LUNDS UNIVERSITET

Faculty of Social Sciences | Graduate School

MSc in Social Studies of Gender

Major: Human Geography

The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Construction of the German National Identity in the Right-Wing Political Discourse on Refugees, Migrants, and Foreigners

Hannah Lea Shaw

Supervisor: Martina Angela Caretta

Date of submission: 17.05.2023

SIMZ21

Statutory Declaration

I, Hannah Shaw, hereby declare that I have composed the present thesis myself and without the use of any other than the cited sources. Sentences or parts of sentences quoted literally are marked as such; other references with regard to the statement and scope are indicated by full details of the publications concerned. The thesis in the same or similar form has not been submitted to any examination body and has not been published.

16.05.2023, Lund

Name

Date, Place

“Must it necessarily be a differentiation which takes the form of opposition, of drawing a hard boundary between “us” and “them”, in other words the geography of rejection? Or might it be a differentiation which is less oppositional, which recognizes a degree of porosity of those boundaries, which recognizes that identities are in process and that within any bounded unity there will always be difference?"

- a fictional citation generated by ChatGPT (2023) wrongfully accredited to Doreen Massey (2013)

Abstract

This thesis explores how the German right-wing political party AfD constructs a national identity in their political discourse around refugees, migrants, and foreigners. The rise of refugees and migrants worldwide has led to a renewed focus on the concepts of nation-states and national identity in defining who does and does not belong. Germany, which has taken on close to a million refugees from the MENA region during the years 2015-2016 and a similar number of Ukrainian refugees since the start of the war in 2022, has seen an increased interest in national identity in the political discourse. The first influx of refugees in 2015 led to the rise of the AfD, which has played a predominant role in shaping the political discourse around national identity and belonging. A critical discourse analytical lens is used as the theoretical and analytical framework from which a directed content analysis is carried out to identify which categories are used to define the German national identity, *the Self*, against the identity of the refugee, migrant, foreigner, *the Other*. The data that is analyzed with the program NVivo, are 30 speeches from the AfD in the Bundestag, 3 election posters and their party program. The findings show that the main categories used in defining *the Other* are a division into real and unreal Others, religion, criminality, terrorism and the use of metaphors and *whataboutism* used mainly to justify the categorization that the AfD undertakes. The main categories present in definitions of *the Self* are the welfare system, citizenship, territories and borders, a collective culture (*Leitkultur*), and the concept of *Heimat*. This thesis concludes that focusing on *the Other* is equally important when understanding *the Self*. Furthermore, it stresses the importance of acknowledging the naturalization of categories in the construction of national identity and the consequences for those that are othered. The rise of the AfD and its role in influencing the construction of a German national identity, highlights the importance of further research on how political parties construct a national identity and how this impacts both those that are in- and excluded from understandings of national identity.

Keywords

Germany, National Identity, Othering, Political Discourse, Refugees

Word count: 19766

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Martina for her guidance, support and encouragement throughout my master's thesis. Your insight and expertise in the field of feminist geographies were invaluable to the completion of this work. Your patience and willingness to answer my numerous questions and comment on various drafts were truly appreciated.

I would also like to thank my supervision group of Aaron, Maja and Davide for their helpful comments and suggestions. Your feedback and advice have greatly improved the quality of this thesis and I am grateful for always knowing you would take time out of your day to help me find solutions for my problems.

I am also grateful to my friends at Lund University (you know who you are!) for their companionship and support during my studies. They have made my time at Lund memorable and have helped me survive my first and then my second Swedish winter.

To my family back home, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your unwavering support, encouragement and love. Without you, this achievement would not have been possible.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my partner Rik for your love, support and understanding of my various moods throughout completing this thesis. Thank you for always being by my side when things get rough.

Finally, I want to thank the ever-growing little pea in my belly for showing me what’s truly important in life. I can’t wait to be your mom.

Thank you all for your contributions to this work and for helping me achieve this important milestone!

Table of Contents

I German-English Translations.....VII
II Abbreviations..... VIII
III Table of Figures..... IX
1. Introduction..... 1
1.1 Research Question & Research Aim..... 4
1.2 Background.....4
1.3 Disposition.....6
2. Literature Review..... 7
3. Conceptual Framework..... 10
3.1 Discourse Theory.....11
3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis..... 13
3.3 Definition of Concepts.....14
3.3.1 Nation..... 15
3.3.2 Othering..... 18
3.3.3 National Identity.....20
4. Methodology.....21
4.1 Ontology.....21
4.2 Feminist Post-Structural and Social Constructivist Epistemology.....22
4.3 Positionality.....23
4.4 Methods..... 24
4.4.1 Research Approach & Design..... 24
4.4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis..... 25
4.4.3 Directed Content Analysis.....27
4.5 Data collection.....29
4.6 Data Analysis.....34
5. Results & Analysis.....36
5.1 The Other- The Migrant, Refugee & Foreigner..... 36
5.1.1 Religion..... 37
5.1.2 Narrative of the Criminal MRF..... 39
5.1.3 Combining Religion and Criminality: Terrorism..... 41
5.1.4 (Un)real Migrants, Refugees & Foreigners..... 42
5.1.5 Metaphors.....44
5.1.6 Whataboutism.....46
5.2 The Self- A German National Identity.....47
5.2.1 Characteristics of the German Citizen.....48

5.2.2 The Welfare System....50
5.2.3 Territories, Borders & the State....51
5.2.4 Discursive Construction of a Collective Culture....53
5.2.5 Narrative of "Heimat"....56
6. Discussion....57
7. Conclusion....60
IV Bibliography....63
V Appendix....74
V.I Names of Plenary Speakers of the AfD....74
V.II Codebook....76

I German-English Translations

German	English
Alternative für Deutschland	Alternative for Germany
Ausländer_in	Inclusive term for a male, female and nonbinary foreigner
Bundesregierung	Federal Government
Bundesrepublik Deutschland	Federal Republic of Germany
Bundestag	Lower House of German Parliament
Deutsche Demokratische Republik	German Democratic Republic
Deutsche Nation	German Nation
Deutsches Reich	German Empire
Flüchtling	Refugee
Geflüchtete_r	Inclusive term for a male, female and nonbinary refugee
Grundsatzprogramm	Party program
Leitkultur	Guiding/ lead culture
Migrant_in	Inclusive term for a male, female and nonbinary migrant
Willkommenskultur	Welcoming culture
Heimat	Homeland or home

II Abbreviations

AfD	Alternative für Deutschland
BRD	Bundesrepublik Deutschland
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik
DIP	Dokumentations- und Informationssystem für Parlamentsmaterialien
DT	Discourse Theory
EU	European Union
MENA	Middle East and Northern Africa
MRF	Migrants, Refugees and Foreigners

III Table of Figures

Figure 1 Conceptual framework ……..…..…11
Figure 2 Step model of inductive category development……..…29
Figure 3 Flowchart of data collection…….……....…..31
Figure 4 AfD Election Poster #1……..……...…..33
Figure 5 AfD Election Poster #2…….....……..33
Figure 6 AfD Election Poster #3…….……..33

1. Introduction

The world is currently divided into 195 countries and/or nation-states with only a few people living outside of their boundaries (One World Nations Online, 2017). For most of modern history, this same world was divided into empires, religious communities and dynastic realms (Anderson, 1983). It was not until the eighteenth century that the nation became such a significant marker of identity in Western Europe and North America (Knight, 1982). With the nation(-state) as the main unit of partitioning, the division of the world today is a political one, which is flawed from a cultural perspective, although culture is often used as a reason to show the difference between nations (De Cillia et al., 1999; Knight, 1982; Penrose, 2002).

Germany, as the nation-state with the current borders that it has today (2023), has only existed since 1990. Since the first mention of a German nation (Deutsche Nation) in the 15th century, Germany has included land that is inter alia now known as Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Lichtenstein (Tompkins, 2019). After the German Empire (Deutsches Reich) ended after the end of World War II in 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany (BRD) was established. After the Berlin Wall fell and the BRD (Federal Republic of Germany) and DDR (German Democratic Republic) were united into the Federal Republic of Germany again, Germany existed with the borders that we know today (ibid.).

This brief historical overview shows how borders are historically contingent and change over time. However, the borders of today's nation-states, and those living within the borders as part of the nation-states population, are constructed and seen as stable, cohesive entities through many different aspects of social and discursive life, such as history and geography curricula in education, the media and political discourse (Ortega-Sánchez et al., 2020; Sautereau & Faas, 2022; Segrott, 2001). This has serious consequences for the lives of many, specifically for those who are categorized as not belonging within the borders of said nation-state (Greenfeld & Prevelakis, 2010; Houtum, 2021; Näre et al., 2022; Newman & Paasi, 1998; Van

Houtum & Van Naerssen, 2002). The current nationalistic perspective on borders has resulted in prioritizing the desires of the nation-state that is contained within those borders over the rights of those living outside of the borders (McCorkle, 2020). The sovereign right of the nation-state lies unquestioned and gets prioritized over human rights, such as the right to life, liberty and security, equality before the law, not to be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention and to seek and enjoy asylum to name but a few (United Nations, 1948).

Dividing the world into nation-states has resulted in a strong division between those who belong within a nation-state, *the Self,* and those who do not belong, namely *the Other*. This process is called *Othering*, a concept that describes the multidimensional process of different aspects of social differentiation in constructing an understanding of one's own identity (*the Self)* (Spivak, 1985). Multiple countries in Europe, such as Sweden, Germany and Italy are currently seeing a strong increase in xenophobia[1] towards *the Other*, namely the foreigner, refugee or migrant (McCorkle, 2020; Näre et al., 2022). In the European context, the rising number of refugees from the MENA (Middle East and Northern Africa) region in 2015 and the following years, resulting in just under 1 million refugees seeking asylum in Germany, had a significant impact on the reactive attitudes of those living within the borders of nation-states in Europe (McCorkle, 2020). The increased importance of the politics of nation-states in dealing with the influx of migrants, rather than overarching European politics, has led to the reinforcement of both the external borders of the European Union and the borders of the nation-states (Pallagst et al., 2018).

Although Germany's treatment of the refugees is internationally known as *Willkommenskultur* (welcoming culture), the refugees from the MENA region sparked a heated social and political debate in Germany and even led to the rise of the far-right, populist party AfD (Alternative for Germany), which entered the Bundestag in 2017 (Bpb, 2020). Studies on the general public in Germany in 2018 on their opinion on refugees and migrants showed that 44% of Germans were in

[1]"Xenophobia is the strong and unreasonable dislike or fear of people from other countries." (Collins Dictionary, n.d.) It can also be defined as hatred towards anything foreign or strange. Synonyms include racism, nationalism, bigotry and isolationism (ibid.).

favor of a complete ban on migration, which the AfD made their main political agenda, as can be seen in their speeches, election posters and party program[2] (McCorkle, 2020).

This stands in stark contrast to the public and political opinion on the significant and sudden rise in refugees from Ukraine after Russia's attack, which began in February 2022. Germany, like other European countries, opened their borders to Ukrainian refugees, with 1.056.416 (February 2023) Ukrainians seeking refuge in Germany (Mediendienst Integration, 2023). Surveys show that directly after the war started, 90% of the population in Germany was in favor of admitting all Ukrainian refugees into the country, with opinions from the AfD mirroring this view, by saying "all-round support to the Ukrainians is unquestionable" (Deutscher Bundestag, 2022a; DW, 2022a). This shows a significant difference in the attitudes towards the refugees from the MENA region and refugees from Ukraine, although both are located outside the borders of the nation-state.

All across Europe, racist, sexist and Islamophobic explanations have been used to explain how Ukrainian refugees are more deserving of receiving asylum and refuge than refugees from the MENA region (Näre et al., 2022). The German political space has created multiple categories of refugees, with some being more deserving of help than others through using multiple categories such as culture and faith to distinguish between those who belong and those who do not (Brookings, 2022; DW, 2022a; Harvard International Review 2022). The construction of *the Self* (the national identity) and *the Other* (the refugee, migrant, foreigner), is an inherently violent process, which has far-reaching consequences for those that have been othered. For example, the increasing securitization of the bordering processes has led to increasingly unsafe routes of refugees, migrants and foreigners trying to cross the border with over 5000 reported deaths along migration routes, just since 2021 (IOM, 2022).

While the categorization of *the Other* is commonly brought up in the political discourse, the categorization of *the Self* is much less frequently questioned, which

[2] The party program (Grundsatzprogramm or Parteiprogramm) is a political document and contains the basic demands, goals and values of a political party.

is why this thesis will concern itself with the construction of the national identity of Germany in relation to the construction of *the Other* (Brookings, 2022; DW, 2022a; Harvard International Review 2022).

1.1 Research Question & Research Aim

My aim is to examine how the right-wing political discourse on refugees, migrants and foreigners in Germany constructs the idea of a common national identity. The construction of the national identity of Germany will be studied through the construction of those that are categorized as not belonging.

The overall goal is to problematize how national identity is not a stable entity but discursively constructed and naturalized. The research questions that will lead this thesis are:

- *What kind of categories are used to construct and justify the common national identity and how are they naturalized in documents and speeches on migrants, refugees and foreigners?*
- *What role does the construction of the Other play in the construction of national identity?*

This thesis investigates the complexities of political discourse and the aforementioned questions through the case study of the right-wing party AfD, which became a part of the German parliament because of their strong opinions and arguments on who is defined as a part of Germany and who is excluded from their definition of a German national identity.

1.2 Background

In this section I will provide the geographical and political context of the events that led to the increase of migrants and refugees from the MENA region and Ukraine to Germany and the political response to these events.

The period internationally known as the long summer of refugees describes an influx of refugees in 2015 and the following years because of wars and terrorist insurgencies in their home countries. These refugees came from Syria, other countries of the MENA region and Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan and Eritrea

(BAMF, 2015). Around 1,2 million first-time asylum applications were registered within the EU in 2015 and around 1,2 million for the year 2016 (Eurostat, 2022). During the same time frame, 890.000 were registered as first-time asylum seekers in Germany, making it one of the countries to take on the most refugees in the EU (BAMF, 2015).

The aforementioned *Willkommenskultur* in Germany was not shared by all and had considerable effects on Germany's political climate (Kösemen & Wieland, 2022). Germany saw a rise in xenophobic attitudes and crimes committed against people who speak other languages than German, are of Muslim faith or non-white (Spiegel Online, 2021; Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2018). The political party AfD, which was founded out of protest against the Euro rescue policy, used the increasing xenophobic attitudes to its advantage. After their foundation in 2013, narrowly missing the 5% hurdle of entering the Bundestag, they grew significantly to 12,6% in the next vote in 2017, thus entering the Bundestag (Deutscher Bundestag, 2022b). There is a correlation between an increase in xenophobia during and after the years 2015-16 and the increase in votes of the right-wing party AfD, supported by statistics that show that every second voter of the AfD is xenophobic (Lachmann, 2014). The AfD is the only far-right and most controversial party in the Bundestag and has been under investigation by the official protection of the constitution for being unconstitutional since March 2022 (Bpb, 2022).

Russia's attack on Ukraine led to the biggest increase in migrants and refugees from outside of the EU to Germany since 2015-16, with over 1 million Ukrainians seeking refuge in Germany (Mediendienst Integration, 2023). Although the amount of refugees is similar to those in 2015-16, the political debate has been significantly different compared to the welcome that was extended to those from the MENA region, going so far as to change legislation and allowing refugees from Ukraine to enter Germany legally without a visa and without the need to officially apply for asylum (DW, 2022b). Although the AfD has been known to be Russia-affiliated, even stating a need to better the relationship with Russia in their

party program, they still support the efforts being made to simplify immigration and asylum processes for those fleeing the war in Ukraine (AfD, 2021).

The categorization of refugees and migrants as being differently deserving of getting granted asylum has far-reaching consequences. From push-backs along the external land borders of the EU to deaths in the Mediterranean Sea because of a lack of maritime support, to the burning down of refugee housing; the effects of the discourse around who does and does not belong are manifold (Deutschlandfunk, 2015; Radjenovic 2021; UNO, 2022). In no small part do political parties influence these xenophobic actions by claiming the naturalization of the categories of those that do and do not belong, thus fueling an already sensitive discourse around the identities of nationalities (Riecker, 2006).

1.3 Disposition

I begin by reviewing existing literature that investigates the construction of national identities, analyzing different times, scales and fields, and show the contextual setting for my research project. The next section presents the conceptual framework, starting off with Discourse Theory, then presenting Critical Discourse Analysis as a more specific theory and as the starting point for my methodology. Thirdly, I define the most important concepts necessary to define national identity in the theory and analysis.

