The Languages of Politics/

La politique et ses langages

Volume 1

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Edited by

Marta Degani, Paolo Frassi
and Maria Ivana Lorenzetti

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This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Volume one of the two-volume publication *The Languages of Politics/La politique et ses langages* brings together a selection of reviewed papers from an international conference held at the University of Verona on 30-31 May, 2013. On that occasion, specialists in the study of political discourse who work in a range of linguistic traditions had the opportunity to fruitfully exchange their ideas and compare their different approaches to the study of political language(s).

The collection of papers gathered in the two volumes reflects this plurality of approaches and their choral dimension by giving voice to the multiple languages of politics. The volumes also reverberate with the spirit of that conference in the respect that they are bilingual, combining contributions in English and French as the two working languages of the conference.

The analysis of political language represents a budding area of research. To date, major contributions have come from the fields of rhetoric, (critical) discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, lexicology, lexicography and, more recently, multimodal discourse analysis. The papers in the two volumes build their investigations on these perspectives and aim to provide new and diversified insights into the study of political language.

In the volumes, the papers have been arranged according to related topics. In volume one, the articles address the following themes arranged in separate sections: metaphor and political discourse, contrastive analysis of political language, historical perspectives, and political language in the media. Volume two includes contributions that deal with political discourse and political genres, the lexicology and lexicography of politics, historical perspectives on political discourse, and political language in the new media. Altogether, not only do the papers testify to the plurality of political languages and their analyses, but they also show how these different topics are interconnected in the two volumes.

The first section of volume one, Metaphor and Political Discourse, opens with the chapter "What can Metaphor Theory contribute to the study of political discourse?" This chapter sets the scene for many contributions in the volume that focus on the use of metaphors in political discourse. In his paper, Andreas Musolff reconsiders the contribution of conceptual

metaphor analyses to the understanding of political discourse and its critical assessment. The chapter provides an overview of the major theoretical approaches in the field and highlights their relation to methodological improvements in metaphor research. The paper also partakes in a timely discussion on metaphor and cultural variation versus universality by presenting data concerned with different instantiations of THE NATION IS A (HUMAN) BODY metaphor. As Musolff points out, the intra-and inter-cultural semantic variability emerging from the data suggests the need to complement a conceptualist/cognitive approach to the study of political metaphor with pragmatic and discourse-historical methodologies.

Chapter two, "The strength to be nurturers: Obama's framing of political issues", is grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory and explores facets of contemporary American political discourse during Obama's first presidential election campaign. In the paper, Degani reconsiders the usefulness and validity of the idealised cognitive models first presented by Lakoff in *Moral Politics* (1996): the Strict Father (SF) versus the Nurturant Parent (NP) models. A critical discussion of the models and their implications for language use precedes the analysis of a selection of speeches delivered by Barack Obama during his first run for the American presidency in 2008. The paper focuses, in particular, on the expression of strength at both lexical and semantic levels, unveiling Obama's strategic use of a strength lexicon within a Nurturant Parent framing. This result highlights the importance of coupling corpus-based analyses with a discourse-oriented methodology.

The investigation of political discourse is expanded in the third chapter, "Demystifying *The Importance of* Seeming *Earnest*: *politolinguistics* at the crossroads of syntax and semantics". In this article, Paul Danler illustrates how morpho-syntax and semantics can act as extremely useful analytical approaches by shedding light on the construal of political messages that partly mask or hide reality. The paper provides insights into the rhetoric of an iconic political figure of Latin America, Fidel Castro. The morphosyntactic analysis considers the discursive functions of diatheses and the use of third person plural, participle and light-verb constructions, deverbal nouns and unsaturated valence. To complement this, a semantic investigation centred on metaphor and metonymy provides additional insights into Castro's rhetoric.

Political metaphors are further explored in Chiara Nasti's "The Lisbon Treaty conflict". This chapter considers how the media covered a specific instance of institutional reform in the European Union that involved a complex process of ratification by the European member states,

especially the United Kingdom and Ireland. The study discusses the different metaphors employed by a number of broadsheets and tabloids that presented the political debate. The paper also considers how these metaphors contributed to the creation of distinctive scenarios in the British and Irish contexts. Furthermore, the analysis indicates how the use of metaphors that portray political reality is strongly connected to issues of evaluation, ideology and cultural variation.

The section on Metaphor and Political Discourse ends with Douglas Ponton's "The Natural Choice? Metaphors for nature in a UK government white paper". The article is informed by Critical Metaphor Analysis and looks at metaphors as powerful means of political persuasion and mass manipulation by focusing on how they shape attitudes in the public debate on the environment. The analysis is carried out on a recent white paper from the British government, in which Ponton criticises the strategic usage of the notion of 'value' as a key metaphor that may attract the corporate sphere.

