April 19 for disinformation and hate about her to begin spreading like wildfire online.

Green party election campaign leader Michael Kellner says the hate and fake reports have taken on a "completely new dimension."

Experts warn that the wave of targeted hate and disinformation that has spread about Baerbock is only the tip of the iceberg ahead of [September's general election](#).



# What we are talking about...

## revisiting and expanding the terminology



# Some concepts revisited

## **Discourse**

(1. uncount  
abstract noun)

language use conceived as  
**social practice**

## **Discourse**

(2. count noun)

(re-)presenting experience from  
a **particular perspective**

## **inter- discursivity**

**contact** between text from  
**different discourses** and genres

## **genre**

**use of language** associated with  
a **specific social activity**



# The first of two “new” terms

## ‘group’

- shares systems of beliefs

**social representations**

- has shared beliefs with other groups in a society

**common ground**

- selects norms and values to organise itself  
**freedom, equality, justice, market**

**→ discourse practices construct the group**

(paraphrased from van Dijk 2000)



# Ideology, the second “new” term

## ‘ideology’

- has a ‘canonical structure’, facilitating dissemination and adoption
- relies on a ‘knowledge’ based on the shared beliefs
- can determine practices through norms, aims and values
- regulates access to valued ‘commodities’  
**e.g. group membership, activities, power**
- defines identity  
**self-schema**
- social representations influence behaviour of group members



# Perceptions related in cognition



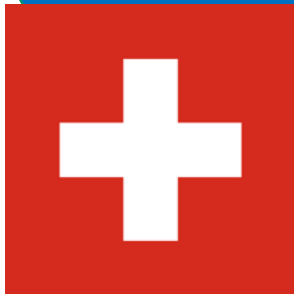
**‘Western Civilisation’**

**economic  
success**

**rule of  
law**

**fused  
reality**

**elected  
government**





# Perceptions and combinations



threat to 'our'  
common ground

terror  
Islam

authoritarian repression  
alien 'culture'  
stereotypes  
control of access to 'us'

**fused realities**



# How to talk the talk...

**Some characteristics of  
political debate and discourse**





# Political rhetoric

## Rule Britannia



When Britain first, at Heaven's command  
Arose from out the azure main;  
This was the charter of the land,  
And guardian angels sang this strain:

"Rule, Britannia! rule the waves:  
"Britons never will be slaves."

The nations, not so blest as thee,  
Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall;  
While thou shalt flourish great and free,  
The dread and envy of them all.

"Rule, Britannia! rule the waves:  
"Britons never will be slaves."

God on one's side  
hallowed history

sweeping claims

inflating status  
and achievements

disproportionate  
'self-image'



# Linguistic tricks of the trade

- Thank you for talking to us, Minister, ... **constructing 'hierarchy'**
- With all due respect
- I am no x-ist, but... **constructing 'solidarity'**
- A very good question ...
- Let's be absolutely clear about ... **claiming knowledge/**
- ... but the real question we need to address is... **claiming objectivity**
- “Prognosen sind immer schwierig, vor allem wenn sie die Zukunft betreffen” **deflecting issues**
- Kishon's “**yes, no, I black, white**” game satire



# Divergent stories: Palestine



## Jewish Loss of Land 1000 BCE to 2013



1000 BCE



1920



Today



Jewish Land



Disputed Land





# Distancing and alignment

**THE Sun** **FTA** **FREE** turtles photos - coming tomorrow only in your **Sun**

Thursday, November 1, 1990 25p Audited daily sale for September 3,979,330 Thought: Jacques-ess

# UP YOURS DELORS

**At midday tomorrow Sun readers are urged to tell the French fool where to stuff his ECU**

**THE Sun today calls on its patriotic family of readers to tell the feisty French to FROG OFF!**

**They INSULT us, BURN our lambs, FLOOD our country with dodgy food and PLOT to abolish the dear old pound.**

**Now it's your turn to kick THEM in the Goulsh.**

**We want you to tell Froggy Common Market chief Jacques Delors exactly what you think of him and his countrymen.**

**At the stroke of noon tomorrow, we invite all true blue Brits to face France and yell "Up Yours, Delors."**

**The sea-heating from our millions of readers will wake the EC President up to the fact that he will NEVER run our country.**

**His bid to replace the £ with the feeble ECU is the last straw after centuries of**

**Proggie Brit-baiting. They BURNED alive British lambs today this year because they couldn't match our quality.**

**JERRED** Mrs Thatcher when she visited Paris to boost celebrations for the bicentenary of the French Revolution last year.