The methodology starts with explaining the relational contingent ontological lens and feminist poststructuralism and social constructivism as the epistemological base. Additionally, I reflect on my positionality as a researcher and German citizen. I then provide a detailed explanation of the data collection. Lastly, I explain the use of directed content analysis with the software NVivo as my chosen method of analysis.

The findings of the content analysis make up the next chapter, divided into two main sections, namely *the Other* and *the Self*. Finally, I summarize and discuss the answers to the research questions, show the limitations and conclude by suggesting further explorations on research on the construction of national identities in relation to *Others*.

2. Literature Review

Research on national identity is being done in multiple different **geographic locations** of the world, with a clear focus on countries within Europe. Such as Bond (2006) who focuses on the Scottish context while trying to answer questions of belonging and exclusion in regards to national identity, Greenfeld & Prevelakis (2010) address the Greek context of nationalism and Lepsius & Campbell (1985) look at the construction of ingroups and outgroups in the German context. Close in geographic proximity and methodological approach is Caballero Mengibar (2015), who shows how discursive representations of immigrants in Spain have constructed a Spanish national identity. As Lepsuis & Campbell (1985) show, Germany is an especially interesting space for analyzing the construction of national identity because of its history with nationalism and the frequent rearrangement of its borders: there is hardly another nation in Europe that has seen as many changes of its borders, which provides fruitful ground to research the construction of national identity. Important contributions to the field of nationalism in the German context are manifold due to Germany's history with nationalist thought, focusing mostly on the national socialism in Germany before and during WWII (see Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Langewiesche 2000; Lepsius, 1990; Lepsius & Campbell, 1985; Zimmermann, 2003).

Since the formation of the EU as a new form of collective identity, national identity research has broadened beyond the nation-state, including supranational political units, such as the EU. These studies concern themselves with the new **supra-national identity** of those living within the borders of the EU and the transformation of national identity as a result of this. Spohn & Triandafyllidou (2003) focus on changes in collective identities resulting from the formation of the EU, specifically the Eastern enlargement of the EU. Meanwhile, Paasi (2001) analyzes how different narratives on European identities have informed different understandings of spatiality and how migrants and refugees have called the narratives of nationally bounded cultures into question. Additionally, there is also Carta & Wodak (2015) whose work revolves around the role of foreign policy

discourses in the construction of EU identities and Robyn (2000), who concentrates on methodological aspects of understanding national identity formation in the new European context.

Besides the geographic location, there are other factors that change the scope of research on national identity, like putting the focus on the **concept of national identity**, such as Anderson (1983) who coined the definition of nations as *imagined communities* or Parekh (1995) who argues for a redefinition of national identity and De Cillia et al. (1999) who hone in on how discursive and linguistic strategies have been used to construct sameness within and difference to other nations in the Austrian context. Their research will be used to build the theoretical framework of this thesis. Additionally, the **historical component of national identity** plays an important role in research. Greenfield & Prevelakis (2010) show the important element of history in the formation of different types of nationalisms and identities.

Since national identities are not constructed just within the political discourse but multifaceted, research on national identity concerns itself with many **different areas of social and discursive life**. For example, Sautereau & Faas (2022) look at the construction of national identity within education, turning to the history, geography and civic education curricula in France and Ireland, while Ortega-Sánchez et al. (2020) focus on the relationship between emotion and national identity by looking at historical education. Meanwhile, Segrott (2001) focuses on how language influences the construction of national identities of diasporic communities. Newman & Paasi (1998) show the role of boundary narratives in constructing national identities. Folkestad (2002) looks at the correlation between music and national identity formation and Yuval-Davis & Stoetzler (2002) use a gendered gaze to analyze how borders and boundaries construct identities.

Furthermore, some research on national identity focuses on different aspects of identity formation, such as Somers (1994), who concentrates on the role of narratives in understanding national identity and agency, or Knight (1982) who analyzes the interplay between territory and national identity and questions the

right of territoriality based identities in separating political and territorial independence. Similar to this thesis, there is a multiplicity of research that concerns itself with the **interplay of discourse and national identity** (see Collins & Jones, 2006; De Cillia et al., 1999; Paasi, 1999, 2001). Important to this thesis is the role of political discourse in identity formation, which Skilling (2010) has looked at in the geographic context of New Zealand, Leith (2012) has focused on in Scotland, Hjelm (2014) has looked at Finland and Malinova (2012) shows the Russian context.

Due to the interdisciplinary aspect of identity research, there is also a **multiplicity of methods** being used to study the concept of identity, such as Ainsworth & Hardy (2004) who show how CDA and other forms of discourse analysis have contributed to the field of identity studies and Robyn (2000) who uses the Q methodology and applies traditional statistical methods to examine European identities.

Important to this thesis specifically, is the research that has been done on national identity, which focuses on ***the Other****,* such as Triandafyllidou (1998) who has had a significant impact on conceptualizing the oftentimes implicit assumption of an Other in research on nationalism and national identity. However, it is still the case that much research pays attention solely to national identity, without *the Other;* which is where this thesis will make a contribution through focusing on *the Other* while at the same time building on previous research on the concepts of national identity.

Overall these articles and books show the importance of interdisciplinary research efforts in both theory, methodology and geographical context in understanding the construction of the complex category of national identity. Research on national identity can have different foci, analyzing different aspects of life ranging from political discourse, to educational curricula and historical groundings. Research can be done on different geographical contexts and scales by turning to different nations, nation-states and supranational communities, or abstractly focus on the conceptualizations of the concepts of nation, nationalism and identity. Due to this manifold of different combinations of geographical context, scale, level of

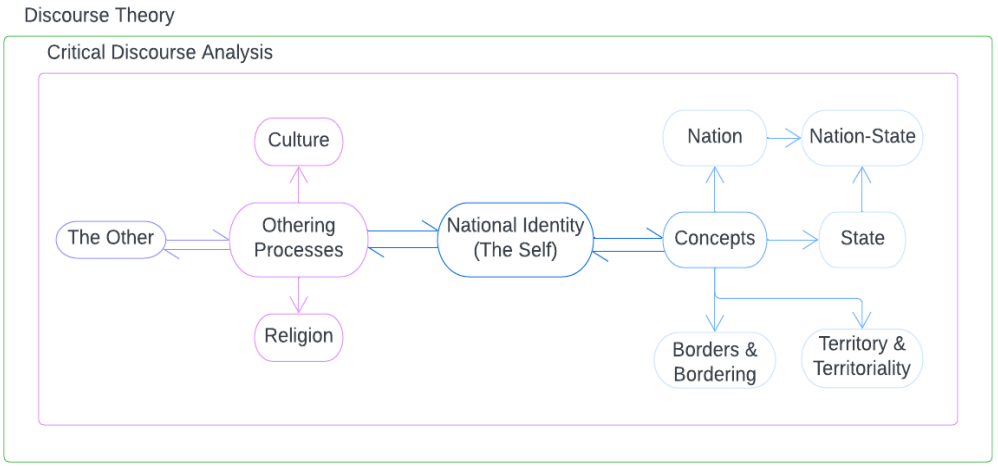
abstraction and method of analysis, there is much research yet to be done to answer questions on national identity. This thesis will provide a small contribution to this interdisciplinary field by showing how the German right-wing political discourse on *Others* constructs a German national identity, by building on previous research and concepts and providing new insights through the data analysis.

3. Conceptual Framework

The overarching theory that is used is Discourse Theory (DT), leaning on Foucault's (1969) understanding of discourse and power/knowledge and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a theoretical and analytical framework. Since this thesis is written at the intersection of Gender Studies and Geography, the use of concepts will also be intersectional, meaning there will be multiple concepts used to explain the phenomena expressed. These will aid in giving definitions to the main categories used to define the context of this research. The following flowchart shows how the theories and concepts used relate to each other. DT and CDA provide the conceptual framework for understanding the construction of national identity. There are multiple concepts that need to be defined to be able to understand the construction of *the Self,* such as the nation, the state, and the nation-state, and borders and bordering processes and territory and territoriality processes. The construction of national identity, and thus *the Self* is related to the construction of *the Other* through *Othering* processes, for which culture and religion play a predominant role. These theories and concepts will be explained in detail in the next sections of the conceptual framework, starting from the broadest category of DT, moving to CDA and important concepts for the definition of national identity and to othering processes, before finally defining national identity fully.

Figure 1

Conceptual framework



3.1 Discourse Theory

I use Foucault's understanding of discourse and power, the expansions of dominant and hegemonic discourses by Laclau and Mouffe and Butler's understandings of discourse, power, and identity as the framework for defining discourse (Butler, 2011; Foucault, 1969; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985).

DT is understood to be concerned with the ways in which meaning is constructed and maintained through language and other forms of communication, such as non-verbal gestures or pictures (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004). One of the most important contributions of Foucault (1969) to discourse theories is the recognition of power and control inherent in discourse. Foucault (1969) understands discourses to be shaped by knowledge, which represents a tool of power and control used by dominant groups to marginalize other groups of people. Discourse plays a key role in shaping our beliefs and values, including our sense of identity. Discourses surrounding the nation, nation-states, and national identities are able to construct and reinforce particular categorizations of who does and does not belong, and what it means to be a member of a nation (Paasi, 1999). It is essential

to use Foucauldian DT to show the dynamics behind the production of discourse regarding marginalized groups, such as migrants, refugees and foreigners (MRF[3]). In regards to national identity, the power that plays an important role here is how certain discourses around those that do and do not belong to the nation lead to the exclusion of the marginalized groups and reinforce what it means to be a member of that particular nation.

Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have built on Foucault's DT and recognized that discourse is always a site of struggle of which discourse will become the hegemonic[4] discourse and shape the naturalization of categories. They argue that discourses are not fixed, but subject to constant negotiation and contestation. Here, different discourses compete for dominance in society with the dominant discourse becoming hegemonic and preventing alternative discourses to gain traction, in effect reinforcing the power of the dominant group. Through this, they show that discourses are not static but dynamic, contested and highly contextualized in specific geographic spaces and times (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). In the context of this thesis, I use the concepts of hegemonic discourses to ask how different actors, such as politicians, engage in the struggles of what it means to be a member of a particular nation and how that nation is defined through different categories, such as a shared language, culture, common values, and norms.

Butler (2011) contributes to Foucault's DT by focusing on the dialectical relationship between power, language, and identity, arguing that identity is never a fixed category but always contingently produced through language and discourse.

[3] Throughout this thesis I will use the terms migrants, refugees and foreigners (MRF) together when referring to those who are classified as *Others*, without distinguishing between different forms of movement across borders. A clear distinction between what constitutes a refugee and what constitutes a migrant and clear subdivisions, such as economic migrant, political migrant, political refugee, environmental refugee is an inherently violent process, which leads to the exclusion of people exercising their human right to life, liberty and security (Näre et al., 2022; Niedrig & Seukwa, 2010). Additionally, the AfD uses the terms foreigners, migrants and refugees interchangeably depending on the arguments they are making, from which I distance myself by using the acronym MRF to refer to all those who are defined as *Others*.

[4] Hegemony, according to Laclau and Mouffe (1985) is defined as the process of creating and maintaining the dominance of specific actors, social groups, or classes over others by making use of cultural, economic, and political power. It is a struggle between these groups and their competing values and norms over which group will become the dominant group influencing the discourse (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985).

Although they focus on aspects of gender identity, I apply the same argument to the category of national identity, building on Butler's contribution and showing how national identity, similarly to gender, is produced through discourse.

To conclude, DT provides a nuanced and critical understanding of the power that is at play when political discourses shape and are shaped by our understanding of concepts of the nation, nation-state, and most importantly, the national identity.

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Going more into detail, I want to show the contributions of using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for both a more specific conceptual framework and the methodological groundings for the methods section.

The main questions, which are continuing to be defining for a CDA approach are what constitutes language, how discourses and social institutions are continuously (re)constructing each other, how ideology functions in social institutions and how people within groups obtain and manage to maintain power (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). CDA and other forms of discourse analysis start from the assumption that language is a significant and inevitable part of social life and always in a dialectical relationship with the social (Fairclough, 2003). What sets CDA apart from other discourse-related methods, is the critical perspective from which different social phenomena are viewed and researched. Through their research, researchers attempt to show how categories that are taken for granted in everyday life become naturalized through social processes, then de-familiarize and de-naturalize them in a further step of the process (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004).

Similar to DT, CDA builds on Foucault to show how contextually contingent all claims to truth are and present alternatives to current claims of truth. CDA assumes that discourses are structured by dominance and are always historically situated, and legitimated by authorities in power, (re)producing their ideological beliefs (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Thus, it is possible for research from a CDA perspective to analyze both the power from above and resistance to it from below, without naturalizing the systems and categorizations in place (ibid.). Of importance to the context of this research is the underlying assumption of CDA

that discourse produces such power/knowledge relations, which in turn constructs, shapes and (re)produces subjects' positions and identities in society, that are not fixed but unstable outcomes of a complex interplay of various discourses (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004).

Research from a CDA perspective is done through the analysis of text, which refers to any written form of language and spoken language itself and can include visual images and sound effects. In this thesis, text will be the official transcripts of speeches in the Bundestag, posters and the party program (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). As Fairclough (2003) points out, texts have causal effects, meaning they can influence changes. A text can change the knowledge that an individual holds, and can change their attitude and even their values. Going further, texts have the ability to contribute to changing identities, such as national identities, which is a main assumption of this thesis (ibid.). As Fairclough (2003) states, although textual analysis is an essential part of discourse, discourse analysis is not just the linguistic analysis of texts but also focuses on the structuring of social practices through the text.

Additionally, those who read and hear the texts are never passive recipients of the text but are always relationally situated, which ties back to the positionality of researchers (ibid.). Implications of this will be discussed in Chapter 4.3 in more detail. CDA assumes that the language it studies does not in itself create power, it gains it through powerful people making use of it in specific ways, which is why focusing on the marginalized to analyze how authorities exercise power is so significant to those using CDA as a research methodology (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

3.3 Definition of Concepts

There is an inherent exercise of power in defining concepts, as dominant groups can enable singular definitions of concepts, leading to their naturalization in different discursive contexts (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Due to this, I will define the concepts that I will be referring to in the analysis of the thesis, show how they have historically been produced and provide a working definition that goes

beyond how these concepts are used in everyday life. The following concepts play an important role in both being able to define national identity, but also in the analysis and interpretation of how the AfD defines national identity.

3.3.1 Nation

Nations are not stable entities but are constructed through different processes and represented in the minds of those living within the nation as a sovereign and limited political unit (De Cillia et al., 1999). As Anderson (1983) stated, to fully understand the concept of nations properly, one must consider carefully how their meanings have come to be, how they have changed over time and why the concept of the nation has such a profound legitimacy today, overruling significant other factors, even going so far as to justifying human rights violations as a way of legitimizing the nation.

According to Anderson (1983), the nation is understood as an *imagined (political) community,* which does not mean that it does not exist and thus cannot have real-life consequences. Quite the opposite, the idea of nations can have very serious and destructive consequences, going from exclusion and discrimination to death in times of war (De Cillia et al., 1999). Anderson (1983) explains his use of the word *imagined* in defining the nation because the members of the community of the nation will never know all of the other members, yet in their minds, they understand and imagine them as being a part of one. There exists no true community, all communities are always imagined and what connects them is the imagination of a 'deep, horizontal comradeship' (ibid.). Specifically, what unites these groups is the conviction that to each nation, belongs a language, which entitled those who spoke it, to a place within the nation (ibid.). Because even the largest communities do not imagine themselves encompassing the entire world, the nation must always be defined as limited, with clear, determined, finite boundaries, which separate one nation from others (Anderson, 1983). Germany first used the concept of the nation to describe its imagined community in the 15th century. Although the borders, the territory and its members have changed over

time, the idea of Germany as an imagined community and thus a nation, remains unchanged (Tompkins, 2019).

State

The borders of the *imagined community* of the nation are defined and enforced through the state, which exercises power over the individuals it rules over by defining who is and is not an individual of that state (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012). According to Knight's (1982) interpretation, Greer & Orleans (1964) claim that historically speaking, states can be defined as a "legal and physical entity, with an effective system of government [...]", which is the "[...] chief custodian of overall social order [...]". Knight (1982) expands this definition to include a more contemporary approach to the definition of the state by referring to the use of concepts of land, territory, permanent resident population, government, organized economy, circulation system, sovereignty and recognition, which serve to divide it from its external environments, i.e. other states.