Section two, Contrastive Analyses of Political Language, opens with "Crafting an effective message for the masses, or the art of populism: an analysis of new populist rhetoric from a textual perspective", in which Maria Ivana Lorenzetti presents a contrastive analysis of the rhetorical strategies of new populism, based on a corpus of speeches from recent American and Italian political election campaigns. Considering the multifarious domain of populism, the papers adopts an interdisciplinary approach, encompassing the historical, social and philosophical dimensions of populism as a concept and as an ideology, and investigates its language from a textual and critical discourse analysis perspective, with a main focus on the role played by metaphor and framing.

Chapter seven, "Understatement and overstatement: two powerful persuasive tools in English and Italian political speeches" is couched in Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory. In this paper, Elisa Mattiello focuses on understatement and overstatement as crucial persuasive devices, especially when used in combination with other figures of speech. The analysis is carried out on a corpus of English and Italian political speeches retrieved from online archives and videos. The paper shows how politicians often achieve persuasion not just by using metaphor but also by relying on hyperbolic statements (the chief expression of overstatement) and understatement. The study also touches upon aspects related to the speaker's cognition, in that it describes the process of overstatement as related to a broadening operation and that of understatement as connected to either a broadening or a narrowing operation, depending on the type of trope involved (meiosis, euphemism or litotes).

In chapter eight, « "Le *spread* est un *imbroglio*" : manipulations discursives autour du mot *spread*, reflets croisés en Italie et en France », Mathilde Anquetil provides a detailed contrastive analysis of the term *spread* as it is used in Italian and French political jargon. Anquetil explores the social usages of this word in political discourse focusing on Italian and French media. The analysis discusses the different attitudes towards the English loan and alludes to their political repercussions by referring to a situation that nearly turned into a diplomatic incident. This happened in 2012 when Silvio Berlusconi publicly expressed his contempt by saying: "Lo spread è un imbroglio".

The contrastive analysis of political language is further pursued in chapter nine, « NATION et NARÓD : analyse sémantique d'un couple de faux-amis franco-polonais ». The paper explores the semantic and conceptual dimensions of a contrastive pair of lexemes, French NATION and Polish NARÓD, following the framework of Explanatory and Combinatorial Lexicology. Bilingual dictionaries describe the two terms as semantically equivalent, and corpus data show that they are employed in a similar fashion. However, French and Polish speakers use these terms in everyday communication in a way that reveals marked semantic and conceptual discrepancies. An investigation of the semantic networks and combinatorial properties of the two lexemes confirms their different linguistic statuses. While the French NATION functions as an abstract noun and is mostly perceived as a set of features that are expected to be shared by members of a national community, the conceptualisation of the Polish NARÓD foregrounds the relational nature of the group and functions as a concrete term.

Chapter ten, « Les mots de la politique à travers les siècles » by Stefania Cerrito, opens the third section on Historical Perspectives. The paper accurately investigates how some basic terms of the current political lexicon have changed their meanings throughout the centuries in order to fit transformations in society. The study is based on the consultation of a large number of historical sources, including French translations of texts about Ancient Greek political philosophy, ancient history and the Roman legal tradition. In addition to this, the study also takes into account the important role played by ancient dictionaries in the evolution of political terminology.

In chapter eleven, « La formule "esprit européen" dans les actes du colloque *L'Avenir de l'esprit européen* organisé par la Société des Nations en 1933 », Paola Cattani brings us back to the period between the two World Wars when politicians were making plans for a united Europe and the expression "esprit européen" started circulating. Cattani defines the

expression as a "formule linguistique", which transmitted different representations of Europe and conveyed meanings that were sometimes contradictory. Her study is based on the analysis of speeches delivered by different political actors during an important symposium that was held in Paris in 1933. The event was organised by the League of Nations and concerned "the future of the European spirit". In the analysis, the author combines a lexical approach with a discourse-analytical approach and investigates not just the meanings associated with the expression but also the debate around it.

The last section, Political Language in the Media, starts with Brigitte Battel's « Visions politiques de l'euro dans le discours médiatique ». The paper deals with the crisis of the Euro currency as a topic of discourse in a period that politics and economics characterise as a phase of transition from "europhoria" to "eurosion". Battel investigates the media responses to this situation, their representations of reality and the type of relation with which they engage their readers (informative, conspiratorial, hopeful, etc.). The analysis, which is based on French and Italian newspaper articles in a period from January 2010 to March 2013 (from the Greek crisis to the Cyprus issue), shows that the future of the common European currency is portrayed in a subjective and highly emotional manner.

The investigation of political language in the media concludes with « La lettre d'information numérique entre stratégies lexicales et discursives : l'exemple de *Mediapart* (France) et de *Micromega* (Italie) ». In this paper, Anna Giaufret compares *Mediapart* (FR) and *MicroMega* (IT) newsletters in a period from December 2012 to March 2013. The study intends to identify emerging *formules* and critically discuss the discursive phenomena affecting them. This is achieved by a cogent combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

The editors

SECTION ONE:

METAPHOR AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT CAN METAPHOR THEORY CONTRIBUTE TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE?