**FOUL**

**BANNED** British beef after falsely claiming it had mad cow disease.

**BLEATED** when we found their fond soft cheese was riddled with listeria bugs.

**GAVE IN** to the Nazis during the Second World War when we stood firm.

**TRIED** to conquer Europe until we got Simon Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815.

**Remember, folks, it won't be long before the garlic-breathed bastards will be here in droves once the Channel Tunnel is open.**

**So grab your megaphones, turn south and let us hear the British lion ROAR.**

**And the best of British to you all!**

**Where to howl at the Gauls - Pages 2 and 3**



**'accommodation'**



# Know your friends and enemies

## Inclusive and exclusive discourse strategies



# Characteristics of political discourse

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## political rhetoric

- Inflating status
- inflating own achievements
- (mis-)representing of self
- unproven claims

## narratives of justification

- teleological founding myths
- protagonists and antagonists
- discourse as shared knowledge

**‘us’ and ‘them’**

- mastery of FTAs
- respect and disrespect for groups
- discourse of solidarity and distance

**convergence  
and divergence**



# Labelling and features

## Us

inclusive  
'we'

dependable  
honest  
shared values

shared tradition  
deserving ('entitled')  
wronged/disadvantaged  
to be taken seriously

## Them

third party  
not 'faced'

fickle  
duplicitous  
divergent values

divergent tradition(s)  
undeserving  
dominant and/or  
threatening  
deserving of scorn



# Labelling Britain vs. the EU

**Us**

inclusive  
'we'

**Them**

third party  
not 'faced'





# Labelling threats to us from outside

Us

inclusive  
'we'

Them

faceless



pressure on 'our'  
limited resources



# Representations of ‘them’

It's in the evening after dark  
When the blackleg miner creeps to  
    work,  
With his moleskin pants  
    and dirty shirt  
There goes the blackleg miners.

Well, he grabs his duds  
    and down he goes  
To hew the coal that lies below;  
But there's not a woman  
    in this town-row  
That would look at a blackleg miner.

Oh, Delaval is a terrible place.  
There they rub wet clay in the  
    blackleg's face,  
And around the heaps  
    they run a foot race  
To catch the blackleg miner.