From a feminist perspective, today the state is understood as a political entity, which performs its borders by indicating who is an insider and gets granted access to markers of citizenship, such as identity cards or social insurance numbers, which grant individuals access to health care, and who as an outsider, does not get access (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012). Inclusion and exclusion are often framed by the state where different discourses reproduce and reinforce otherness (Van Houtum & Van Naerssen, 2002). Hence, actors of the state, such as politicians continually exercise power over both those that are a part of the state and those that are not through the very act of defining who is and is not an individual of the state.

Territory & Territoriality

The spatial strategy of defining who belongs, which is often deployed at the geographical scale of nation(states) is called territoriality (Paasi, 1998). As Van Houtum and Van Naerssen (2002) show, the territorial order gives enough certainty, comfort, identity and security to be valued over a non-territorial

ordering of the world. However, research has begun to focus on the *territorial trap,* which can be defined as the naturalization of the category of the territory, which constitutes the nation-state, resulting in a fixed imagination of a world of nation-states, which is something that I aim to challenge (Paasi, 1998). Passi (1998) shows how territoriality is never static but a perpetually changing, discursively constructed phenomenon. As Knight (1982) has said, "[...] territory is not, it becomes, for territory itself is passive, and it is human beliefs and actions that give territory meaning." (Knight, 1982, p. 517).

The territory that is defined as German territory has changed significantly throughout time, but the idea of Germany as a nation remains, thus showing that conceptions of territoriality change throughout history but the idea of a territory, which belongs to a nation, remains a central idea of what constitutes national identity (Paasi, 1998; Tompkins, 2019).

Nation-State

Many countries today, Germany included, are defined as nation-states. Yuval-Davis (1997) has defined the concept of the nation-state as assuming an absolute correspondence between the borders of the nation, its territory and the boundaries of those who live in a specific state. However, this concept is fiction, as there are always people within that are not considered to be members of the hegemonic nation and there are members who live in other countries (ibid.). The effect then is that the hegemony of one collectivity within the nation-state is naturalized, which constructs some minorities as deviants or *Others*, and excludes them from important resources of power, which are exclusively available for the hegemonic collectivity (ibid.). The concept of the nation-state is therefore deeply embedded in power relations and processes of *Othering*.

The concept of *sovereignty*, which refers to the supreme authority or power within a defined territory, such as a nation-state, or a different kind of political entity, plays a significant role in the definition of the nation (Newman & Paasi, 1998; Paasi 2001). As Anderson (1983) has shown, sovereignty is even necessary for the *imagined community* of the nation to exist because it allows the creation and

enforcement of the cultural practices which sustain the imagining of the nation. Additionally, it allows the maintenance of the borders of the nation and the enforcement of the loyalty of those living within those boundaries.

Borders & Bordering

In this thesis, borders are not understood simply as material lines of division but as being performatively (re-)produced, a process called *bordering* (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012). As Anderson et al. (2011) state, borders are an ideological function of those who discursively produce them. They are productive and generative, creating power relations of deep inequality between people of different national statuses (B. Anderson et al., 2011). Because boundaries are essential in the organization of social and physical space, they are also of vital importance to nation-building processes (Paasi, 2001). At these imagined borders, not the physical, material borders, is where different identities, such as the national identity are produced (B. Anderson et al., 2011). Regarding the geographical context of this thesis, it is important to note that in the political and media discourse, the physical borders of Germany, are not necessarily the actual borders of Germany (i.e. to Poland, Luxemburg, Belgium, Austria, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Czechia) but because of the supra-national political and economic European Union have been outsourced to the external borders of the EU (Privacy International, 2020). The concept of borders and bordering plays a significant role in this thesis, as through the speeches of the right-wing politicians in the Bundestag, they are actively participating in the performative construction of Germany's external borders, which in turn then leads to the construction of different subject identities (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012).

3.3.2 Othering

First introduced by Spivak (1985) *Othering* describes a multidimensional process, which touches upon different aspects of social differentiation in constructing and understanding *the Self* (Jensen, 2011; Spivak, 1985). Yuval-Davis (1997) shows how all societies have pools of shared cultural traditions, collective memories and

a common sense through which *the Other* gets produced and where it is decided how it should be handled. These processes of *Othering* are dynamic and contradictory and they apply differently to different groups of Others (ibid.). As Anderson (1983) stated, the imagined communities of the nation transcend differences of gender and class, among others, however, these same categories oftentimes become signifiers of otherness (Anderson, 1983; Yuval-Davis, 1997).
There can be different types of *Others*, depending on the context. In the German context, an *Other* might be someone from a new region, with a different religion, someone who speaks another language, or any combination of these. Any culturally perceived difference could become the defining category to exclude some as *Others* and include some as *the Self* (Yuval-Davis, 1997).

Religion

One of the commonly mentioned categories for defining *the Other* in the national context are religious beliefs (Chaturvedi, 2002) Although many societies are becoming increasingly secularized in theory, religion still plays an important factor, even in countries, such as Germany, that are secular (Modood & Thompson, 2022). Discussions arise out of the debate of which role religion plays in contemporary society, using arguments of history and identity of the state to legitimize the dominance of one religion over others. As a consequence those belonging to a marginalized religion do not get the same benefits as the members of the dominant religion (Modood & Thompson, 2022; Tope et al., 2017).

Culture

Another category predominantly used to define *the Other* is the category of culture. Once established, a cultural identity of a nation is seen as an identity marker that clearly distinguishes it from other nations with other cultures. The culture is not perceived as dynamic but as an unerasable identifier of the nation, resistant to change (Weiguo, 2013). Oftentimes this cultural debate has replaced the racial definition of the people, by defining them through ethno-cultural conceptions of citizenship and national identity rather than their race (Caiani &

della Porta, 2011). Especially in the German context, the ideology of a common German culture has played an important role in structuring the nation's identity after the ideas of race and *Blut und Boden* ideology were rejected after WWII (Mende, 2011; Pautz, 2005). The debate about whether Germany has a coherent culture that connects its members, is called the *Leitkulturdebatte* and is characterized by ideas of incompatibility of different cultures, with an attempt to re-establish a German national consciousness after the Holocaust (Pautz, 2005).

3.3.3 National Identity

National identity, like the category of nation(state) is discursively produced, reproduced, transformed and destructed through language and other symbolic systems. It is a narrative according to which people tell themselves to give meaning to the social world that surrounds them (De Cillia et al., 1999). It is a story about who they are and are not which can reflect senses of belonging to a specific community, relating to both past, present and future (Yuval-Davis, 1997). De Cillia et al. (1999) show how this narrative is brought into existence through various beliefs and convictions which are reinforced by different actors, such as politicians, intellectuals and other influential people. This is disseminated through different channels, such as systems of education, mass communication, or even sporting events.

Following assumptions from a CDA perspective, identities are constructed through discourses, through which their position within society and to other groups is defined (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004). These identities result from multiple, sometimes contradictory discourses and are never stable. Groups use these competing discourses to secure an advantage over others, leading to the conclusion that discourse and power are deeply connected to identity (ibid.).

As the section on *Othering* has shown, national identities become constructed not only from within, through defining the features that one has in common with other fellow nationals, but also from without through differentiating oneself from what one is not. Thus, national identity only gains meaning through its contrast with *Others* and can mean different things in different contexts (Newman & Paasi,

1998; Triandafyllidou, 1998). Finally, national identity is also a spatial category, precisely because of the ideas of territory in dividing *the Self* and *the Other,* which all require physical lines of division (Paasi, 2001). Multiple categories, such as religion and culture play an important part in structuring a nation's identity and sense of self (Mende, 2011; Modood & Thompson, 2022).

The current political discourse, especially the right-wing discourse of the AfD does not allow for alternative conceptualizations of the nation-state, the territory which it encompasses, and the borders which separate it from other nation-states. Rather all of these categories are naturalized, which leads to the creation of a clear in-group, *the Self,* and the out-group of *the Other.*

4. Methodology

I will begin by showing my ontological and epistemological rooting in feminist poststructuralism. This section will also showcase my reflections on my positionality as a researcher and how my standpoint, experiences, and biases influence the outcomes of this thesis. I will then explain how CDA provides the methodological framework. Next, is the process of data collection and lastly the data analysis with NVivo.

4.1 Ontology

The ontological position of this thesis is both relational and contingent. As my claims of discourse in the previous section on the conceptual framework of the thesis have shown, I view reality to be socially constructed rather than having a fixed or objective essence. Building on the theoretical framework of DT and CDA, a social and relational ontological perspective also allows for the recognition of a diversity and multiplicity of experiences and is skeptical of a universal truth (Slife, 2004). Relational ontology recognizes the interconnectedness of things, which makes this ontological perspective the correct fit for critiquing that anything in this world has an inherent essence, which is not shaped by its relation to other things (ibid.). In addition to relational ontology, this research also looks through the lens of social ontology, questioning how social

relationships and structures shape the nature of reality (Schatzki, 2003). Overall, the ontology of this thesis is intertwined with the epistemology, as my understanding of reality, informs my understanding of knowledge and vice versa.

4.2 Feminist Post-Structural and Social Constructivist Epistemology

I view myself to be a feminist, poststructural researcher but acknowledge that while in theory, epistemologies, which are theories of knowledge, are clearly distinguished one from another, oftentimes different epistemologies are not as distinct as they are made out to be. For this reason, I will use some of the starting points of the social constructivist epistemology in addition to a feminist poststructural perspective, to show how I understand knowledge to be shaped.

Poststructuralism originated out of postmodernist thought through the recognition of the linguistic/discursive turn. Foucault (1969) has played an important part in shaping this turn to language, which recognizes the constitutive power of language and discourse to shape reality (Olssen, 2003). Furthering what the ontological perspective of social and relational ontology shows, poststructuralism also rejects the existence of a universal truth and reality, which exists independently from an observer and instead focuses on how discourses produce subjects, whose very material form only materializes through the discursive practices of everyday life (Gavey, 1989). The aim of research from a poststructural perspective is to show the constitutive and discursive performances which enable the recognition of the power that categories possess and in effect to challenge that power by showing that it is discursively produced and not inherent to the category (Gannon & Davies, 2012). For this thesis, this means that I understand the use of specific categories in the construction of a German national identity, as neither natural nor neutral categories which possess power and whose influence goes beyond just the political discourse and reaches into the lives of MRFs.

Additionally, poststructuralism offers a highly relevant perspective for this thesis because of its understanding of constructing subjects according to a separation

from a constitutive Other (Kehl, 2020). The meaning-making through different categorizations in discourses strongly depends on differentiation, borders and boundaries drawn between different categories, which relates to this thesis, as the national identity is being constructed along different boundaries of belonging. Finally, feminist poststructuralism focuses on processes of subjectification, namely how people become subjects through structures of power, such as language and discourse (Davies & Gannon, 2005; Gavey, 1989).

To conclude, a poststructural feminist perspective allows me to critique the naturalization of the national identity and the categories of MRFs in documents of the AfD.

4.3 Positionality

Following Fairclough's (2003) argument that research done through the lens of CDA should be explicit about its own positions and commitment, I want to use this section to acknowledge the biases and ideological commitments that I bring into this research process. As the epistemological positioning has shown, I do not believe that there is a single truth, which can be uncovered by research. Following the Kantian tradition of denying the possibility of 'pure' cognition, I argue that regardless of the methodological approach used for research, there is no possibility of gaining insight and answering research questions without *a priori* knowledge and judgment (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

Furthermore, as Wodak & Meyer (2001) have shown in their work on the methods of CDA, researchers conducting an analysis on discourse are never situated outside and free of the discourse. The analysis will always be based on laws, norms, values, and rights, which are a historical outcome of the very discourse that the researcher is researching, meaning that an analysis is never based on truth and always on a biased interpretation of a discursive process (ibid.). I acknowledge this limitation of my thesis and as a result, will not generalize the findings of my case study to a broader context.

As Newman and Paasi (1998) have shown by summarizing important boundary narratives in political geography, researchers are in a key position of constructing,

representing and reproducing the narratives around nations, territories, boundaries and identities. Through continuously providing information in nation-state-based frameworks researchers play a significant role in the naturalization of the category of nation-states (Paasi, 1998). For this reason, a significant part of the conceptual framework was the definition of concepts and categories, which are used in the speeches of the AfD and thus throughout this thesis, to show that definitions have histories and are not simply natural, but are created with specific purposes in mind, which shape specific narratives, which the speakers want to portray.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that being a German citizen, having grown up in Germany and lived a significant part of my life within it, has shaped my perspective and knowledge of the German political discourse. In no way, is my position a neutral one, however, as feminist epistemologies show, there is no way for researchers within social sciences to make objective truth claims, as they always bring situated knowledge with them, which influences the outcomes of their research (Longino & Lennon, 1997). I distance myself from the political beliefs of the AfD and use the analysis and interpretation of the data to criticize their claims. Being German and thus not being in the position of an MRF coming to Germany, gives me both an insider and outsider perspective at the same time. I acknowledge that through this thesis I will not be able to speak from the perspective of the MRF, nor will I be able to speak for every person who identifies as German. This thesis shows only my opinions and my individual analysis of the highly contextualized political discourse of the AfD.

4.4 Methods

This section will show the methods used in the analysis of the data. The broad framework is provided by CDA and the specific method used within this framework is a Directed Content Analysis.

4.4.1 Research Approach & Design

This thesis works within the framework of a case study. The construction of national identity and *the Other* will be explored through the case of the German

political party AfD. Although multiple case studies would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, collecting multiple types of data for a single case study can also yield an in-depth understanding and forgo the challenges of word limits, which is why one case will be the scope of this thesis (Heale & Twycross, 2018). Although case studies are usually non-generalizable, they can provide working hypotheses with which to study larger data sets of multiple cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

For analyzing the discourse on national identity in the right-wing context, CDA, next to being used as a conceptual framework, will also provide the methodological framework of the analysis. The discourse, which is at the center of the research, is the right-wing political discourse on MRF focusing solely on the AfD. The data through which I am analyzing the discourse are protocols of speeches by the AfD in the Bundestag, posters of the AfD for the last election period of the Bundestag in 2021 and the Grundsatzprogramm (party program) of the AfD, which can be found online through the archives of the Bundestag and the official website of the AfD. The method of directed content analysis will be applied to the material to distinguish different concepts used to define *the Self* and *the Other*. This thesis takes on an inductive approach, letting the themes, categories and concepts emerge from the material (Chambliss & Schutt, 2018).

4.4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

The aim of this thesis is to understand how the German national identity is constructed through the construction of *the Other*, which is excluded from *the Self*. In this way, my starting point is a social problem, choosing to analyze those in authority, who hold power to show the consequence for those who are excluded (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Putting the focus on the marginalized to critically analyze how those in power use language to naturalize their control, is the main idea of CDA and also the reason why it provides the framework for the analysis (ibid.).

As Wodak and Meyer (2001) state, CDA can be defined as being fundamentally concerned with the analysis of the manifestation of power and discrimination in

language. Its aim is to identify how social inequalities are expressed through language, following Habermas' claim that language is always a medium of domination, which serves to legitimize power relations (ibid.). To clarify, power does not derive from language, rather language can be used to alter distributions of power, through grammatical forms and through control of the genre of texts (ibid.). In this way, CDA is well suited as an analytical framework for this thesis, since it aims to show the power inherent in the construction of a German national identity and the effects of *Othering* on the categorization of refugees, migrants and foreigners.

Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) use the examples of refugees to show how closely intertwined identity, power and discourse are and how CDA aids in showing the connections between these categories. Using a critical discourse analytical approach, they explain how organizations and institutions have individual interests in the constructions of refugee identities, and also show how the identity of the organizations themselves are produced through the discourse that they enable (ibid.).

However, as Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) show, CDA is not a one-size fits all approach to understanding how discourses produce identities and vice versa. As all methodologies and methods, CDA also has its limitations, with the main critique of CDA being that it challenges and problematizes only powerful authorities and their truth claims. However, as a social constructivist approach it should do so also for those discourses which are favored by the critical inquiry since all truth claims should be viewed as constructions and more room should be given to adjudicating between them (ibid.).

Additionally, CDA is critiqued for not focusing enough on the material conditions and institutions which allow for the production of discourses (ibid.). I agree, that indeed the scope of this thesis does not allow for a closer look at the institutions, which structure the possibility of different accounts of social reality, although it would be a necessary addition to fully understand the construction of the national identity in the German political discourse. Understanding the economic, political and social circumstances under which discourses are produced, is essential to

being able to critically interpret different texts (Caballero Mengibar, 2015). Because the scope of this thesis does not allow for a multi-method approach, the aforementioned background regarding the discourse on refugees, and the rise of the AfD, will have to suffice to proceed with using CDA to analyze the construction of a common national identity and *the Other*.