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Abstract

The application of conceptual metaphor analysis to the critical study of political discourse has generated a wealth of publications over the past decades. This paper attempts to take stock of some of the theoretical developments in the field and reflect on their contribution to methodological advances in metaphor research generally and to the understanding of metaphor in political discourse in particular. The data comprise metaphorisations of the state as a (human) body, which has played a prominent role in Western political thought and discourse. This metaphor field shows a high degree of semantic variation, both intra- and cross-culturally, and thus invites an analysis that reflects their universality and/or cultural specificity. It is therefore argued that the conceptualist/cognitive approach to the analysis of political metaphors needs to be complemented by pragmatic and discourse-historical methodologies.

1. Introduction

The title question of this contribution suggests that metaphors are relevant to political discourse – otherwise, their analysis would be contributing only very little to this subject. But are metaphors so important in politics? And if yes, should they be? At least regarding the last question, the jury is still out. Recently, I came across a British student's blog that had this to say about political metaphors:

(1)   […] in recent weeks I've noticed something that seriously irritates me about political discourse – metaphors! […] A serious offender is David Cameron. He's by no means the only politician to use metaphors. I'm picking on him because of his frequency of use but most importantly because he's been on TV a lot lately. Cameron's speech to the Conservative Party Conference in October was full of these gems: "But if we put in the effort, correct those mistakes, confront those vested interests and take on the failed ideas of the past, then I know we can turn this ship around." "The new economy we're building: it's like building a house. The most important part is the part you can't see – the foundations that make it stable." "We can choose to be a country that's back on its feet and striding forward." "No, Britain never had the biggest population, the largest land mass, the richest resources, but we had the spirit. Remember: it's not the size of the dog in the fight – it's the size of the fight in the dog." […] I couldn't help cringe at the use of these platitudes which made all the sensible things a little less convincing. I guess the point of using these metaphors is to spice up the discourse, be more approachable and interactive. To me however they seem a bit patronising, and I don't think I'm the only one who feels this way. I shouldn't think Conservative MPs especially would need metaphorical decoding of what is going on in Britain today…but there you have it! (*This is a London particular* 2011).

The blogger's statement is very revealing: politicians' metaphors are seen as being at best trivial clichés, and at worst serving to obfuscate and detract from what "is really going on". The examples cited in this blog are well-worn common places (*turning the ship around*, *foundations for the economy as a building*, *a country on its feet*, *the size of the fight in the dog*), which are irritating not just on account of their triteness but also because they treat the hearers as if they cannot be expected to understand complex social issues and need to be fobbed off with oversimplifying slogans. It is thus not only an aesthetic discomfort that this blogger articulates but also a deeper mistrust of the politicians' good will to announce and communicate their plans honestly in public. This is by no means an exceptional or unique view. One of David Cameron's predecessors as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Margaret Thatcher, accused "European" (i.e., in her parlance, non-British) politicians of being particularly cunning in using metaphors, and trying to trick the metaphor-innocent Brits:

(2)   [...] anyone dealing with the European Community should pay
       careful attention to metaphors. We in Britain were inclined to
       minimize their significance [...]. We had to learn the hard way that
       by agreement to what were apparently empty generalizations or
       vague aspirations we were later held to have committed ourselves to
       political structures which were contrary to our interests. (Thatcher
       1993: 319)

(3)   Misleading analogies such as the European train leaving the station
       have been used in the debate, she [= Thatcher] says: "If that train is
       going in the wrong direction it is better not to be on it at all." (*The
       Times,* 31 October 1992)

Thatcher's quotations in examples (2) and (3) betray an anti-European bias
that, of course, has little to do with metaphor. However, her denunciation
of metaphors as a (typically "European") trick to obscure controversial
objectives or agendas rings hollow in view of the fact that she utilises the
very metaphor that she criticises in example (3) in order to make her own
political point. The conditional argument, "If that train is going in the
wrong direction it is better not to be on it at all", presupposes the concept
of European politics as a train with passengers (meaning the European
member states) who can choose to be a part of it (and its journey) or not.
Without the metaphorical equation of the "European Community" (as it
was in the early 1990s) and a train, Thatcher's conclusion would not make
any sense at all. Of course, one can argue about whether a (real or
metaphorical) train is going in the right direction and whether you wish to
join it or not, but without the assumption that such a train exists, offering
an opportunity to join it and travel somewhere, the whole debate,
including Thatcher's choice (i.e. not to join), would be pointless. Her
criticism was therefore not really about the "European train" metaphor but
rather its alternative directions or destinations, i.e. about subordinate
aspects of the concept of political processes as a journey. Once she had
changed the metaphor to fit her political viewpoint, she had no problem
using it (and many other metaphors).[1]
     However, even if we dismiss Thatcher's anti-metaphor stance as
insincere and motivated more by anti-European prejudice than by insight
into political communication, her caution towards the metaphor in politics
and the anonymous blogger's suspicions about it are still worthy of
consideration. Why does the political metaphor generate such mistrust?
The following discussion will attempt to elucidate this issue by

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[1] For Thatcher's mastery of using metaphor in her own speeches see Charteris-
Black (2005: 18-19, 87-114).