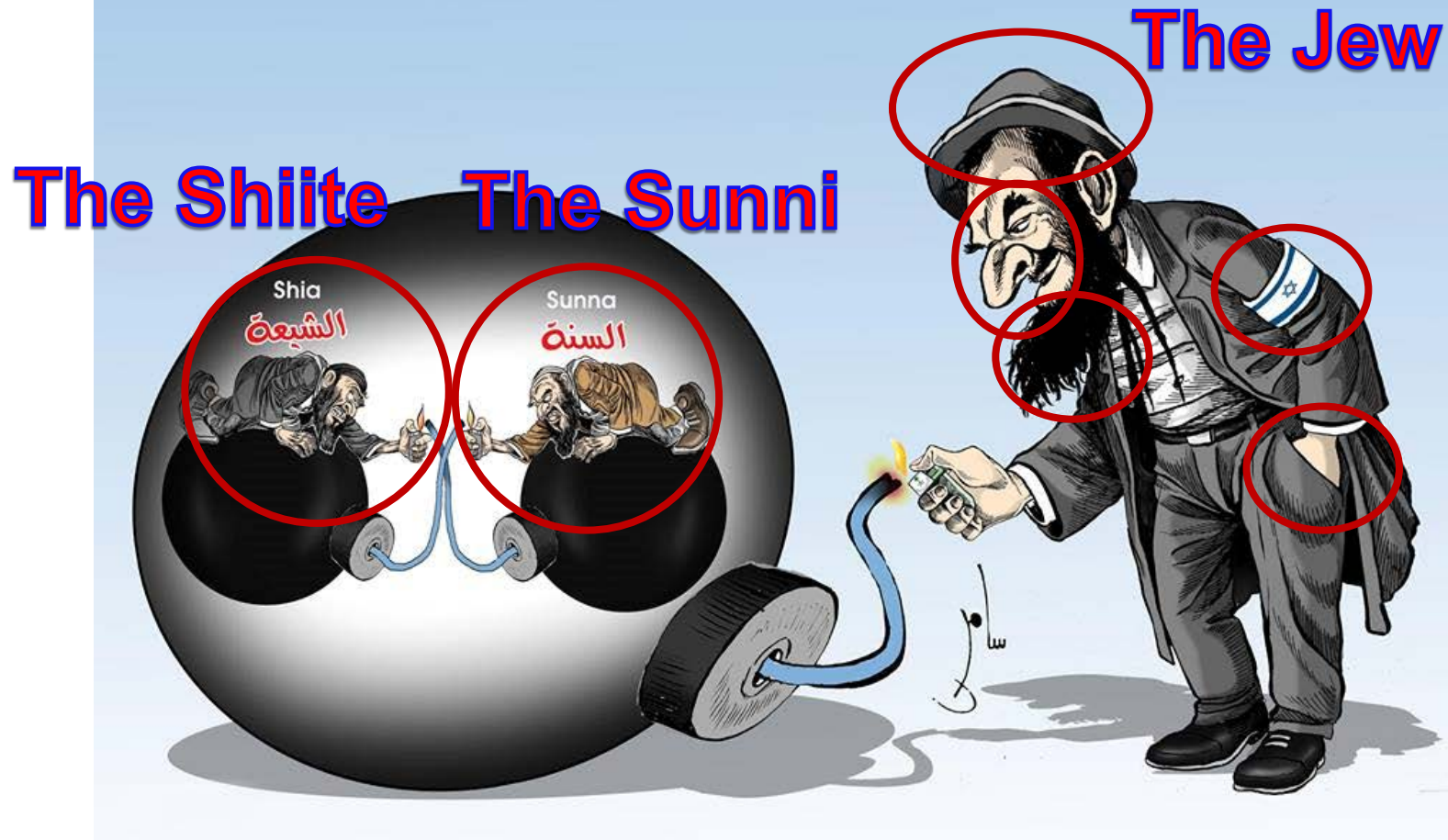
So, don't go near the Seghill mine  
Across the way they'll stretch a line,  
To catch the throat and break the spine  
Of the dirty blackleg miner.

They grab his duds and his pick as well  
And they hoy them down the pit of hell.  
Down you go, and fare you well,  
You dirty blackleg miner.

So join the Union while you may.  
Don't wait till your dying day,  
For that might not be far away,  
You dirty blackleg miner.

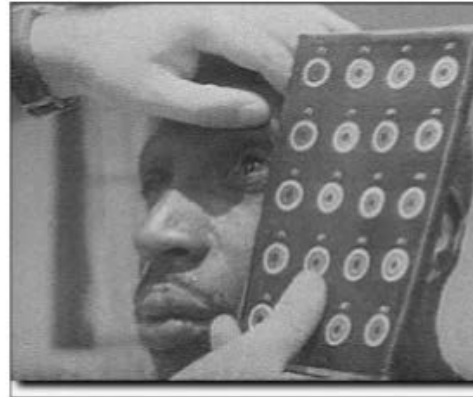
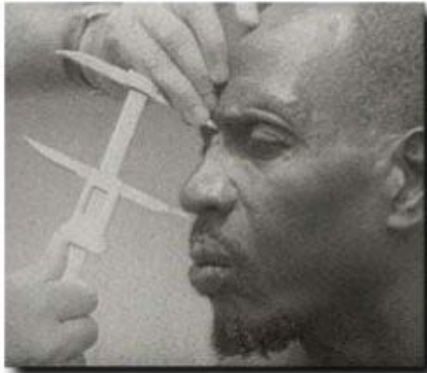


# Exemplars of 'them'





# Constructions of 'them': Rwanda



Mod. 3



Amazina y'abana n'igite bavukiye  
Noms, prénoms et date de naissance des enfants

Amazina Noms et Prénoms	Yavutse kuwa Né le/à	Igitina Sexe
1. Umukazamba	27/8/29B	
2. Umukazal	13/10/82 B	
3. Umukazal	16/11/85 B	
4. Umukazal	15/11/92 B	
5. ....		
6. ....		
7. ....		
8. ....		
9. ....		
10. ....		
11. ....		
12. ....		