The large theoretical framework that comes with CDA does not necessarily fit the data that is being analyzed, has been another critique of CDA (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). As shown in the conceptual framework of this thesis, I also make use of multiple theories from different academic fields. However, I argue that being able to take multiple perspectives into account is a strength rather than a weakness and can aid in going outside of the boundaries supposed by one academic field and showing how different theories are not entirely independent from each other, but should build on each other to show the complex relations of everyday life (ibid.). Wodak & Meyer (2001) go a step further by stating that the relationships between language and society are so complex that it is necessary to employ an interdisciplinary research approach.

Finally, a challenge of CDA is its broad approach which allows for many different operationalizations of research, thus offering many different possibilities and perspectives on research on discourse, which at the same time can mean a lack of guidelines (Caballero Mengibar, 2015). Contrary to popular belief, CDA is not an exact method for the description of structures but describes the critical attitude with which the researcher applies explicit methods (Carta & Wodak, 2015), which is why the specific method of Directed Content Analysis will be applied within the framework that CDA provides.

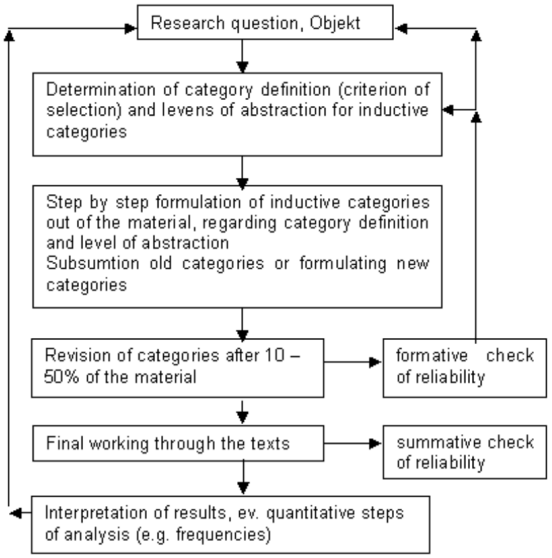
4.4.3 Directed Content Analysis

A content analysis is a method used to interpret meaning from the content of text data, which has been historically used to analyze political speeches in the 19th century (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). It can be defined as a method for the subjective interpretation of the content of a text through the application of a systematic process of coding which leads to the identification of

patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Content analysis encompasses a breadth of approaches and is a flexible method. The focus is on the content and contextual meaning of texts, with attention on the characteristics of language but goes beyond the counting of words to examine the language, known as quantitative content analysis (ibid.). Hsieh & Shannon (2005) have identified three distinctive approaches within qualitative content analysis, namely the conventional, directed and summative approach. This thesis will apply a directed analysis, which is generally used to describe a phenomenon, in this case the construction of a common national identity. Directed Content Analysis is used when previous research about a phenomenon exists but could benefit from further analysis (ibid.). Although it is a more deductive approach, being led by previous theories, directed analysis can be employed with an inductive research design, letting the categories emerge from the data, allowing the researcher to immerse themselves within the data without letting preconceived notions lead the research. Because I am not aiming to just validate previous research, but looking to extend it, I developed the categories inductively following Mayrings' model of inductive category development (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Mayring, 2004). This model, explained in Figure 2, starts from the research question, and follows different steps of category formulation, leading to the interpretation of results. As the model shows, this way of working with data is a circular process, where previous steps inform later ones and vice versa.

Figure 2

Step model of inductive category development



Note. This model was produced by Mayring in order to show the circular direction of inductively developing categories. From Mayring, P. (2004). Qualitative content analysis. *A companion to qualitative research*, *1*(2), 159-176.

Different inferences can be made about the aspects of the communicator, the situation of the text production, the socio-cultural background of the speaker, or the effects of the message of the text (Mayring, 2004). Because the focus of this thesis is the construction of a common national identity, I will analyze the effects of the messages in regard to how they convey different aspects of national identity. Although there are no systematic rules for employing a content analysis, there are some key features that need to be considered.

An important feature is that the analyzed sample of text must be representative of the context which it aims to explain. The exact details of the data collection for the texts of this thesis are described in the section on data collection.

4.5 Data collection

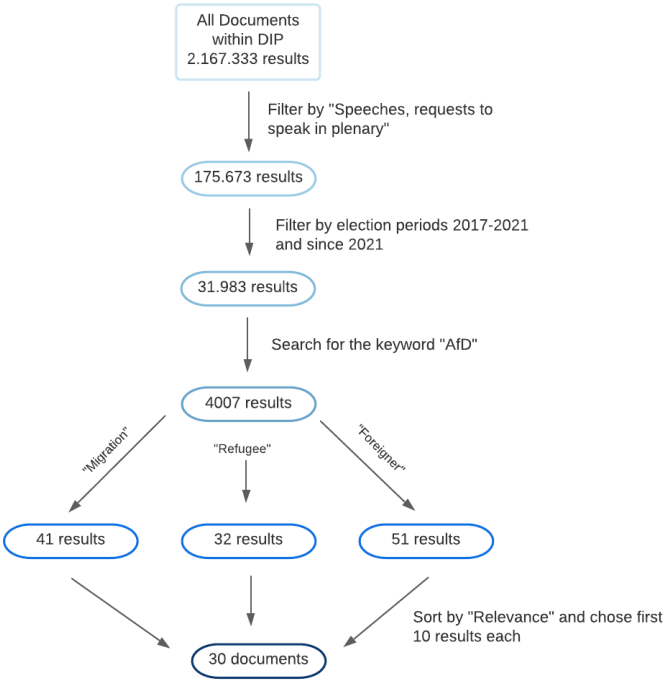
The data consists of written protocols of speeches of the AfD in the Bundestag, the party program and 3 posters, which were published as election material for the

Bundestag election in 2021. The posters and the party program can be found on the official website of the AfD. The protocols are accessible through the website of archives of the Bundestag and the Bundesrat, which is called DIP (Documentation- and information system of parliamentary materials) and is a joint information system of the Bundestag and Bundesrat (DIP, 2023). DIP documents all parliamentary events on printed matter and stenographic reports (plenary minutes). At the time of writing, the DIP has over 2 million documents, dating back to 1949, which I narrowed down in multiple steps to 30 documents, as Figure 3 shows.

First, I filtered the results by only looking at speeches made in the Bundestag. Examples of documents that were excluded are laws, questions to the Bundesregierung (federal government), and motions and indexes. Then, I filtered the results even further by defining the election periods 2017-2021 and 2021-now. Because the AfD was only voted into the Bundestag in 2017, all search results earlier would be nominal mentions made by other parties.

Figure 3

Flowchart of data collection



I then searched for the keyword “AfD”, which yielded 4007 results. Individual searches for keywords in combination with “AfD”, namely “Migration” (Migration), “Refugee” (Flüchtling), and “Foreigner“ (Ausländer), resulted in a further narrowing down of the documents to 124. The search function does not search for the keywords in the complete text corpus, but only in the titles of the document, which correspond to the topic which participants in the Bundestag can comment on, through speeches.

I then used the “Sort by Relevance” option of the website and chose the first 10 results for each of the keyword searches, unless the speeches made were on the same topic, in which case I skipped a result and chose the next document, resulting in 30 speeches. The reason for skipping those documents is that I want to analyze the discourse as broadly as possible (within the frame of this thesis), so I looked for speeches on as many different topics as possible. The final documents

resulted in 64 pages of protocolized speech, made by 18 different members of the AfD.

The party program was collected from the official website of the AfD. Similarly to the filtering that I did for selecting the speeches made in the Bundestag, I chose the sections of the party program, which had mentions of refugees, foreigners and migrants, which resulted in three sections titled *Einwanderung, Integration und Asyl (Immigration, Integration and Asylum), Außen und Sicherheitspolitik (Foreign and Security Policy)* and *Kultur, Sprache und Identität (Culture, Language and Identity).* These sections were copied and pasted into a Word document without making changes to the layout or the content, to import them into NVivo.

The posters were chosen out of the campaign for the Bundestags elections in 2021, by choosing all of the posters, which related to Germany or *the Other*. Additionally, I also regarded mentions of different concepts related to national identity in these posters, such as, borders, culture and *Heimat*[5]. The text played a more predominant role than the images in both the data collection and analysis. This resulted in the following three posters being used for the analysis, which were also uploaded into NVivo. The speeches, the parts of the party program and the posters together resulted in 36 total files, which were analyzed.

[5] A German concept which can be translated as home ore homeland.

Figure 4

AfD Election Poster #1

Figure 5

AfD Election Poster #2

Figure 6

AfD Election Poster #3

Note. All three of the posters are part of the election campaign for the 2021 Bundestags election from the AfD. From AfD (2021). *Unser Programm zur Bundestagswahl 2021* (11.04.2023). https://www.afd.de/wahlprogramm/[6]

Speakers

Members of the Bundestag can freely express their own opinions in speeches in the Bundestag, as the Grundgesetz (Basic Law) Article 38 Section I states: "They shall be representatives of the whole people, not bound by orders or instructions and responsible only to their conscience." The members of the Bundestag are directly elected by those with voting rights in Germany and are meant to represent the German people. While there are no individual authors to which the posters and the party program can be accredited to, the speeches are made by individual members of the AfD, and will be mentioned by name and referred to as speakers, party-members or politicians. A list of all the names of the plenary speakers, by which speeches were analyzed can be found in the appendix under V.I. They will not remain anonymous, to support the claim that the discourse which this thesis analyzes, is made by individuals and does not get constituted by itself. This

[6] The first poster can be translated from top to bottom as follows: What did my father come to Germany for back then? For the German *Leitkultur.* The blue banner reads: Our country. Our values. The bottom of the poster reads: Germany. But normal.
The second poster can be translated as follows: Normal is, to protect our borders.
AfD Election Poster #3 can be translated as follows: Local beats global. Strengthen local businesses. Germany. But normal. AfD.

discourse is man-made, since all of the speeches that were collected in the randomized process, are speeches made by men. This is unsurprising, as just 1,36% of the members of the AfD in the Bundestag are women (Bundestag, 2023).

The speeches were protocolled by stenographers during the speeches and can later be checked for validity by the speakers, which can request edits insofar as they do not change the meaning of the speech (Deutscher Bundestag, 2023). Thus, I believe the protocols of the speeches to be very close or congruent to the actual speeches of the AfD members, which is why I refer to speeches rather than protocols of speeches as my material.

All of the excerpts used in the analysis were translated by me. I acknowledge that the translation of text is already a first step in the analysis, as translation already assumes a level of interpretation of the translator (Venuti, 2009). All translations in this thesis are my own. I stayed as close to the original German text as possible and included explanations of the context where necessary[7]. Parts, where other parties interrupted the speakers, are omitted in the excerpts shown in the thesis, as they are not part of the analysis of this thesis.

4.6 Data Analysis

To operationalize the large data set of speeches, I employed a content analysis to identify keywords, categories and finally themes to uncover contextual meanings of the words and concepts used (Caballero Mengibar, 2015). First, I uploaded the pages of chosen speeches from the archives, where the AfD spoke, to NVivo and then coded the speeches. The codes were developed in an inductive manner first, having the data lead in developing the codes. I chose to code inductively because my thesis is not hypothesis-driven and I am not expecting a certain outcome, according to which I want to code the texts. Inductive coding allows more freedom in establishing the codes and does not presume categories as fixed entities but as being created from texts in motion (Caballero Mengibar, 2015). Additionally, although there is much research on national identity, and many

[7] The original German documents will be shared upon request.

categories of national identities have been identified, I chose to code inductively to leave the possibility for new categories and themes to arise to create a dialogue between previous research and my data.

This first coding included creating categories with different levels of abstraction, through making notes in the text (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). After a first reading and coding of all of the documents, I put the codes in order, creating sub-codes in preparation for the creation of themes in a later step of the coding process. I then did a second screening and coding of all the documents, making sure that especially those documents that I coded first, were coded with codes that I only created later in the process. This more deductive way of coding ensured that all documents were coded in an equal manner. All codes were named in German and included an English translation for simplifying translation processes in the further analysis. For example, I found different descriptions of those residing in Germany, such as being described as *natives (Einheimische)*, *tax payers (Steuerzahler_innen)* or *workers (Arbeitnehmer_innen)*.

After a second reading and coding process, I grouped the codes together under higher order headings with the aim to reduce the total number of categories and to already draw comparisons between different data points by choosing which codes belong to each other and which do not, making this step already one of interpretation (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Following the previously mentioned example, I grouped together the codes for *natives (Einheimische)*, *tax payers (Steuerzahler_innen)* and *workers (Arbeitnehmer_innen)* under the generic code of *citizen (Bürger_in)*, as all of these different codes seemed to be characteristics of the citizens of Germany.

The next step of the analysis is the abstraction of categories, which leads to the formation of themes. The similar sub-codes were then grouped together under a generic code and if reasonable, these generic codes were then also categorized together under a main code, which formed the highest level of abstraction (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The generic code of citizen was then grouped together with other codes under the main code named *Description National Identity (Beschreibung Nationale Identität),* since the characterization of German citizens falls under

descriptions of national identity. The final sub-codes, generic codes and main codes can all be viewed in the Codebook, attached to the thesis in the appendix under V.II.

Out of the content analysis arose the need for including rhetorical devices used by the politicians in their speeches, to answer the research question on how the categories used in the definition of *the Self* and *the Other* are naturalized. Because the rhetorical devices used, were identified through the content analysis, not a rhetorical analysis, rhetorical analysis is not an individual method applied in the same way as the directed content analysis. While the content analysis led to the gathering of the text that is the most significant for interpreting and analyzing, the rhetorical analysis was used only as an addition to further deepen the understanding of the themes already identified through the content analysis.

5. Results & Analysis

This section presents the main findings from the coded data of speeches, posters and the party program. It is divided into two main sections with subsections, corresponding to the themes identified in the data. The first theme is on the classification of *the Other* and the second theme is about *the Self* and the national identity. The first theme shows how significant the construction of *the Other* is to the construction of the German identity, and highlights the justification and naturalization processes through the use of the rhetorical devices of metaphors and the concept of *whataboutism*, while the second theme more closely answers the research question of which categories are used to define the national identity.

5.1 The Other- The Migrant, Refugee & Foreigner

In this section I will show the main themes of the construction of *the Other* that arose out of the analysis. I will focus on how these themes relate to the construction of *the Self* in order to answer the research question of what role the construction of *the Other* plays in the construction of *the Self*. The theme of *the Other* was identified in 26 out of the total 36 files analyzed, with 137 distinct mentions. Additionally, I will focus on the role of metaphors in this construction

and finally explain how the concept of *whataboutism* relates to the analyzed material.

5.1.1 Religion

One of the main themes identified in the construction of *the Other* is the concept of religion. In the context of this thesis, the mention of religion in speeches could only be identified in relation to the description of *the Other,* not *the Self*. Thus, the role of the religion of those that are defined as belonging to Germany is significant but remains unmentioned and can only be implicitly understood through which religion is *not* identified as being a part of *the Self*. In effect, then showing the importance of including the categorization of *the Other* in understanding *the Self*, answering the research question of what role *the Other* plays in the construction of the national identity. The category of religion was identified in 10 of the analyzed files, with 25 distinct mentions. The party member in the following excerpt categorizes the MRFs, which are on the route to Germany as being of Islamic faith. Their aim of fleeing towards the German welfare system clearly categorizes Muslims as bad and undeserving MRFs.

> *Ladies and gentlemen, at the end of last month I was on one of the refugee routes in the Balkans. I looked at the situation in Bihac on the border with Croatia. There you see thousands of young men whose only goal is to get to Germany, thousands of young Muslims who are desperate to get to Germany, who travel through six to seven states just to flee towards the German welfare system. What is being organized here is unacceptable. (Hebner, 19-138, 2019)*

The author mentions the migration as being organized, does not state clearly by whom but through the context of this speech having been made in the Bundestag, it becomes clear that he implies the other political parties, who have welcomed MRFs into Germany of being responsible for the migration movements into Germany. This statement and assumption denies the MRFs any agency and intentionally ignores the circumstances of the origin countries of the MRFs.

However, in the context of the party program, the AfD clearly states the Judeo-Christian religion, as not only being the main religion that those that belong to the German nation-state identify with but go further and describe it as being a foundation of German culture, which signifies the role that the concept of culture plays in the construction of a common national identity, as will be shown again in Chapter 5.2.4.