considering recent developments in one of the major theoretical approaches to metaphor in linguistics, i.e. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), and its relationship to discourse-historical and pragmatic approaches. These theories will be tested against data from a metaphor field that has been particularly productive in British political thought and discourse for many centuries through the phrase *body politic* and which is also widely known internationally, i.e. the imagery of the nation state as a (human) body.[2]

2. Conceptual metaphor in political discourse

The notion of metaphor as a phenomenon that has *conceptual* significance, i.e. whose analysis tells us something about the thoughts and ideas of the people who use it, can be traced back to Aristotle (Mahon 1999) and was emphasised in the late twentieth century, e.g. in the "New Rhetoric" and analytical philosophy movements (Black 1962; Richards 1936; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969). Since 1980 it has gained special prominence as a sub-paradigm of cognitive linguistics in the form of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson ([1980] 2003), and since then developed further in a wealth of publications.[3]

The evidence for the fundamental significance of metaphors for concept building and development is overwhelming. Not only are they ubiquitous in everyday speech and across most registers of human communication but they are also systematic in the sense that they concern not just lexical items but also whole areas of (popular) knowledge that are applied to the respective meaning "targets". Thus, the STATE-AS-A-(HUMAN) BODY metaphor,[4] which we already encountered in Cameron's reported praise of Britain as "a country that's back on its feet and striding forward" (example 1), also informs utterances such as the following:

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[2] For dictionary entries on *body politic* see *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (1999: 149, 713); Deignan (1995: 2); *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2002, vol. 1: 258). For recent publications on its conceptual and linguistic history see Charbonnel (2010), Harvey (2007), Musolff (2010c).

[3] The literature on CMT and its further developments such as "Conceptual integration" or "Blending Theory" is vast; for indicative references see: Fauconnier and Turner (2002); Gibbs (2008); Grady, Taub and Morgan (1996); Kövecses (2002, 2005); Lakoff (1993); Lakoff and Johnson ([1980] 2003, 1999); Ortony (1993). For applications of CMT to political discourse see Charteris-Black (2004, 2005, 2013); Dirven, Hawkins and Sandikcioglu (2001); Dirven, Frank and Ilie (2001); Lakoff (1996); Musolff (2004).

[4] In keeping with CMT practice, small capitals indicate conceptual structures.

(4)   [Boris Johnson] said, "as a mere Mayor of London, as a mere toenail in the body politic, it may be difficult to have a referendum [on the EU Lisbon Treaty]". (*BBC Newsnight,* 5 October 2009)

(5)   Paul Kagame, the only leader Rwanda has known since the end of the genocide, has said his country is not ready for the "medicine" of democracy ahead of elections in August. (*The Independent,* 25 June 2010)

(6)   So long as there has been a body politic to host them, parasites have feasted on its blood. (*The Independent,* 7 December 2011; regarding a scandal about lobbyists who claimed to be able to sell contacts to British government ministers)

(7)   Forty years on, Britain still has not joined Europe. The transplant of a European organ into the British body politic still requires constant reinforcement by immunosuppressant drugs. (*Financial Times*, 7 January 2013)

The examples all presuppose the view of the (nation) state as a body that has a human anatomy "down to" the *toenails* and that can be healthy or ill, e.g. that may need *medicine*, succumb to *parasites*, or even require an organ *transplant*. It goes far beyond the few lexicalised expressions such as *body politic*, *head of state*, *head of government*, *long arm of the law*, etc. that can be found in dictionaries. In fact, every concept that we have about human bodies may be applied to the nation concept: in a research corpus for this metaphor as used in the British media 1990-2013, more than seventy body-related concepts have been recorded that encompass the whole human anatomy, the life-span from conception (including the role of DNA) through birth and up to death, a wide spectrum of health-disease concepts, complete with specifications of agents of disease, special medical conditions and therapies and body aesthetics (Musolff 2010b, 2012). This wide range of body-related "source" concepts that are applied to the "target domain" (Lakoff 1993) of politics illustrates one key insight of CMT: the metaphorical mapping functions not just between isolated words but between whole areas ("domains") of concepts that are organised in a specific perspective. This mapping is by no means exclusive: as we saw in quotation (1), there are many more metaphors available to conceptualise the state or nation (e.g. as a *ship* or a *building*, etc.). But if we choose the STATE-AS-A-BODY metaphor, all BODY-related concepts that we know become available in principle as source-input for our thinking and communicating about the (nation) state. The ultimate choice of a specific body part or condition is then mainly a question of its "fit" for

what we wish to think and say about the state: it would make no sense to randomly associate any body aspect with any political concept.[5]

This pervasive STATE-AS-A-BODY metaphor can be found in most European languages, again not just in lexicalisations (e.g. for European languages: Dutch: *politiek lichaam*, French: *corps politique*, German: *politischer Körper*, *Staatskörper*, *Volkskörper*, Italian: *corpo politico*, Spanish: *cuerpo político*, Russian: политическое тело (*politicheckoe telo*), and Greek: Πολιτικό σώμα (*politiko soma*)), but also in all kinds of conceptualisations based on knowledge of the human body and its health (Musolff 2014a; 2014b).