Ubwoko (Mute, Tutsi, Twa, Naturalisé)  
Ethnie: Tutsi

Aho yavukiye  
Lieu de Naissance: ...

Itariki yavutseho  
Date de Naissance: 1954

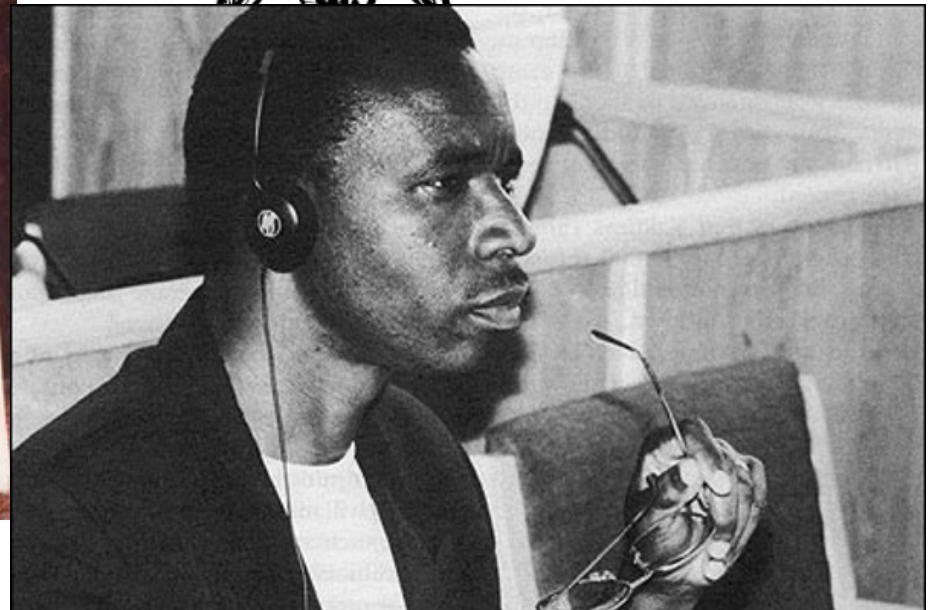
Umwuga  
Profession: ...

Aho atuye  
Lieu de domicile: ...

Amazina y'uwo bashakanye  
Noms du Conjoint: MARANDA

N° C.I.: 5104

Umukono cyangwa igikumwe cya nyirayo  
Signature ou l'empreinte du titulaire: [Signature]