> *The AfD is fully committed to freedom of faith, conscience and confession. However, the AfD clearly opposes Islamic religious practice that is directed against the free democratic basic order, our laws and the Judeo-Christian and humanistic foundations of our culture. Many moderate Muslims live law-abiding and integrated lives and are accepted and valued members of our society. They belong to Germany. Islam, however, does not belong to Germany. (AfD, 2016)*

Interestingly, they acknowledge the right to faith, conscience and confession of those living in Germany but negate this statement by stating that in their views Islam does not belong to Germany. They understand the Judeo-Christian religion to be part of the culture of Germany, thus culturalizing the Christian religion, making the adaptation of the Christian religion necessary for the German national identity (Haynes, 2020). By portraying the Christian beliefs as a culture rather than a religion, the AfD can thus continue to state freedom of faith as one of their beliefs, while still privileging Christianity over other religions (ibid.).

Additionally, the mention of the word *integrate* in this context plays an important role in the German debate around who belongs and who does not (Brinkmann & Uslucan, 2013). Being integrated presupposes a clear idea of the culture into which to integrate and although Germany is a secular state, the previous statement made it clear that the AfD understands the Judeo-Christian religion as essential to the German national identity, which is why only those with the same faith can belong to Germany. The only exception being those that live integrated lives, which does not get explained further. One of the main contradictions of the AfD, is the acceptance of integrated MRFs on the one hand and the absolute rejection

of any integration measures on the other, as following excerpts will show. By describing those Muslims that have integrated as law-abiding, the AfD assumes that most Muslims are not law-abiding, which leads to the next theme, the characterization of MRFs as criminals.

5.1.2 Narrative of the Criminal MRF

The narrative of MRFs as criminals was identified in 15 of the 36 texts analyzed, with 33 distinct mentions, thus making it one of the most prominent themes of this analysis. More precisely the criminality that MRFs are associated with is a brutal criminality, often referring to knives as weapons that are used against the victims of German women, poor Germans and the German police.

> *Your 2 million rocket technicians, engineers and other skilled workers that you have imported since 2015 have for the most part already ended up in the welfare system. And one thing is also clear: the criminal knifeman will not become a better person if he can insult the police in German in the future thanks to a language course, ladies and gentlemen. (Münzenmaier, 19-101, 2019)*

Here the politician contrasts skilled MRFs with a criminal knifeman and thus equates unskilled MRFs with criminals. Knives have played a significant role in the political discourse of the AfD regarding crimes and are closely related to racialized stereotypes (Hoven & Hestermann, 2019). Although statistics show that there is no difference in country of origin or background of migration of those that carry knives, the AfD predominantly focuses on MRFs as perpetrators in relation to crimes with knives (ibid.).

Additionally, the speaker sarcastically makes fun of integration efforts through acquiring language skills, although language proficiency of immigrants in the host countries language has been proven to be beneficial to employment, because of which immigrants do not have to rely on the welfare system to sustain themselves (Delander et al., 2005). Although in the party program, integrated individuals are described as being welcome in Germany, the AfD again contradicts itself and

shows that all those categorized as *the Other* are unwelcome and at the same time also unable to integrate themselves and will never be a part of *the Self*.

The next party member mentions clan criminality, as a specific form of criminal action of MRFs in Germany.

> *And in the problem neighborhoods of our cities you leave the poor Germans alone with Islamic parallel societies and clan criminality. (Baumann, 19-155, 2020)*

The use of the concept of clans is a clearly criminalized and racialized categorization of MRFs (Özvatan et al., 2023). In the excerpt it is used in connection with the mention of Islamic groups, thus alluding to the fact that only people of faith can engage in clan criminality, showing the racialized dimension of the statement. The description of Islamic societies as parallel societies renders those of Islamic belief as not belonging to Germany (ibid.).

Another theme within the narrative of MRFs as criminals is the theme of gendered violence. Since the increase of MRFs in 2015, there has been much debate in the media and in politics about the safety of German women (Spiegel Online, 2019) The effects of this discourse are two-fold, the MRFs are being villainized, while women in Germany are being victimized. The following excerpt shows this narrative of victimized women and villainized MRFs.

> *Refugees and host societies have to adapt to each other. So we should also adapt. - What then are the needs of a diverse, i.e. colorful, society? Dear Ms. Roth, for example, the need to keep quiet for days after the New Year's Eve in Cologne about the assaults on women by North African cathedral dancers or to benevolently advise one's own daughter to keep an arm's length away, to wall off Christmas markets, to enact knife bans, to introduce sex education for all refugees? (Frohnmaier, 19-69, 2018)*

There are multiple events that his text is basing its arguments on. One was a New Year's celebration in Cologne in 2015, where over 1200 official complaints were filed, with half of them regarding sexual offenses. The victims were

predominantly women and the perpetrators were men of various different origins (Diehl, 2019). However, the media and political discourse quickly demonized young men from the MENA region as the main perpetrators, leading the already heated debate about MRFs to escalate (Niewel, 2016). The other events mentioned are an attack on a Christmas market in Berlin in 2016 by someone who came to Germany from Tunisia, with 12 deaths (Bpb, 2021). The text adds to this debate by categorizing the MRFs as criminals, despite the fact that women are much more frequently victims of violence by men who are not MRFs and there being more violence towards MRFs from right-wing Germans than from MRFs towards Germans. There is also no data that supports a correlation between migration status and criminality (Bpb, 2020; ProAsyl, 2021; Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2022a;b).

Thus, the previous excerpts show that not only are MRFs categorized as being criminal, there are clear racial and religious stereotypes, through which they distinguish specific forms of criminality with which MRFs engage, such as knives as weapons and clan criminality.

5.1.3 Combining Religion and Criminality: Terrorism

The AfD also uses the themes of religion and criminality in relation to each other, in the context of terror and terrorism, which was found in 5 of the analyzed files, with 14 distinct mentions. Although terror and terrorism are terms that do not exclusively describe the actions of people with specific beliefs and of specific origins, the AfD uses these terms specifically to describe criminal acts of people with Islamic beliefs.

> *As a reminder, in the case of dangerous persons, the question is no longer whether they will commit a terrorist attack, but when. We have also seen steadily rising numbers of Salafists, Islamist terrorist potential individuals, and Islamist terrorist trials. This proves quite clearly that all the measures this government is taking to combat Islamist terror are completely inadequate. (Hess, 19-78, 2019)*

There have been 17 deaths in Germany since 2016 due to Islamist terrorism, while there have been 33 deaths associated with right-wing terrorism (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2022a;b). The numbers clearly show that terrorism is not just an issue of religious background and migration status, but also one of racist and xenophobic beliefs. The AfD stokes fear of MRFs by choosing to focus only on a specific form of terrorism and not disclosing the full picture and by promoting these images of dangerous Muslim terrorists, they increase the risk of racist and xenophobically motivated attacks from right-wing believers (Rees et al., 2019).
The AfD also frequently uses situations in other European countries to highlight the size of the issue with terrorism, as the following excerpt shows.

> *Everywhere in Europe the situation is escalating, and it is always the same groups of origin that are involved, when in neighboring Sweden there are fires on every corner because migrant gangs are terrorizing entire cities, when so-called banlieues burn in France because entire generations of politicians from the left and right camps, although they have tried everything with all means, have not succeeded. The situation is similar in Belgium, similar in the Netherlands, similar in Great Britain and, in fact, already here. (Baumann, 20-60, 2022)*

However, in many of these countries, similar to Germany, there has been more right-wing terrorism than Islamic terrorism (Bjørgo & Ravndal, 2019). As Koehler (2016) has shown, right-wing terrorism is on the rise and posing a serious risk in European countries, kindled among others, by right-wing politics.

5.1.4 (Un)real Migrants, Refugees & Foreigners

Another aspect of the description of MRF is the categorization into two distinct categories, which was found in 7 files and mentioned 8 times. One category is deserving of having left their country involuntarily and of seeking asylum and getting support from the German social system, while the other is depicted as voluntarily having made the choice to leave to receive financial support from the social system in Germany. In the speeches, the first group is characterized as

being *real* and *good* MRFs, while the second one is *unreal* and *bad* MRFs. In many cases in the speeches, the deserving MRF are depicted as being *echt* (true/real) and *wirklich* (real/actual). The following excerpt is an example of this where the politician states that only during a real escape from war and catastrophe could someone lose their passports.

> *Of course, in the case of a real escape from war and catastrophe, it may happen that you lose your passport or could not take it with you in the first place. (Wirth, 19-189, 2020)*

Passports are powerful objects that control, shape and regulate our lives. As Keshavarz (2015) states, they are material articulations of the abstract notions of borders, the nation, citizenship and territory and are used by states to enforce these notions. Precisely because a passport is a powerful materialization of rights, granting the permission to travel only to some, it is at this little booklet that political, social and economic interests intersect (ibid.).

Although it has been shown by migration studies that it is impossible to clearly distinguish between different forms of migration, the AfD still naturalizes and essentializes different forms of migration and MRFs through their distinct categorization (Niedrig & Seukwa, 2010).

The example of a passport arises again in another excerpt, however in contradiction to the previous mention of being a real refugee only if you lose your passport, now real refugees are the ones that still have their passport.

> *How can you recognize real refugees? They are, unlike in 2015, they are mostly female, they have their passports with them, they appear grateful instead of demanding, and they want to return home. (Curio, 20-21, 2022)*

The polarity of these two excerpts on passports shows just how subjective the construction by the AfD really is. The categories of *the Other* that is essentialized in their speeches, are not as robust as they make it out to be and adjusted depending on the context.

Interesting in the previous excerpt is the use of gender to classify real MRFs. In this context, the AfD employs two different sexist justifications for their argument

on who is a deserving MRF. First, they show that women are more deserving of help than men, and second, that women would be less demanding and more grateful. Additionally, there is no data, which backs the claims that the return rate of refugees is gender specific, with women being more likely to return home than men (Kaya & Orchard, 2020).

Not only are there two categories of the real and the unreal MRF, but there is a third category present in this categorization and that is the host country itself. As Niedrig & Seukwa (2010) show, there are three distinct roles that arise out of the construction of MRFs, namely the victim (the real refugee), the offender (the unreal refugee) and the savior (the host country). The following excerpt shows the role of the host country by being depicted through taxpayers, which are made responsible for paying for both *real* and *unreal* MRFs.

> *But if you're going to spend that money on foreigners/strangers at all costs, how about spending that hard-earned taxpayer money on the people who are actually rightfully here, the people who really have fled war and terror or who have been persecuted for their faith or political views? (Münzenmaier, 19-101, 2019)*

Here, the purpose of the categorization becomes clear; only *real* MRFs are deserving of receiving financial aid, which comes out of "hard-earned taxpayer money". The categorization of *real* refugees is done through the factors of religion and political beliefs. Although they describe those that are persecuted for their faith as deserving MRFs, they do not specify which religion.

5.1.5 Metaphors

The literary device of metaphors was consistently used throughout the speeches which aided the definition and naturalization of the categorization of MRFs. It answers to both the categorization of *the Other* as well as to the naturalization processes of t*he Other* and *the Self.* A total of 11 files contained metaphors, with 17 mentions throughout them.

Metaphors are frequently used in different discourses to describe MRFs, often with the intended effect to dehumanize them (Leudar et al., 2008). Although most

research has been done on the use and effects of metaphors in the media, this section shows that the use of metaphors in political discourse follows a very similar pattern, by frequently using different metaphors to describe *the Other* (Abid et al., 2017). Many of the metaphors used water imagery, referring to the MRFs as a dam breakage (*Dammbruch*), a flood (*Flut*), a wave (*Welle*) or a current (*Strom*). This is shown in the following excerpt, where the German migration policy is described as having flooded Germany with migrants.

> *This policy of flooding Germany with migrants, to destroy the welfare state by overstretching it, to drive the constitutional state into collapse, that is dangerous political extremism. (Curio, 19-140, 2020)*

Of significance to understand the use of metaphors is the context within which they are used. In the speeches by the AfD, it is clear that often metaphors are used in conjunction with a conflict towards the host country (Abid et al., 2017). The previous excerpt shows this by mentioning the destruction of the welfare state and the complete collapse of the state in relation to the metaphorical description of MRFs.

Metaphors are also used to describe the German MRF policies. Here the metaphor is usually used to describe a burden on the host country (Abid et al., 2017). The following text shows how the German migration policy is described as an escalator and a conveyor belt.

> *It would create a kind of giant escalator, an endless conveyor belt for migrants from the Orient and Africa directly into the heart of our cities and towns. (Baumann, 19-98, 2019)*

Here, the use of metaphor also results in a loss of agency of the MRFs, which, according to this imagery, do not have any free will and are just subject to involuntary movement via machines that move them from one place to another. This is a violent depiction of migration, as it chooses to both ignore the choices that MRFs make before migrating and also minimizes the dangers of the migration journey itself. In line with this metaphor are multiple other mentions of dehumanizing metaphors, which describe the migration to Germany as voluntary

acts through describing it as tourism (*Asyltourismus*), a trip (*Migrationstrip*) or even as a shuttle service. These metaphors again, do not leave space for the experiences that MRFs have made along their migration journey.

To conclude, through the use of metaphors, the AfD constructs the identity of *the Other* with clear hostile aims towards them. It is a tactic to de-humanize the MRFs in order to justify and naturalize how the AfD constructs their identity. A main concern with this construction of the identity of those migrating to Germany is that it is one-sided, with the AfD having much more power to define their identities than the MRFs themselves have (Leudar et al., 2008). Although they are subject to such hostile categorization, there is rarely space for them to share their identities with others. Thus, it is essential to create spaces where MRFs can both react to the identities imposed on them by the political discourse and use their own voice to construct their own identity.

5.1.6 Whataboutism

This thesis focuses on the construction of *the Self* against the construction of *the Other*. While so far, I have been focusing on the individual construction of *the Other,* there are also explicit mentions where Germans and non-Germans are compared, which I want to use as a bridge between the section on *Othering* and the section on *the Self*. In 10 of the 36 analyzed files, with 17 distinct mentions, the AfD employs so-called *whataboutism* to direct the focus away from the MRFs and towards other issues within Germany. Using diversionary tactics to deflect attention away from controversial issues, is often employed by political parties on extreme ends of the spectrum and is used in this context to justify the exclusion of *the Other* from the national identity (Dash et al., 2021). Without exceptions, the AfD uses *whataboutism* to divert attention from MRFs to German citizens, as the following excerpt shows.

> *From the FDP to the left, you have room for theatrically howling migrants in faraway countries, but you do not care about the misery of our fellow citizens. (Sichert, 19-176, 2020)*

As O'Connell (2020) has shown, *whataboutism* is often used to police discourse. Regarding the previous excerpt, the AfD is trying to police the discourse on MRFs in Germany by both stating that they are not really deserving of help and are pretending to have things worse than they actually do and then diverting the attention to German citizens, who they characterize as being rightfully deserving of both help and attention. The next excerpt mirrors this *whataboutism* by again stating that the MRFs are only allegedly needy, while actually needy people are those that are already living in Germany.

> *German politicians do not need to go to a Greek island to take pictures with allegedly needy people; because the really poor, the really needy live millions of times among us. (Sichert, 19-176, 2020)*

Comparing the living standards in Germany with those in, for example in Syria, it is clear that those living in Syria face severe issues, which impact their quality of life, that Germans do not, such as political instabilities, restrictions of civil rights, high inflation, worse infrastructure, significantly lower GDP per capita and significantly higher unemployment rate (Worlddata, 2023). Thus, using *whataboutism* in the context of deflecting attention away from issues of MRFs fleeing these regions by claiming to pay attention to more pressing issues, is simply untrue (ibid.).

5.2 The Self- A German National Identity

Next, after having identified different themes, through which the AfD characterized *the Other* in their speeches, posters and party program, is the theme of the construction of *the Self,* which was identified in 27 of the 36 files, with 124 mentions. The main categories that were identified through the analysis are the role of the welfare system, the characterization of citizens, the role of territories, borders and the state, the concept of a common culture known as *Leitkultur,* and finally the concept of *Heimat*.

5.2.1 Characteristics of the German Citizen

One main category that arose out of the data, was the category of *Bürger* (citizen). There were 25 explicit mentions of the actual word *Bürger* but also different implicit characterizations of who is understood to be a citizen of Germany totaling 52 distinct cases in 17 files. Through the analysis, I identified paying taxes as being identified as belonging, which plays a predominant role in the characterization of citizens, as the following politician shows.

> *Ladies and gentlemen I have now listened for a very long time to all the speeches on this subject and I perceive that there are very few people here who have any problem with saddling the German taxpayer with billions and billions of coverage for ever more unmanaged mass migration. (Ehrhorn, 19-184, 2020)*

Previous literature confirms that taxation historically has played an important role in identifying with and belonging to a nation-state (Isin & Turner, 2007). Furthermore, the AfD uses the concept of *natives* to describe those who belong to the German national identity. The following excerpt shows the outrage of one speaker over the level of support that MRFs are planned to receive in Germany, in which he shows how he values the natives of Germany over MRFs, thus aiming to create a system of two classes, where one class (natives) receive good care, while the other class (MRFs), does not.