In view of such a widespread cross-linguistic/cultural usage, we may well ask whether we are dealing with a universal metaphor or an instance of a general mapping such as COMPLEX SYSTEM ARE (HUMAN) BODIES, which has indeed been mooted as a possible universal or near-universal (Kövecses 2002: 129-130).[6] The universality of bodily experience as a knowledge basis for all humans is, of course, unquestionable, and has been analysed in detail in a branch of Cognitive Linguistics known as *Embodiment Theory* (Gibbs 2005; Johnson 1987; Lakoff and Johnson 1999; Maalej and Yu 2011). However, as Lakoff and Johnson ([1980] 2003: 57) pointed out as early as 1980, we must bear in mind that "what we call 'direct physical experience' is never merely a matter of having a body of a certain sort; rather, *every* experience takes place within a vast background of cultural presuppositions". One complex of presuppositions that forms its own coherent "cultural model" is, for example, the notion of the *Great Chain of Being*, i.e. a graded ontology, which exists, as Lakoff

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[5] Lakoff has formulated this constraint as the "invariance" principle of CMT: "Metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology (that is, the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the target domain" (1993: 215). This is plausible enough but he goes on to derive the "corollary" that "image-schema structure inherent in the target domain cannot be violated, and that inherent target domain structure limits the possibilities of mappings automatically". This claim is both unnecessary and counter-intuitive even within CMT, because one of the main functions of conceptual metaphors, highlighted by Lakoff and Johnson themselves (1980: 147-158), is that metaphors help "create" similarities, i.e. conceptually organise a hitherto unstructured target domain. If the target domain is previously unstructured and its "emergent" structure is shaped by conceptual metaphors, it makes little sense to assume a pre-established "image-schema structure inherent in the target domain".

[6] With reference to long-term historical traditions, Harvey (2007: 7-9) discusses a common Indo-European source of the *state-body* metaphor that can be traced back to the second millennium BC and which later spread to other cultures (e.g. ancient Egypt and Israel).

and Turner (1989) have shown, not only as a historical metaphysical worldview that was given famous literary and philosophical expression over centuries from Antiquity to the Enlightenment, but also "as a contemporary unconscious cultural model indispensable to our understanding of ourselves, our world, and our language" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 167). As with the *Great Chain of Being*, we can view the *body politic* metaphor as a cultural model that is routinely assumed by members of the public, while its origins or historical precedents are hardly remembered accurately or explicitly mentioned by anyone except for conceptual historians.

The fact that the metaphor's socio-cultural specificity and provenance are not highlighted every time it is used, however, does not mean that it can be neglected in synchronic analyses. A corpus-based comparison of the usage of the STATE-AS-A-(HUMAN) BODY metaphor in present-day political discourses in three European languages, i.e. English, French and German, has shown that whilst the three respective discourse communities share most of the source-target mappings, their lexical realisations vary significantly and systematically in a) their respective coverage of the semantic source field of body-related concepts, b) their socio-historical indexicality as regards famous/infamous historical usage models and c) their stylistic and register-specific distribution (Musolff 2010b, 2010c, 2012, 2014b). In current British English discourse, for instance, *body politic* is a marked form, due to its archaic semantics and syntax, with the adjective *politic* meaning 'political' and positioned after the noun, which was productive in Early Modern English, especially for French and Latin loans (Hughes 1988: 186; Rissanen 1999: 208). Present-day English speakers have to acquire *body politic* as a fixed expression; otherwise, they would only be talking of a *political body*. This latter phrase can indeed be found in present-day discourse, but mainly to designate specific political, administrative and economic institutions, groupings and business "corporations", not in reference to the whole of society/state. It is thus not exchangeable with *body politic*.

One aspect that seems to stand out in British discourses about the *body politic* is the high occurrence (i.e. in at least one fifth of all examples) of wordplays on its double entendre as referring to an individual's status in the political arena and their specific physical characteristics, usually in an ironical sense, as in examples (8) and (9) below.

(8)   *Body politic:* […] In what is perhaps the ultimate betrayal of the Celebrity "Cool Britannia" culture he embraced upon entering Downing Street, *Heat* this week prints a long-lens snap of Blair resplendent in his Caribbean holiday podge - *a sort of "ripples and nipples" look*. (*The Independent*, 14 August 2007)

(9)   Sorry, Gordon [Gordon Brown, British Labour Prime Minister], but your body politic doesn't match Putin's. (*The Observer*, 1 November 2009)