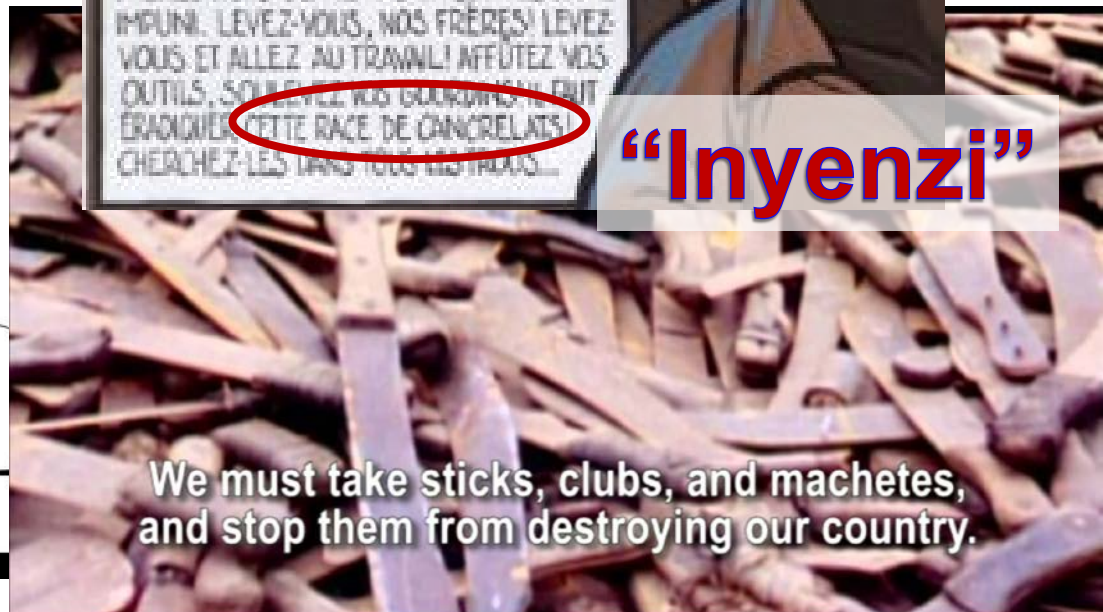




# “Them” as non-human



**“Inyenzi”**



We must take sticks, clubs, and machetes, and stop them from destroying our country.



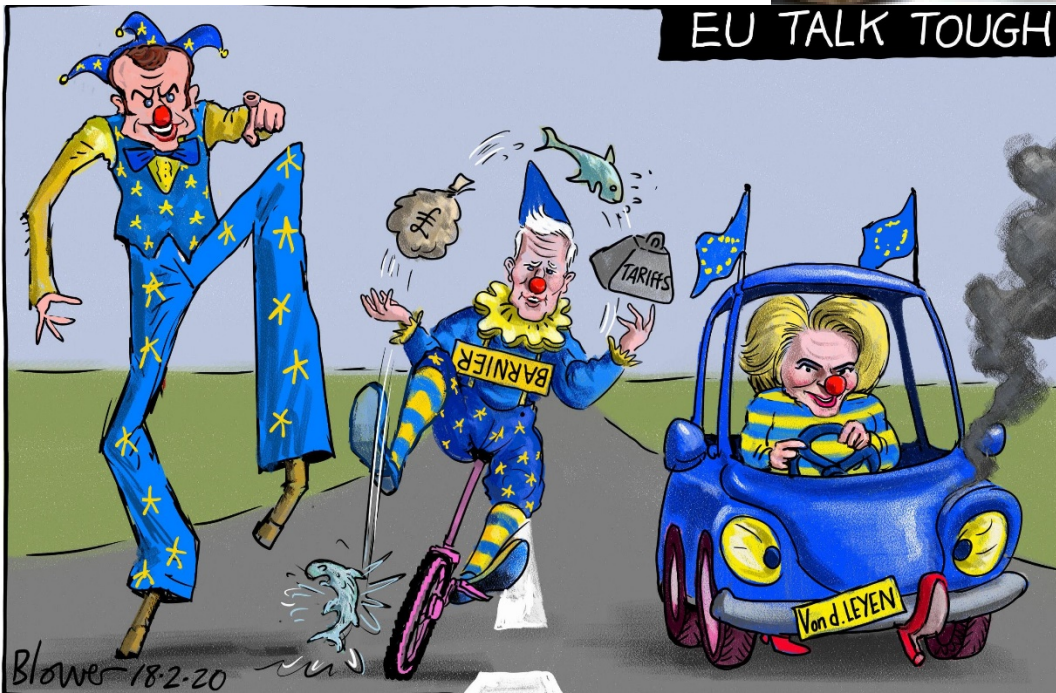
## So: how to refer to “them”

- group as a multitude      **economic ‘migrants’ / refugees**  
**the Tories, the Loyalists ...**
- generalised individual  
as ‘stereotypical’  
embodiment      **The Jew, The German ...**
- prominent individual  
as representative of  
group/threat (metonymical)      **Jean-Claude Juncker, Berset**
- metonymical,  
objectified  
representation      **Bern**  
**the management**
- dehumanisation      **cockroaches, rats,**  
**snakes, vermin, parasites**