> *And then all migrants everywhere are supposed to be well taken care of - at the level of the natives. (Baumann, 19-155, 2020)*

In German, the word native is *Einheimische,* which translated literally, depending on the interpretation, can mean those claiming a single (*ein*), space as their home (*heimisch*), thus prohibiting anyone from another country, with another home to become *einheimisch*, unless they revoke their previous country of belonging, as even accepting Germany as their other home, would make them *Mehrheimische* (multiple home). Also, the concept of being a native is discursively constructed and naturalized, just as the national identity is. Given the fact, the oxymoron native foreigner *(einheimische_r Ausländer_in)* is used to describe those that were

not born in Germany but have become a part of the national identity over time, which is another characterization used by the AfD for citizens.

The following excerpt shows how the AfD uses the concept of duration of stay in Germany as a factor of obtaining citizenship.

> *But it is no secret anymore that you do not care so much about the people who have been living here for a long time. (Münzenmaier, 19-101, 2019)*

There is no indication of how long one needs to have stayed in Germany to be understood as being part of the national identity. What sets this argument apart from the other characterizations of *the Self* and *the Other*, is that this is something that everyone can achieve. Regardless of religion, culture, or other factors, anyone could achieve the status of having lived in Germany for a long time. Additionally, this expression is also much more inclusive, as there are many people from different countries and from various religious backgrounds, who have lived in Germany for many generations, such as Turkish Gastarbeiter_innen (guest workers) who emigrated to Germany between 1961 and 1973 during the duration of the recruitment agreement between Turkey and Germany (Hunn, 2002).

Lastly, the AfD uses the worker identity as a key characterization of the citizens of Germany. In the following excerpt, the aforementioned categories of taxpayer and duration of stay get combined with the worker identity to characterize the German citizen.

> *Unlimited money for migration, but the German worker, who pays in for decades, gets nothing decent out of it! This is pure rip-off. The citizens will not put up with this any longer. (Curio, 19-140, 2020)*

Similar to the previous category, these factors are much less restrictive than others, since anyone who legally works in Germany will pay taxes and the longer they stay, the longer they will pay taxes. Although one must take into account that the AfD would like to limit those who get granted the right to work in Germany. Out of this categorization arises yet another contradiction, as the AfD seems to neither want those that arrive in Germany to become workers and thus tax payers

but also reject those that come to Germany with the supposed singular expectation to benefit from the welfare system, as I will show in the following section.

5.2.2 The Welfare System

A frequent description of Germany is by referring to the German welfare system (Sozialstaat) when mentioning Germany, which was found in 8 of the analyzed files, with 15 distinct mentions. This description of Germany is mentioned in three distinct parts of the party program, showing the significance of this description to the construction of the national identity through the AfD.

> *The most important (mis)incentive to immigrate into the German welfare system via the right of asylum is the lack of enforcement of the obligation to leave the country against foreigners who are not or no longer entitled to stay. (AfD, 2016)*

Here, Germany is not described as the host country, but the German welfare system seems to be the final destination. The MRFs are clearly characterized as being undeserving of receiving the benefits of the German welfare system. This presupposes that there is another kind of person who is deserving of the benefits. This is never explicitly mentioned but it can be assumed that in opposition to the undeserving MRF, there exists a deserving national German who deserves access to the benefits of the welfare system (Menke & Rumpel, 2022).

Additionally, the AfD draws a clear distinction between different kinds of MRF here, by dividing along the lines of legality of the stay in Germany.

The next speaker very explicitly states his opinion on who comes to Germany and why.

> *The so-called skilled workers that you recruit with your methods and incentives do not migrate into our labor market, but almost all into our welfare system. You are not bringing the Vietnamese doctor here, but the soldier of fortune from the Balkans who is having his crooked teeth fixed here in Germany, ladies and gentlemen. (Münzenmaier, 19-101, 2019)*

The Vietnamese doctor as a desirable MRF is juxtaposed with someone from the Balkans with crooked teeth, leading to a distinct racialization of the political discourse on MRFs. This plays with racialized stereotypes about different nationalities, which again adds to the aforementioned concepts of real/good MRFs and bad/unreal MRFs (Szczepanik, 2016). Additionally, the party member speaks of recruitment processes, which lead people to come to Germany, disregarding the factors in the individual countries, which force MRFs to leave them. However, there currently is not any recruitment process happening, in which Germany tries to find workers to balance out an undersupplied labor market. Although this is necessary since the German population is rapidly aging and there is a high demand for workers, which is a common discussion in the political discourse (BMWK, 2022). By pretending that this is already happening and with negative consequences, the AfD discourse prohibits any further negotiations toward the necessity and benefits of such actions.

5.2.3 Territories, Borders & the State

Although the mention of territory and the role of borders in the speeches and the other material, is not as frequently explicitly mentioned as other themes that have been identified in this thesis, it does remain as one of the most important appeals that get made in regard to the need for change and often correlates with mentions of the need for security. While territory was mentioned 19 times in 9 files, borders were explicitly mentioned 14 times in 8 of the analyzed files. It becomes clear that for the AfD the borders are where the national identity is threatened the most.

> *This proves quite clearly: border controls bring security; they protect our citizens from violent criminals and terrorists. That's why every politician who really cares about the security of our country must tell this government loud and clear: If you really want to improve the security situation in this country, then finally protect our borders! (Hess, 19-78, 2019)*

In line with their right-wing beliefs, there are also mentions of the concept of *Boden* (land, ground or soil) in relation to the German identity. The use of the

term *Boden* in this context has connotations and remembrances of the *Blut und Boden ideology* (blood and land/ground/soil) of the Nazi regime, which refers to a racially defined national body (*Blut*) within a defined settlement area (*Boden*).

> *In your bill, you create for almost everyone, who somehow enters German land/ground/soil [Deutschen Boden], the prerequisite for state-funded German courses. (Münzenmaier, 19-101, 2019)*

Furthermore, the previous author explicitly expresses his disdain for the funding of German courses for MRFs arriving in Germany, although acquiring language skills is one of the most important factors for MRFs to secure their livelihood in countries that do not speak their native language (Delander et al., 2005). The concept of language will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.2.4.

The role that borders play for the national identity, becomes obvious in Poster #2 (see page 43), where the AfD claims that protecting "our" borders is normal. By choosing to use the possessive pronoun "our" to describe the borders instead of just saying the borders, shows how engrained the concept of borders to limit the national identity and thus *the Self* is in the political discourse that the AfD creates.

As I have mentioned in the conceptual framework, the sovereignty of the nation is an inherent characteristic through which the category of the nation-state can be justified, which the AfD also employ during their speeches, as the following excerpt shows (Anderson, 1983).

> *Sovereign nation-states are not some dusty ideas of the last century for us. Those who want to abolish borders and thus dissolve national territories, anyone who wants to replace the state's people by resettling them is attacking almost everything that constitutes a democratic state. (Frohnmaier, 19-135, 2019)*

The speaker describes sovereignty as necessary not just for the state to exist but equates the sovereign nation with the democratic state. Thus, naturalizing the concept of the sovereignty of the state by making it a base for establishing democracy. How the politician describes sovereignty to mean borders and national territories and a people that has settled shows that the AfD uses the concept of sovereignty in a very similar way to how Anderson (1983) has described its use as

a legitimation for the borders of the nation-state. The next speaker takes the importance of sovereignty even further, by showing that the sovereignty of the German nation is essential for Germany to exist.

> *Germany's disappearance in the globalism of forced migration or freedom for a sovereign German nation. (Curio, 20-17, 2022)*

5.2.4 Discursive Construction of a Collective Culture

As stated in the conceptual framework, the concept of culture often plays an important role in the construction of a national identity (Caiani & della Porta, 2011; Weiguo, 2013). This thesis affirms previous research, as the construction of a collective culture was an important theme that arose out of the coded texts, with 9 files containing mentions of culture, with 18 mentions overall. The difference in cultures is oftentimes highlighted through the differential treatment or image of women, as the following party member shows.

> *The Danes stand for a different, for a new policy. They have understood that there are also cultural reasons when integration in Europe fails colossally - especially when larger numbers of immigrants come from culturally very different regions with very different images of women, people and ideas about living together. (Baumann, 20-60, 2022)*

Here, the speaker is not referring to a collective culture of Germany, but constructing a supra-national identity of Europe, by implying that the reasons for integration failing, are the same across Europe, thus showing that those that are classified as not belonging to Germany, are not just those who are not from Germany, but those who are also not from Europe, thus clearly differentiating between different types of MRFs.

> *The Alternative for Germany is committed to the German Leitkultur. The AfD regards the ideology of multiculturalism as a serious threat to social peace and to the continued existence of the nation as a cultural entity. (AfD, 2016).*

Specific to the German context is the concept of *Leitkultur,* as can be seen in the previous excerpt. This refers to the need for retaining one dominant culture and keeping other cultures separate to avoid cultural conflicts because of the assumption that different cultures are incompatible with each other (Pautz, 2005). It is used in both the party program and the posters that I analyzed. In Germany, it replaced ideas of racial belonging with cultural belonging in an attempt to move away from the Nazi definitions of the German national identity (Pautz, 2005). However, since the German word for race (*Rasse*) has become entirely removed from the language after WWII, the concept of culture did not become a better way to define the national identity, it became a replacement term for racialized belonging, under a different name (Soekefeld, 2007). Especially in right-wing contexts cultural identity gets used in much the same way as race was used to justify belonging during the Nazi regime (Yılmaz, 2012).

While the concept of *Leitkultur*, can be considered as an ideology, used by the right-wing political discourse to construct a common national identity, the AfD goes in the opposite direction and claims the concept of multiculturalism as an ideology and threat to the nation itself, as the previous excerpt shows. This shows just how significant the concept of a collective culture is to the construction of a German national identity through the AfD, as according to them, without the *Leitkultur*, there would be no nation.

In the AfD Election Poster #1 (see page 43), the AfD shows just how strongly they believe in the concept of *Leitkultur*, by stating that MRFs are coming to Germany to subordinate their culture to the German culture. The poster shows that the AfD considers certain values to be a part of the German *Leitkultur* without specifically stating which ones they are referring to.

Another factor regarding what constitutes the collective culture is the German language, which was identified in 4 of the analyzed files, with 7 mentions. The following party member shows the significance that the role of language plays in identifying a German national identity.

> *We would like to promote and strengthen the teaching of German again and teach German culture and language at a high level. (AfD, 2016)*

The way language is understood by the AfD is as a stable construct, which has been the same or similar for many decades and will continue to remain unchanged, which becomes clear in the following statement.

> *The AfD is concerned about how the German language is being replaced or "counter-gendered" by English in the spirit of a misunderstood "internationalization". We firmly reject politically "correct" language specifications. (Kleinwächter, 19-124, 2019)*

Here, the AfD speaks about the replacement of the language, rather than accepting changes of the German language as a central element of the very concept of language (Schmidt, 2020). They specifically reject influences that come from other languages, especially English, dismissing the fact that languages have developed out of other languages and continue to influence each other (Schmidt, 2020).

The final excerpt, which highlights the role that language plays in the construction of cultural identity, was taken from an analyzed part of the party program, which was titled *culture, language and identity*, thus in itself showing the significance of language for the AfD in this context.

> *As a central element of German identity, the German language must be enshrined in the Basic Law as a state language, following the example of many other countries. (AfD, 2016)*

Here the AfD makes clear just how central an element the German language is to the national identity, confirming Anderson (1983) who named a common language as one of the most important criterias that unite a nation. However, German is an official language, not just in Germany but also in Austria, Luxemburg, Liechtenstein, Belgium and Switzerland, which contradicts their argument.

5.2.5 Narrative of "Heimat"

Predominant in the categorization of both *the Self* and *the Other,* the concept of *Heimat* plays an important role in the analyzed material, with 9 files containing 13 distinct mentions. The German concept of *Heimat* can be translated into home or homeland. It encompasses the feeling of home on an undefined spatial scale from the nearest family to a country or nation-state and is closely linked to ideas of feeling connected to family, friends and a wider community through attachment to a certain place with distinct values (Ratter & Gee, 2012). The following excerpt shows how important *Heimat* is to the AfD, the speaker even equating it with the state.

> *With the Ampel[8] full steam ahead into the abyss, destruction of Germany until 2025, with the Union until 2029, with the AfD salvation of Germany as "Heimatland" and state. (Curio, 20-17, 2022)*

It is a highly subjective feeling but plays an important role in the sense of belonging in the German context. *Heimat* can be where you feel safe, where you know the language/dialect that gets spoken, where you recognize the landscape, where you are accustomed to the customs, or where people think and feel similarly to you (Pallagst et al., 2018). To summarize, *Heimat* can be defined by spatial, social, emotional and discursive components, which lead to highly individual understandings of identity (Ratter & Gee, 2012). While *Heimat* does not have to be understood at the spatial scale of the nation-state, it is often used in, specifically right-wing political discursive contexts to construct a national identity, as is the case in the analyzed data of this thesis (Peabody & Randall, 2019; Römhild, 2004; Svasek, 2002).

As Ratzhel (1994) has shown, specific understandings of *Heimat* are also associated with how foreigners are perceived, specifically, whether they are socially accepted. Especially when it is understood as a harmonious image, the

[8] The Ampel refers to the coalition between the three ruling parties SPD, which is associated with the color red, FDP, which is associated with the color yellow and finally the Green party. These three colors make up a traffic light, which means Ampel in German, thus giving the name to the coalition.

MRFs are regarded as an endangerment to the country which is defined as *Heimat* (Rathzel, 1994). This association is also clear in the analyzed data, as the following politician shows how the MRFs have changed cities, villages and the entire *Heimat.*

> *Their unworldly Willkommenskultur has changed our cities, our villages, our entire Heimat at its core. (Baumann, 20-60, 2022)*

Furthermore, the following politician constructs the country of Germany around this concept.

> *Germany is not just any word for us; Germany is our "Heimat". (Frohnmaier, 19-69, 2018)*

Lastly, this concept is also represented in Poster #3, where the AfD states that local is more important than global to them. They are referring to the importance of native (*heimisch*) businesses here, but their view of local over global extends beyond just businesses.

6. Discussion

What kind of categories are used to construct and justify the common national identity?

The previous chapter has shown that there are multiple categories that the AfD employs to construct both a common national identity and an *Other* against which the national identity is formed. Some of the categories, such as religion and culture have been identified by previous research to play an important role in right-wing discourses on national identities (see Chaturvedi, 2002; Modood & Thompson, 2022), which this thesis has proven. Other categories, such as the strong focus on the welfare state and the citizenship of those residing in Germany, arose solely out of the studied material but can be backed by research in other geographical contexts, which have shown similar results.

The use of CDA as the main theoretical and methodological perspective, allowed me to be critical of not only the new material that arose out of this thesis but also the previous research which had been done on the understanding of national

identity, allowing me to better classify the findings of this thesis. The categories that were identified to be the most significant in the construction of the national identity were the concept of a common culture, specifically the *Leitkultur*, territories and borders, the welfare state, citizenship and finally the concept of *Heimat*. Especially the concepts of *Leitkultur* and *Heimat*, which are specific to the construction of national identity in the context of Germany, show how highly contextualized the construction of national identity is. This is also shown by how many different studies have been done on the construction of national identity, with a multitude of angles that have found a multitude of different categories which are significant in each context. This means that this thesis adds a small puzzle piece to the much larger aim of understanding how national identity is constructed. All of these categories are used to not only construct the national identity of Germany but are at the same time used by the AfD to justify their xenophobic claims through the naturalization of the mentioned categories.

How are they naturalized in documents and speeches on migrants, refugees and foreigners?

The analysis has shown how the AfD continuously tries to naturalize the categories which they construct but through multiple contradictions fail to do so, which becomes especially obvious after a critical engagement with the political discourse. This is where the coding and creation of themes helped to identify these contradictions within the speeches, the party program and the posters. However, the content analysis of themes itself was not enough to show the full picture of the naturalization of methods, which is why rhetoric devices needed to be included in the interpretation of the categories, such as the employment of specific tactics, namely metaphors and *whataboutism* by the AfD to dehumanize the MRFs and in turn legitimize their arguments of discriminating and xenophobic politics. Although previous research has been done on the role of metaphors in describing MRFs (see Abid et al., 2017; Leudar et al., 2008), it is not brought into relation with the naturalization of both the national identity and the *Other*, which is one of the contributions made by this thesis.