Uses such as (8) and (9) where the phrase *body politic* refers to a politician's physical body are linked historically to the origins of the STATE-AS-BODY concept in the Renaissance, when the ancient tradition of describing the state as a body-hierarchy from head to toe (Musolff 2009; Nederman 1992; 2004) was conflated with the originally theologically derived notion of the *King's Two Bodies*, i.e. the distinction between a mortal/vulnerable body and the eternal "mystical"/political body of the sovereign (Bertelli 2001; Horten 2009; Kantorowicz 1997). This topic is not exclusive to the English/British History of Ideas, but it received its terminological fixation in the lexical pair *body natural – body politic* in English. The intricacies of late medieval and Renaissance debates about how to separate the monarch's "personal" body (and property) from their political body are of course largely forgotten today, but an awareness of the double meaning of *body* in the political sphere seems to have survived in the public consciousness in Britain. The most likely transmitters of the metaphor of the *King's two bodies* are Shakespeare's works, which continue to be an integral part of popular British culture through school, theatre and mass media (Diede 2008; Hale 1971; Jagendorf 1990; Spicci 2007). By contrast, references to or puns on this metaphor version figure only marginally in the public discourses of France and Germany, where they mostly occur in scholarly research (e.g. Haltern 2009).

In German, the phrase *politischer Körper*, which lexically matches *body politic* most closely, can still be found in the present-day sample but is far outnumbered by alternative lexemes or phrases: *Staatskörper* (and its variant *Körper des Staates*; literally, 'state body'/'body of the state'), *Nationalkörper* (lit., 'national body'), and *Volkskörper* (lit., 'people's body'). *Staatskörper/Körper des Staates* (literally, 'state body'), accounts for 33% of all 85 metaphor instances that contain the lexical unit *Körper* and seems to be the most neutral, ideologically unmarked expression, which targets any kind of political (state) entity, as does *politischer Körper* ('state body') which has only four occurrences in the sample. *Rationale Körper* has just one occurrence in the sample and seems to mainly express

the concept of SOCIETY as distinct from that of STATE. By contrast, *Volkskörper* accounts for more than 50% of the whole German sample and is a highly marked form. Most of the post-1965 corpus texts in which it occurs critically quote and denounce its use in xenophobic discourses and, historically, in Nazi-jargon where it served to "justify" the genocide of European Jews as *parasites* on the German *people's body* (Musolff 2010a: 23-68). The journalist Katharina Rutschky, for instance, criticised participants in post-war German debates about demographic decline as echoing Nazi-propaganda by exhibiting an "injured soul in the sick *people's body*" ("Im kranken *Volkskörper* steckt eine verletzte Seele", *Die Welt,* 11 April 2006).

In present-day French political discourse, we find three further lexicalised variants of the STATE-AS-BODY metaphor, i.e. *corps politique*, *corps électorale* and *corps social*. Their meanings are closely related but not identical: the social, electoral and political *bodies* are all aspects of the same referent, i.e. the politically active part of the French populace. The *corps social* is typically seen as being both the foundation of the state and an "object of the care" by the political classes, lest its problems lead to a disintegration of the nation as a unified political body, i.e. the *corps politique*. Its concrete manifestation is the *corps électorale*, which through electing parliament and president at regular intervals, continually (re)constructs its membership. The 'electoral body' is thus the incarnation of the 'political body' of the nation, which in turn is the politically active incarnation of the 'body of society'. Such mutually defining uses of *corps politique*, *corps électorale* and *corps social* can be found many times over in the French sample, but have few counterparts in the English and German samples. Which discourse tradition can they be linked to? A commentary in the magazine *Multitudes* can help us here, which highlights the STATE-BODY metaphor in its title: "*Le corps politique, un malade à la recherche de sa thérapie*" ("The body politic: a sickly patient in search of a therapy"). Its author, the writer Philippe Boisnard, argues that the political classes must rethink their fundamental political assumptions, in particular the notion that French society and state are based on the notion of obedience to the sovereign general will, which dates back to Rousseau's *Social Contract* of 1762 (Boisnard 2005; Musolff 2012: 148-149). In this context, it is relevant that the French press sample contains a relatively high number of interventions by public intellectuals, such as the philosophers Alain Renaud, Giorgio Agamben and Bernard Henri Lévy

and the politician/writer Régis Debray,[7] which have no equivalent in the British or German press. With intellectuals' and philosophers' voices playing such an eminent role in the public discourse community, it is not surprising that key metaphors from philosophical texts and traditions play a much greater role in French debates than in other national discourses. This intellectually oriented "habitus" (Bourdieu 1990) of the French public sphere is thus distinctly different from British reminiscences of the *body politic*/*body natural* duality or the historicising habitus of the German public sphere that harks back to the catastrophe of National Socialist rule.

3. The reception of political metaphor

A further dimension of culture-specific variation becomes visible when we consider not just the production side but also the reception and understanding of political metaphor. In the successive academic years, 2011-12 and 2012-13, groups of international MA students at the University of East Anglia were asked to interpret the STATE-AS-BODY metaphor. After a brief induction into this concept, students were given the task of applying it to their home nation. Here are eight exemplary responses:[8]

(10) Student A: "The *head* of the *body* represents the Queen of England, as she is in charge of the whole country and she is royalty. The features of the *head* (*eyes, nose, mouth and ears*) represent the different official people, such as politicians, the Prime Minister, the Government".