**Demons, vermin, fools, etc.**

**Sollen Linke und  
Nette die Schweiz  
zerstören?**



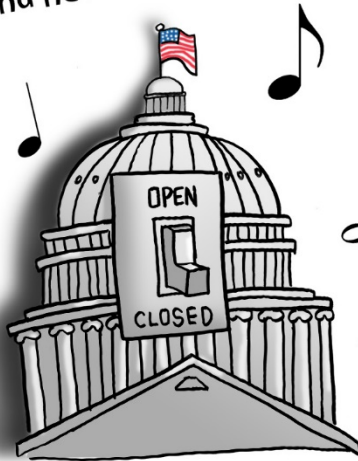


# Polarisation in Germany and the US



Das grüne Zweigespann Baerbock  
spätestens beim Blick ins kürzlich  
Gendersternchen zu schlagen, erk

Let all the Beltway stay shut down  
and never brought to mind



May old Pelosi be forgot  
And Trump's wall built in time



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Una Toon  
SPECIAL  
THANKS  
TO L.L.!



Should all Deep Staters be locked up  
And justice for their crimes

We'll take a cup o' kindness yet,  
for auld lang syne.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

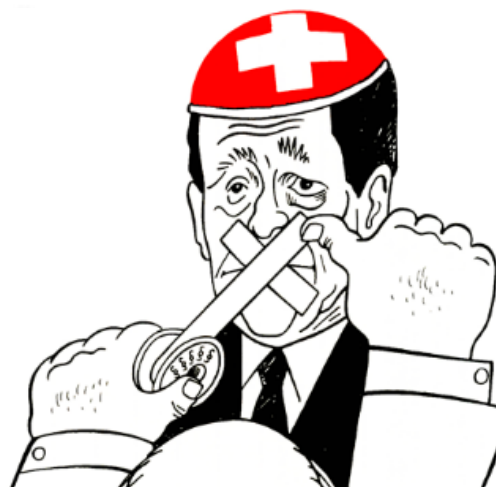




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...and how the discourse goes on



Das Bundesgericht verurteilt zwei  
SVP-Kadermitglieder wegen  
Rassendiskriminierung

The “new normal”  
‘us and them’ narrative

Normalisation

Mit ihrer Inseratenkampagne «Kosovaren schlitzen Schweizer auf» haben die damalige SVP-Generalsekretär Martin Baltisser und seine Stellvertreterin Silvia Bär eine Ethnie herabgewürdigt und zu Hass und Diskriminierung aufgerufen.



**We don't get fooled again...**



**Consequences and conclusion**



# What to do...

- be aware of **linguistic and semiotic (mis-)representations**
- analyse what political **discourse practices** say – and what they don't say
- spot the **beliefs / 'knowledge'** in ideologies
- question
  - (simplistic) **narratives**
  - (dubious) **analogies** and **images**
  - and (stereotypical) **characterisations**
  - **unreferenced figures** and **statistics**
- resist '**realities**' of Normalisation
- activate your **C**ritical **D**iscourse **A**nalysis  
                                  **C**areful           **D**etailed           **A**ssessment



# The lure of “we care only about you”



**When and if fascism comes to America it will not be labelled "made in Germany"; it will not be marked with a swastika; it will not even be called fascism; it will be called, of course, "Americanism." [...]**

**The high-sounding phrase "the American way" will be used by interested groups intent on profit, to cover a multitude of sins against the American and Christian tradition, such sins as lawless violence, teargas and shotguns, denial of civil liberties. [...]**

**For never, probably, has there been a time when there was a more vigorous effort to surround social and international questions with such a fog of distortion and prejudices and hysterical appeal to fear. We have touched a new low in a Congressional investigation this summer, used by some participating in it to whip up fear and prejudice against many causes of human welfare, such as concern for peace and the rights of labour to bargain collectively.**

**Halford Edward Luccock (1938)**



# See what I mean?

"We are socialists, we are enemies of today's capitalistic economic system for the exploitation of the economically weak, with its unfair salaries, with its unseemly evaluation of a human being according to wealth and property instead of responsibility and performance, and we are all determined to destroy this system under all conditions."



Socialism is the philosophy of failure, the creed of ignorance, and the gospel of envy. Its inherent virtue is the equal sharing of misery.





That's it for today...

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See you next week when we will  
end the lectures with a look at

# **A Complete Load of Cobblers**