The AfD also follows in the steps of other right-wing political discourses, of using concepts of territory and borders to naturalize the sovereignty of the state, which falls in line with numerous previous research, that has already shown these categories to be of importance in understanding national identity (see Hjerm & Triandafyllidou, 2002; Paasi, 2001; Paasi, 1998; Tompkins, 2019). However, these concepts were not as prevalent as others, namely the use of narratives, such as a collective culture and the concept of *Heimat*, through which the AfD successfully paints a picture of coherent characteristics which define all those who live within the borders of the nation-state. By making some characteristics of the German citizens, such as paying taxes and having lived in Germany for an (undefined) long period of time, and being a worker, seemingly exclusive to Germans, which are not MRFs, they are naturalizing who belongs and who does not.

Both the relational and contingent ontology and the post-structural feminist epistemology were key in being able to challenge these taken-for-granted assumptions through which the AfD portrays their naturalized understanding of national identity. They allowed me to critically question how the categories found through the content analysis enabled them to justify their portrayal of the German national identity.

What role does the construction of the Other play in the construction of national identity?

This thesis has put a specific focus on the construction of *the Other* against which the national identity is developed, as I believe this to be a significant part of the German national identity construction. This intentional focus has clearly shown that *the Other* is an integral part of the identification with *the Self* in regard to the political discourse of the AfD. Especially the theme of direct contrast between the German and *the Other*, which was found throughout the material, shows just how important *the Other* is to the construction of *the Self*. There were multiple themes identified, which played a significant part in the construction of *the Other* and *the Self* and those were religion, the narrative of criminal MRFs, and the construction of the two distinct types of (un)real MRFs. The use of metaphors played a

significant role in the construction of *the Other* and served to further dehumanize the MRFs and draw a further distinction between them and the German national identity. The AfD continuously draws a distinction between those who belong to Germany and those who do not by using highly context-dependent, seemingly arbitrary characteristics, such as language skills, religion, being a worker and being a criminal. Although these characteristics are all things that people can be or have, regardless of their citizenship and country of residence, the AfD employs them to naturalize distinctions between *the Self* and *the Other*. To conclude, this thesis has shown that the concept of *Othering* plays a significant role in the construction of the German national identity and is repeatedly employed by the AfD to create categories into which *the Self* and *the Other* belong, proving that it is equally important to focus on the *Other* when understanding the *Self*. Thus, showing that the role of *the Other* plays such a significant part in the construction of the Self, is another contribution of this thesis.

7. Conclusion

Finally, let me conclude by reflecting on the limitations that I faced during this thesis in the hopes that other scholars in the future may take them up in order to provide a more complete picture of the construction of national identity and its implications.

Migration is an omnipresent theme in media, political discourse, society, economics and public discourse. Consequently, there are large amounts of material to be used to fully understand the conceptions of migrants, refugees and *Others* and the construction of *the Self* in those discourses. Even within just the political discourse in the Bundestag, there are over 2 million individual data points, which could be analyzed. The sheer volume of material leads to the obvious limitation of this study, it is relevant only in a highly contextualized setting, namely within the German right-wing political discourse of the AfD within the last six years. However, the findings could be used to understand the rise of right-wing discourses in other European countries in order to then figure out, whether the phenomena shown in this thesis, apply to other contexts as well.

Discourse does not exist in a vacuum and is always shaped by other discourses around it. The discourse of the AfD is also influenced by the discourse of other politicians from different parties answering to the AfD in their own speeches or interrupting the AfD during theirs. The exclusion of alternate discourses in dialogue with the AfD is another limitation of this thesis. Future studies, which are allowed a larger frame, can build on the findings of this thesis by adding on the additional perspective of alternate voices of other parties with different opinions in the Bundestag, thus challenging the hegemonic discourse of the AfD.

Although the findings of the thesis may not be applicable to different contexts because of its highly geographically and historically situated context, the methodological choices can be. The rational and contingent approach to ontology and the post-structural feminist epistemology enabled me not to view previous research as an all-encompassing truth but recognize them as geographically and historically contextualized studies, with more room for research in different geographic spaces and times. The framework provided by CDA aided in being able to critically engage with both previous research and previous categories of national identity construction and critically analyze the material of this thesis. Using a directed content analysis allowed me to build on previous research, while at the same time being able to advance it through new findings in my data. The limitation that the content analysis put on the analysis was the inclusion of rhetoric devices next to the categories which were identified with the content analysis. Only through the analysis, did I realize the importance of including rhetoric devices in understanding the processes of naturalization that the AfD undertook in their speeches, posters and campaigns. Future research will definitely improve this shortcoming of methodological choice on my part, by using a method that can encompass both thematic categories and rhetoric ones better.

While my thesis is a contribution to the field of national identity, it is necessary for further research to be made on the topic of the construction of national identity precisely because it has far-reaching consequences. Specifically, the focus must also be put on the MRFs and their own construction of their identity, to allow for

alternate conceptions of MRF identities within Germany, for which there is no space within the right-wing political discourse and thus for which there was no space in this thesis. Thus, I envision a future research project in which MRF, who are currently in Germany, have the opportunity to confront the findings of this thesis and to be able to comment and discuss how they perceive the categories by which they have been defined. In this way, they could add their perceptions of national identity to the discourse and thus be able to participate in the construction of their own identity, in effect challenging the hegemonic discourse of the AfD of defining who belongs, who doesn't belong, and why.

IV Bibliography

Abid, R. Z., Manan, S. A., & Rahman, Z. A. A. A. (2017). 'A flood of Syrians has slowed to a trickle': The use of metaphors in the representation of Syrian refugees in the online media news reports of host and non-host countries. *Discourse & Communication*, *11*(2), 121–140. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481317691857

AfD (2021). *Unser Programm zur Bundestagswahl 2021* (11.04.2023). https://www.afd.de/wahlprogramm/

AfD (2016). *Grundsatzprogramm für Deutschland* (15.05.2023). https://www.afd.de/grundsatzprogramm/

Ainsworth, S., & Hardy, C. (2004). Critical discourse analysis and identity: Why bother? *Critical Discourse Studies*, *1*(2), 225–259. https://doi.org/10.1080/1740590042000302085

Anderson, B. R. O. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Rev. ed). Verso.

Anderson, B., Sharma, N., & Wright, C. (2011). Editorial: Why No Borders? *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, *26*(2), 5–18. https://doi.org/10.25071/1920-7336.32074

BAMF (2015). *Migration Report 2015.* General Conclusions. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2015-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=13

Bjørgo, T., & Ravndal, J. A. (2019). *Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns, and Responses*.

Blank, T., & Schmidt, P. (2003). National Identity in a United Germany: Nationalism or Patriotism? An Empirical Test With Representative Data. *Political Psychology*, *24*(2), 289–312. https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00329

BMWK (2022). *Fachkräfte für Deutschland* (12.04.2023). https://www.bmwk.de/Redaktion/DE/Dossier/fachkraeftesicherung.html

Bond, R. (2006). *Belonging and becoming: National identity and exclusion.* Sociology, 40(4), 609-626.

Bpb (2022). *AfD als Verdachtsfall eingestuft* (15.05.2023). https://www.bpb.de/kurz-knapp/taegliche-dosis-politik/505958/afd-als-verdachtsfall-eingestuft/

Bpb (2021). *Vor fünf Jahren: Islamistischer Anschlag auf Berliner Weihnachtsmarkt* (12.04.2023).

https://www.bpb.de/kurz-knapp/hintergrund-aktuell/344771/vor-fuenf-jahren-islamistischer-anschlag-auf-berliner-weihnachtsmarkt/

Bpb (2020). *Kurz und bündig: die AfD*. (02.01.2023). https://www.bpb.de/themen/parteien/parteien-in-deutschland/afd/211108/kurz-und-buendig-die-afd/.

Brinkmann, H. U., & Uslucan, H. H. (Eds.). (2013). *Dabeisein und dazugehören: Integration in Deutschland*. Springer-Verlag.

Brookings (2022). *Forcibly Displaced Ukrainians: Lessons from Syria and Beyond* (11.04.2023). https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2022/06/21/forcibly-displaced-ukrainians-lessons-from-syria-and-beyond/

Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (2022a). *Rechtsextremismus. Zahlen und Fakten* (31.03.2023) https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/DE/themen/rechtsextremismus/zahlen-und-fakten/zahlen-und-fakten_node.html#doc679030bodyText2

Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (2022b). *Islamismus und islamistischer Terrorismus. Zahlen und fakten* (31.03.2023). https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/DE/themen/islamismus-und-islamistischer-terrorismus/zahlen-und-fakten/zahlen-und-fakten_node.html;jsessionid=6566CCCCCF04ED1058C8A7619B83178C.intranet231#doc678982bodyText4

Butler, J. (2011). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.

Caballero Mengibar, A. (2015). Critical discourse analysis in the study of representation, identity politics and power relations: A multi-method approach. *Communication & Society*, *28*(2), 39–54. https://doi.org/10.15581/003.28.2.39-54

Caiani, M., & della Porta, D. (2011). The elitist populism of the extreme right: A frame analysis of extreme right-wing discourses in Italy and Germany. *Acta Politica*, *46*(2), 180–202. https://doi.org/10.1057/ap.2010.28

Carta, C., & Wodak, R. (2015). Discourse analysis, policy analysis, and the borders of EU identity. *Journal of Language & Politics*, *14*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.14.1.01car

Chambliss, D. F., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Making sense of the social world: Methods of investigation*. Sage Publications.

ChatGPT (2023). *Personal communication* (15.05.2023). https://chat.openai.com/

Chaturvedi, S. (2002). Process of Othering in the case of India and Pakistan. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, *93*(2), 149–159. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9663.00191

Collins, C., & Jones, P. E. (2006). Analysis of Discourse as “a Form of History

Writing": A Critique of Critical Discourse Analysis and an Illustration of a Cultural-Historical Alternative. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, *14*(1–2), 51–69. https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2006.9644769

Collins Dictionary (n.d.). *Xenophobia* (12.04.2023). https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/xenophobia

Dash, S., Shekhawat, G., Akbar, S. Z., & Pal, J. (2021). Extremism & Whataboutism: A Case Study on Bangalore Riots. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2109.10526*.

Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2005). Feminism/poststructuralism. *Research methods in the social sciences,* 318-325.

De Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (1999). The Discursive Construction of National Identities. *Discourse & Society*, *10*(2), 149–173. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926599010002002

Delander, L., Hammarstedt, M., MÅnsson, J., & Nyberg, E. (2005). Integration of Immigrants: The Role of Language Proficiency and Experience. *Evaluation Review*, *29*(1), 24–41.

Deutscher Bundestag (2023). *Protokolle. Dokumente. Plenarprotokoll* (13.04.2023). https://www.bundestag.de/protokolle

Deutscher Bundestag (2022a). *Disput über die Aufnahme ukrainischer Kriegsflüchtlinge* (11.04.2023).https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2022/kw14-de-masterplan-hilfe-889116

Deutscher Bundestag (2022b). *Bundestagswahlergebnisse seit 1949-Zweitstimmen* (11.04.2023). https://www.bundestag.de/parlament/wahlen/ergebnisse_seit1949-244692

Deutschlandfunk (2015). Zunehmende Gewalt gegen Flüchtlinge. Polizei ermittelt kaum Tatverdächtige (11.04.2023). https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/zunehmende-gewalt-gegen-fluechtlinge-polizei-ermittelt-kaum-100.html

Diehl, J. (2019). Bilanz der Kälner Silvesternacht. Hunderte Opfer, fast keine Täter (12.04.2023). https://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/koelner-silvesternacht-ernuechternde-bilanz-der-justiz-a-1257182.html

DIP (2023). *DIP-Das Rechercheportal* (13.04.2023). https://dip.bundestag.de/%C3%BCber-dip

DW (2022a). *Mehrheit der Deutschen sieht die Ukraine in der EU* (03.03.2023).https://www.dw.com/de/mehrheit-der-deutschen-sieht-die-ukraine-in-der-eu/a-61005618.

DW (2022b). Faktencheck: Bevorzugen EU-Länder ukrainische Flüchtlinge?

(11.04.2023).https://www.dw.com/de/faktencheck-bevorzugen-eu-l%C3%A4nder-ukrainische-fl%C3%BCchtlinge/a-63548244
Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *62*(1), 107–115. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x
Eurostat (2022). *Annual Asylum Statistics* (11.04.2023). https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Asylum_statistics&oldid=558844
Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203697078
Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *12*(2), 219–245. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363
Folkestad, G. (2002). National identity and music. *Musical identities*, 151-162.
Foucault, M. (1976). *The History of Sexuality, Vol 1: An Introduction*. Penguin.
Foucault, M. (1969). *Archaeology of Knowledge* (0 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203604168
Gannon, S., & Davies, B. (2012). Postmodern, Post-Structural, and Critical Theories. In S. Hesse-Biber, *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis* (pp. 65–91). SAGE Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483384740.n4
Gavey, N. (1989). Feminist Poststructuralism and Discourse Analysis. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *13*(4), 459–475. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1989.tb01014.x
Greenfeld, L., & Prevelakis, N. (2010). The Formation of Ethnic and National Identities. In L. Greenfeld & N. Prevelakis, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.481
Greer, S.,Orleans, P. (1964). *Political sociology*. In Handbook of modern sociology, ed. Robert E. L. Faris, pp. 808-51. Chicago: Rand McNally.
Gürses, H. (2016). Flüchtlingskrise. Wie Sprache unsere Welt formt (12.04.2023).https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000034981638/fluechtlingskrise-wie-sprache-unsere-welt-formt
Harvard International Review (2022). *The Limitations of Humanity: Differential Refugee Treatment in the EU* (11.04.2023). https://hir.harvard.edu/the-limitations-of-humanity-differential-refugee-treatment-in-the-eu/
Haynes, J. (2020). Right-wing populism and religion in Europe and the USA.

Religions, *11*(10), 490.
Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2018). What is a case study? *Evidence Based Nursing*, *21*(1), 7–8. https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2017-102845
Hjelm, T. (2014). National piety: Religious equality, freedom of religion and national identity in Finnish political discourse. *Religion*, *44*(1), 28–45. https://doi.org/10.1080/0048721X.2013.857366
Hjerm, M., & Triandafyllidou, A. (2002). Immigrants and National Identity in Europe. *Contemporary Sociology*, *31*(6), 730. https://doi.org/10.2307/3089958
Hobsbawm, E. (1990). *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Houtum, H. (2021). Beyond 'Borderism': Overcoming Discriminative B/Ordering and Othering. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, *112*(1), 34–43. https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12473
Hoven, E., & Hestermann, T. (2019). Kriminalität in Deutschland im Spiegel von Pressemitteilungen der Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). *Kriminalpolitische Zeitschrift*, *3*, 127-139.
Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, *15*(9), 1277–1288. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687
Hunn, K. (2002). Asymmetrische Beziehungen: Türkische „Gastarbeiter "zwischen Heimat und Fremde. *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, *42*, 145-172.
IOM (2022). *More than 5,000 Deaths Recorded on European Migration Routes since 2021: IOM* (11.04.2023). https://www.iom.int/news/more-5000-deaths-recorded-european-migration-routes-2021-iom
Isin, E. F., & Turner, B. S. (2007). Investigating citizenship: An agenda for citizenship studies. *Citizenship studies*, *11*(1), 5-17.
Jensen, S. Q. (2011). Othering, identity formation and agency. *Qualitative Studies*, *2*(2), 63–78. https://doi.org/10.7146/qs.v2i2.5510
Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208871
Kaya, S., & Orchard, P. (2020). Prospects of return: The case of Syrian refugees in Germany. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, *18*(1), 95-112.
Kehl, K. (2020). *The right kind of queer: race, sexuality, and gender in contemporary constructions of Swedishness.*
Keshavarz, M. (2015). Material practices of power – part I: Passports and passporting. *Design Philosophy Papers*, *13*(2), 97–113.