(11) Student B: "If one *organ* or *part of the national body suffers*, *the whole body would suffer* from *fever*. In other words, *having a healthy body requires healthy parts*. As a nation, a problem in one area of a country should attract the attention of the whole people in that country".

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[7] See A. Renaud, "Squelettiques métaphores politique", in *Libération* (21 March 1995); G. Agamben "La double identité du people", in *Libération* (11 February 1995); B.-L. Lévy, "Construire l'Europe politique, ou mourir", in *Le Point* (13 September 2012); Interview with R. Debray, D. Podalydès and O. Py, in *Le Monde* (5 March 2011).

[8] The responses have been normalised for English spelling and in some cases slightly abridged, and body-related source expressions have been italicised, but no content has been changed. Due to the relatively small number of responses overall (28), no statistical analysis has been applied, but this is planned for further research.

(12) Student C: "2 *Heads*: *Head of state* is the king? – Not sure anymore! *Head of government* are [Prime Minister] Rajoy and the big banks' presidents".

(13) Student D: "The *face*: president and government; the *brain*: oligarchs, members of parliament (make all decisions in essence); the *hands*: official and unofficial local authorities (including mafia groups); the *mouth*: the media – controlled by the oligarchs/MPs (dictates political ideology)".

(14) Student E: "Beijing: *Heart and Brain*, Shanghai: *Face* (economic centre); Hong Kong and Taiwan: *Feet*; Tianjin: *Hands* (= army close to Beijing); Shenzhen: *Eyes* (= the first place open to the world)".

(15) Student F: "Beijing is the *heart* of China. The police is the *arm* of China. The railway is the *throat* of China. Shanghai is the economic *backbone* of China. Tsingtao is the *skeleton* of Shandong province. Shenzhen is the *liver* of China; Tiananmen is the *eye* of Beijing. Nanjing is the *face* of Jiangsu; Szechuan is the *hair* of China; Xiangyang is the *heel* of China".

(16) Student G: "Beijing: *brain* (government); Shanghai: *hug/arm* (welcome to foreign people); Guangzhou: *feet* (keep China going); Hong Kong: *face* (familiar to everyone, representative); Taiwan: *hair* (we can live without hair but it is necessary for beauty)".

(17) Student H: "[…] Taiwan: potential *disease* (maybe one time we have to fight against it and occupy it); Tibet: *stomach* (sometimes you feel uncomfortable); The *head* of the government: *hair* (if one goes down, always some other one will grow up)".

Example (10) was produced by a British student; examples (11) (12) and (13) by a Saudi-Arabian, a Spanish and a Ukrainian student, respectively, while students "E", "F", "G" and "H" are Chinese. All their answers are correct in the sense that they fulfil the task, but the responses fall into two distinct classes. The first four responses describe a Western political system in terms of a body's health and anatomy, even if, as in example (13) substantial parts of the *body politic* seem to have been taken over by criminals or at least undemocratic forces. Responses (14)-(17), on the other hand, identify geographical places in China (both the mainland and islands, including the politically separate state of Taiwan) and link them to parts of the human anatomy on the basis of functional correspondences between activities or states of parts of the human body (*arm*, *brain*, *disease*, *eye*, *face*, *feet*, *hair*, *hands*, *head*, *heart*, *stomach*) and political characterisations of these locations. These responses are geographically

more specific than those given by the non-Chinese students, and at the same time more "personalised" in the sense that they use the source domain of the human body as an inventory for characterising the People's Republic of China as a personalised agent. This STATE-AS-BODY/PERSON is conceived of as a whole human being that puts up a *face* to the outside world, *hugs* other people(s) that are friendly to it and *fights* diseases. A further characteristic of the "Chinese" responses is that they thematise parts of the *body politic* that Western political discourse cannot reach, so to speak, e.g. the notion of its *hair*, which seems to be absent from all non-Chinese responses (although this cannot be regarded as a statistically validated finding).

As regards the comprehension task of interpreting the STATE-BODY metaphor, we can conclude that it has been successfully fulfilled in *all* the above examples, but it is also evident that the responses represent different interpretative perspectives that, if they were to be corroborated, may indicate a cultural dividing line. Insofar as the physical source domain categories, i.e. *health*, *brain*, *head*, *heart*, *hands*, *feet*, *face*, *eye* and *hair*, are basic level terms, which require no expert anatomical or medical knowledge, we may assume that they reflect prototypical concepts that are derived from the phenomenological human physique and as such are universal. This finding would support the universalist view that a globally shared basic knowledge of the human body serves as the source for conceptualising abstract objects such as the "nation state". On the other hand, however, the contrast that we found between two main types of interpreting the metaphor invites further investigation. The first four responses clearly differ in their target referents but have in common that they visualise the abstract idea of the (nation) state and its most important institutions by functional analogies to the whole and the parts of a human body. Neither the political target nor the anatomical source references are particularly precise, but they suffice to indicate two main organising notions, i.e. that of a hierarchical ordering (head or brain = superior to rest of body) and that of the interdependence of all parts of the body, both at the literal and the figurative levels.

These two notions of body-internal hierarchy and interdependence can indeed be related to the *body politic* metaphor tradition in European/"Western" culture, as has been established in conceptual history. The view of monarchs and/or government leaders as *heads* of nations, of institutions as *organs*, and of the whole state as suffering, if an *illness* breaks out in one *part of the body*, which these answers articulate, is fully compatible with formulations of *body politic* theories proposed by ancient, medieval or Renaissance thinkers and poets. The assumption of such a

tradition, as a construct of conceptual history, does not entail that university students in the twenty-first century are consciously aware of it. Nevertheless, *body politic* terminology still permeates British and American public discourses (Musolff 2004: 83-114; 2010b: 23-25; Haltern 2009). It thus seems not unreasonable to conclude that the British student's answer and also the responses by the Arab, Spanish and Ukrainian students (all of whom had majored in English language and literature in their respective first degrees and may well have been familiar with the *body politic* as a topic of English political history and poetry) stand in a loose but still tangible connection to that tradition.

The Chinese students' responses, on the other hand, do not echo this Western *body politic* theory. By contrast, they are constructed via different routes of combining metaphor and metonymy. From the limited evidence assembled so far, it would seem that the Chinese respondents apply, in the first place,[9] a basic mapping: GEOGRAPHICAL SHAPE OF NATION (I.E. CHINA) IS CONGRUENT WITH ANATOMY OF A HUMAN BODY. Secondly, salient parts of this geopolitical 'body' are selected on the basis of metonymic relationships (e.g. 'Beijing – seat of government') and analogically associated with functional interpretations of specific body-organs, e.g. brain or heart as controlling the rest of the body. In example (14), *brain* and *heart* are even treated as functional equivalents, as their simultaneous allocation to the capital Beijing demonstrates. In a further step, these second-order analogies are invested with political interpretations, as exemplified in the differing depictions of Taiwan as one of China's *feet* (i.e. as an essential body part), as *hair* (beautiful but not necessary for survival) or *disease* (to be combated) in examples (14), (16) and (17). The Chinese students' reading of the metaphor contrasts with that given by the other students, not so much in terms of a more or less imaginative interpretation or topical application of the metaphor,[10] but in its metaphor-metonymy combinations.

It would be wrong to conclude that the difference between this construction of the (NATION) STATE-BODY metaphor and the "Western" model caused any misunderstanding among the students; however, at the

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[9] The following description is based on post-exercise discussions with the students and does not claim to reflect a "psychological reality" of real-time online metaphor interpretation. Any hypothesis about the latter would require psycholinguistic corroboration.

[10] In examples (10) and (11), for instance, the Spanish and Ukrainian respondents also creatively applied the metaphor to topical political issues in their countries, e.g. by highlighting misgivings about the King's 'head-ship' and the function of oligarchs as the 'brains' behind the official state 'face'.

same time, it became evident that the geopolitical metonymy (REGION/ PLACE-FOR-POLITICAL FUNCTION/IMPORTANCE), which was primary for the Chinese respondents, played no significant role for the others, who focused more on the perceived functional similarity between body part and political institution as the basis for their metaphor mapping. When the British and international students discussed the results among themselves, they could easily communicate with and understand each other, but they also agreed that their respective models of the concept NATION were partly different, with the Chinese students emphasising the importance of their home country's shape, while the others highlighted political institutions. These preliminary findings will have to be tested in further studies before any reliable conclusions can be drawn, but they indicate that people from differing cultural backgrounds may share conceptual metaphors at a relatively general level, while at a more specific level there are systematic differences revealing that shared concepts can partly be "false friends" due to differing combinations of metaphor and metonymy.

4. Conclusion

Conceptual metaphors such as A (NATION) STATE IS A (HUMAN) BODY can be both universal, when seen as a relatively general metaphor "theme" based on physical experience, and culture-specific, as regards the distribution of its main variants in a usage-based corpus as well as in its interpretations. Both these aspects make STATE-BODY metaphors attractive for politicians: they are easy to understand and suggest a certain self-evidentiality (e.g. that losing a head is more important than losing another limb, that being healthy is better than being ill) and they are culture-/community-specific enough to allow particular allusions, humorous wordplay and historical references that are familiar to their primary audiences. Their openness for narrative and argumentative extension and elaboration makes metaphors ideal for taking antagonistic and adversarial stances. Every assessment of a political situation or problem in terms of HEALTH/ILLNESS concepts can be opposed by an alternative *diagnosis* and *prognosis* – much as M. Thatcher turned the "Europe-as-a-train" metaphor against those whom she suspected of steering it in the wrong direction (see example 3). But even when no specific debate or dispute is being aimed at, a common metaphor theme may be interpreted differently, as evidenced by the international students' responses reported above. What is significant is that the observed variation seems to be systematic and can be related to culture-specific discourse traditions.