https://doi.org/10.1080/14487136.2015.1133130
Knight, D. B. (1982). Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *72*(4), 514–531. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1982.tb01842.x
Koehler, D. (2016). Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in Europe: Current Developments and Issues for the Future. *PRISM*, *6*(2), 84–105.
Kösemen & Wieland (2022). *Willkommenskultur zwischen Stabilität und Aufbruch. Aktuelle Perspektiven der Bevölkerung auf Migration und Integration in Deutschland.* Bertelsmann Stiftung. https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/Projekte/Migration_fair_gestalten/BST_Studie_Willkommenskultur_2022.pdf
Lachmann, G. (2014). *Forsa: Jeder zweite AfD-Wähler ist ausländerfeindlich* (12.04.2023).https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article132532352/Jeder-zweite-AfD-Waehler-ist-auslaenderfeindlich.html
Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics.* Verso Books.
Langewiesche, D. (2000). *Nation, Nationalismus, Nationalstaat in Deutschland und Europa* (Vol. 1399, p. 267). Beck.
Leith, M. S. (2012). *Political discourse and national identity in Scotland*. Edinburgh University Press.
Lepsius, M. R. (1990). *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland* (pp. 232-246). VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
Lepsius, M. R., & Campbell, J. A. (1985). The Nation and Nationalism in Germany. *Social Research*, *52*(1), 43–64.
Leudar, I., Hayes, J., Nekvapil, J., & Turner Baker, J. (2008). Hostility themes in media, community and refugee narratives. *Discourse & Society*, *19*(2), 187–221. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926507085952
Longino, H. E., & Lennon, K. (1997). Feminist Epistemology as a Local Epistemology. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, *71*, 19–54.
Malinova, O. (2012). Russia and 'the West'in the 2000s: redefining Russian identity in official political discourse. In *Russia's Identity in International Relations* (pp. 84-101). Routledge.
Massey, D. (2013). *Space, place and gender*. John Wiley & Sons.
Mayring, P. (2004). Qualitative content analysis. *A companion to qualitative research*, *1*(2), 159-176.
McCorkle, W. (2020). *Introducing Students to Critical Border and Migration Theories in an Era of Xenophobia*.
Mediendienst Integration (2023). *Flüchtlinge aus der Ukraine* (11.04.2023).

https://mediendienst-integration.de/migration/flucht-asyl/ukrainische-fluechtlinge.html
Mende, J. (2011). Kultur, Volk und Rasse. Die deutsche Ethnologie im Nationalsozialismus und ihre Aufarbeitung. *Anthropos*, *106*, 529–545. https://doi.org/10.5771/0257-9774-2011-2-529
Menke, K., & Rumpel, A. (2022). Who Belongs, and How Far? Refugees and Bureaucrats Within the German Active Welfare State. *Social Inclusion*, *9*(4). https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v9i4.4646
Modood, T., & Thompson, S. (2022). Othering, Alienation and Establishment. *Political Studies*, *70*(3), 780–796. https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321720986698
Newman, D., & Paasi, A. (1998). *Fences and neighbours in the postmodern world: Boundary narratives in political geography*.
Niedrig, H., & Seukwa, L. H. (2010). *Die Ordnung des Diskurses in der Flüchtlingskonstruktion: Eine postkoloniale Re-Lektüre*.
Niewel, G. (2016). *Kipping: In der Debatte um Köln zeigt sich "progromartiger Rasissumus"* (12.04.2023). https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/uebergriffe-in-koeln-kipping-in-der-debatte-um-koeln-zeigt-sich-progromartiger-rassismus-1.2815978
Näre, L., Abdelhady, D., & Irastorza, N. (2022). What Can We Learn from the Reception of Ukrainian Refugees? *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, *12*(3), 255–258. https://doi.org/10.33134/njmr.620
O'Connell, E. (2020). Whataboutery. *International Journal of Applied Philosophy*, *34*(2), 243-254.
Olssen, M. (2003). Structuralism, post-structuralism, neo-liberalism: Assessing Foucault's legacy. *Journal of Education Policy*, *18*(2), 189–202. https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093022000043047
One World Nations Online (2017). *Independent States of the World* (04.03.2023).https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/states.htm#:~:text=List%20of%20all%20Sovereign%20Nations,including%20de%20facto%20independent%20Taiwan
Ortega-Sánchez, D., Pagès Blanch, J., & Pérez-González, C. (2020). Emotions and construction of national identities in historical education. *Education Sciences*, 10(11), 322. https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8219.00051
Özvatan, Ö., Neuhauser, B., & Yurdakul, G. (2023). The 'Arab Clans' Discourse: Narrating Racialization, Kinship, and Crime in the German Media. *Social Sciences*, *12*(2), 104. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12020104
Paasi, A. (2001). Europe as a Social Process and Discourse: Considerations of Place, Boundaries and Identity. *European Urban and Regional Studies*,

8(1), 7–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/096977640100800102
Paasi, A. (1999). Boundaries as Social Practice and Discourse: The Finnish‐Russian Border. *Regional Studies*, *33*(7), 669–680. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343409950078701
Paasi, A. (1998). Boundaries as social processes: Territoriality in the world of flows. *Geopolitics*, *3*(1), 69–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650049808407608
Pallagst, K., Hartz, A., Caesar, B., & Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (Eds.). (2018). *Border futures - Zukunft Grenze - Avenir frontière: Zukunftsfähigkeit grenzüberschreitender Zusammenarbeit*. Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung, Leibniz-Forum für Raumwissenschaften.
Parekh, B. (1995). The concept of national identity. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies*, 21(2), 255-268.
Parker, N., & Vaughan-Williams, N. (2012). *Critical Border Studies: Broadening and Deepening the 'Lines in the Sand' Agenda*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2012.706111
Pautz, H. (2005). The politics of identity in Germany: The Leitkultur debate. *Race & Class*, *46*(4), 39–52. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396805052517
Peabody, S., & Randall, A. (2019). Unpacking Heimat: A Spiraled Approach to Identity and Belonging for Global German Studies. *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, *52*(2), 178–186. https://doi.org/10.1111/tger.12102
Penrose, J. (2002). Nations, states and homelands: Territory and territoriality in nationalist thought. *Nations and Nationalism*, *8*(3), 277–297. https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8219.00051
Privacy International (2020). *How EU exporting surveillance bid outsorce its borders* (12.04.2023). https://privacyinternational.org/long-read/4288/borders-without-borders-how-eu-exporting-surveillance-bid-outsource-its-border
ProAsyl (2021). *Besorgniserregende Gewalt gegen Geflüchtete wird durch offizielle Statistik bagatellisiert* (12.04.2023). https://www.proasyl.de/pressemitteilung/besorgniserregende-gewalt-gegen-gefluechtete-wird-durch-offizielle-statistik-bagatellisiert/
Radjenovic, A. (2021). *Pushbacks at the EU's external borders.* European Parliament.https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689368/EPRS_BRI(2021)689368_EN.pdf
Rathzel, N. (1994). Harmonious `Heimat' and Disturbing `Auslander'. *Feminism & Psychology*, *4*(1), 81–98. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353594041005
Ratter, B., & Gee, K. (2012). *Heimat—A German concept of regional perception*

and identity as a basis for coastal management in the Wadden Sea. Elsevier Enhanced Reader. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2012.04.013

Rees, J. H., Rees, Y. P., Hellmann, J. H., & Zick, A. (2019). Climate of hate: Similar correlates of far right electoral support and right-wing hate crimes in Germany. *Frontiers in psychology*, *10*, 2328.

Riecker, P. (2006). *Juvenile Right-Wing-Extremism and Xenophobia in Germany: Research and Prevention*.

Robyn, R. (2000). A methodological approach to the question of national identity in Europe. *Politique européenne*, *1*(1), 84. https://doi.org/10.3917/poeu.001.0084

Römhild, R. (2004). Global Heimat Germany. Migration and the Transnationalization of the Nation-State. *Transit*, *1*(1). https://doi.org/10.5070/T711009689

Sautereau, A., & Faas, D. (2022). Comparing national identity discourses in history, geography and civic education curricula: The case of France and Ireland. *European Educational Research Journal*, 14749041221086378. https://doi.org/10.1177/14749041221086378

Schatzki, T. R. (2003). A New Societist Social Ontology. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, *33*(2), 174–202. https://doi.org/10.1177/0048393103033002002

Schmidt, W. (2020). *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache. Teil 1: Einführung, Vorgeschichte und Geschichte* (12th edition). S. Hirzel Verlag.

Segrott, J. (2001). Language, geography and identity: The case of the Welsh in London. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *2*(3), 281–296. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360120073860

Skilling, P. (2010). The Construction and Use of National Identity in Contemporary New Zealand Political Discourse. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, *45*(2), 175–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/10361140903296594

Slife, B. D. (2004). Taking Practice Seriously: Toward a Relational Ontology. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, *24*(2), 157–178. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0091239

Soekefeld, M. (2007). *Problematische Begriffe: Ethnizität, Rasse, Kultur, Minderheit*.

Somers, M. R. (1994). The narrative constitution of identity: A relational and network approach. *Theory and Society*, *23*(5), 605–649. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00992905

Spiegel Online (2021). *Rassismus: Bericht kritisiert Kriminalstatistik als lückenhaft* (12.04.2023).

https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/rassistische-gewalt-bericht-kritisiert-unzureichende-erfassung-in-der-kriminalstatistik-a-5a1df4c5-fb8c-4f15-9e56-43346f5b6ca2

Spiegel Online (2019). *Hunderte Opfer, fast keine Täter. Bilanz der Kölner Silvesternacht* (14.05.2023). https://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/koelner-silvesternacht-ernuechternde-bilanz-der-justiz-a-1257182.html

Spivak, G. C. (1985). The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives. *History and Theory*, *24*(3), 247–272. https://doi.org/10.2307/2505169

Spohn, W., & Triandafyllidou, A. (2003). *Europeanisation, National Identities and Migration: Changes in boundary constructions between Western and Eastern Europe*.

Svasek, M. (2002). Narratives of "Home" and "Homeland": The Symbolic Construction and Appropriation of the Sudeten German Heimat. *Identities*, *9*(4), 495–518. https://doi.org/10.1080/10702890214871

Szczepanik, M. (2016). *The 'Good' and 'Bad' Refugees? Imagined Refugeehood(s) in the Media Coverage of the Migration Crisis*. *10*(2).

Süddeutsche Zeitung (2018). *Die Deutschen werden immer intoleranter* (12.04.2023).https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/auslaenderfeindlichkeit-muslime-studie-rechtsextremismus-1.4199261

Tompkins, A. S. (2019). Binding the Nation, Bounding the State: Germany and its Borders. https://doi.org/10.1080/014198798329784

Tope, D., Rawlinson, B. D., Pickett, J. T., Burdette, A. M., & Ellison, C. G. (2017). Religion, Race, and Othering Barack Obama. *Social Currents*, *4*(1), 51–70. https://doi.org/10.1177/2329496516651641

Triandafyllidou, A. (1998). National identity and the "other." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *21*(4), 593–612. https://doi.org/10.1080/014198798329784

United Nations (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

UNO (2022). Flüchtlingskrise Mittelmeer (11.04.2023). https://www.uno-fluechtlingshilfe.de/hilfe-weltweit/mittelmeer

Van Houtum, H., & Van Naerssen, T. (2002). Bordering, Ordering and Othering. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, *93*(2), 125–136. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9663.00189

Venuti, L. (2009). Translation, Intertextuality, Interpretation. *Romance Studies*, *27*(3), 157–173. https://doi.org/10.1179/174581509X455169

Weiguo, Q. (2013). Dehistoricized cultural identity and cultural othering. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *13*(2), 148–164. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2013.770864

Weissbrod, L. (1983). Religion as National Identity in a Secular Society. *Review of Religious Research*, *24*(3), 188–205. https://doi.org/10.2307/3511814

Widdowson, H.G. (1995) `Discourse analysis: a critical view', Language and Literature, 4 (3): 157±72. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506802009003378

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. SAGE.

Worlddata (2023). *Country comparison Germany, Syria* (13.04.2023). https://www.worlddata.info/country-comparison.php?country1=DEU&country2=SYR#health

Yılmaz, F. (2012). Right-wing hegemony and immigration: How the populist far-right achieved hegemony through the immigration debate in Europe. *Current Sociology*, *60*(3), 368–381. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392111426192

Yuval-Davis, N., & Stoetzler, M. (2002). Imagined Boundaries and Borders: A Gendered Gaze. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, *9*(3), 329–344. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506802009003378
nationalism: The politics of transition, 23-35.

Yuval-Davis, N. (1997). *Gender and nation.* SAGE publications.

Zimmermann, E. (2003) *Right-wing extremism and Xenophobia in Germany: Escalation, exaggeration, or what*? In: P.L. Merkl and L. Weinberg (eds.) Right-wing Extremism in the Twenty-first Century. London.

V Appendix

V.I Names of Plenary Speakers of the AfD

The names of the speakers are in alphabetical order, according to the last names of the speakers.

1. Dr. Bernd Baumann, 65 years old, businessman, part of the AfD since 2013
2. Marc Bernhard, 51 years old, lawyer, member of the AfD since 2013
3. Stephan Brandner, 57 years old, lawyer, part of the AfD since 2013
4. Jürgen Braun, 62 years old, communications consultant, member of the AfD since 2017
5. Dr. Gottfried Curio, 63 years old, mathematician and physicist, member of the AfD since 2014
6. Thomas Ehrhorn, 64 years old, pilot, member of the AfD since 2013
7. Markus Frohnmaier, 31 years old, press speaker, member of the AfD since 2015
8. Dr. Götz Frömming, 55 years old, high school teacher, member of the AfD since its foundation in 2013
9. Martin Hebner, passed at age 62 in 202, IT management consultant, was part of the AfD since its foundation in 2013
10. Martin Hess, 51 years old, police officer, member of the AfD since 2013, deputy spokesman of the AfD since 2018
11. Norbert Kleinwächter, 36 years old, teacher, member of the AfD since 2014
12. Steffen Kotré, 52 years old, engineer, member of the AfD since 2014
13. Sebastian Münzenmaier, 34 years old, insurance and financial investment specialist, member of the AfD since 2013
14. Jörg Schneider, 56 years old, mechanical engineer, member of the AfD since 2017
15. Martin Sichert, 43 years old, businessman, part of the AfD since 2013

16. René Springer, 44 years old, political scientist, member of the AfD since 2015
17. Roman Johannes Reusch, 69 years old, lawyer, member of the AfD since 2013
18. Dr. Christian Wirth, 60 years old, lawyer, member of the AfD since 2015

V.II Codebook

Name	Description	Files	References
Beschreibung Nationale Identität (Description National Identity)	This code encompasses any and all events where the German national identity was explicitly or implicitly mentioned in the texts.	27	124
Bürger_in (citizen)	This code was used whenever there was an explicit mention of the term Bürger. This code has subcodes, which further divides the category Bürger into smaller categories.	17	52
Arbeitnehmer_in (worker)	This subcategory of Bürger shows the different times where the citizens of Germany were classified as workers.	4	5
Aufenthaltsdauer (Duration of stay in Germany)	This sub-code describes the instances where citizens of Germany were defined through how long they had lived in Germany.	1	1
Der kleine Mann (the simple man)	This category of Bürger shows the classification of citizens as „ the simple man“, a description used to describe average citizens, without much money or influence.	1	1
Einheimische (natives)	This code was used when the citizens of Germany were described as being native to Germany.	1	1
Steuerzahler (tax payer)	This code describes when tax paying was used to define the category of a citizen.	10	18
Zivilgesellschaft (civil society)	This sub-code is coded whenever a text under the category Bürger also has a mention of the civil society.	1	1
Demokratie (democracy)	This code is used whenever texts directly refer to democracy as a key definer of the German national identity	1	2

Deutschland (Germany)	This code was used when the speeches used direct mentions of Deutschland (Germany) to describe the national identity	4	4
Abendland (western world)	This code was used when the country Germany was referred to as the Abendland (western world).	1	1
Bundesrepublik(federal republic)	This code was used when instead of Germany the country was referred to as the Bundesrepublik (federal republic).	2	2
Der Bund (the confederacy)	This code was used when Germany was referred to as der Bund (the confederacy).	1	1
Kultur (Culture)	This code encompasses all direct and indirect mentions of Kultur	4	6
Flagge (flag)	This code was used whenever there was a mention of the German flag when describing Germany as a country.	3	3
Tradition (tradition)	This code is used whenever there is an implicit or explicit mention of the term tradition.	2	2
Nation_national	This code makes up the category of talk about the nation and national thinking. It is used whenever there is an explicit mention of the word nation or national.	4	4
Siedlungsgebiet (settlement area)	This code is used when Germany is described as a settlement area.	2	2
Staat (state)	This code encompasses all direct mentions of Germany as a state.	4	4
Souveränität (sovereignity)	This code is used when sovereignty is mentioned in the context of the state.	3	3
Staatsgebiet	This code is used when Germany is described as a state-area.	1	1
Staatsvolk	This code is used when those living in Germany are described as the people of the state.	1	1
Territorium (territory)	This code is used whenever there are direct or indirect descriptions of Germany as a territory.	9	19

Boden (land/ground)	This code is used when the territory of Germany is described as der Boden (the land/ground).	1	1
Grenze (border)	This code encompasses all direct mentions of borders.	8	14
Deutsche Grenzen (borders of Germany)	This code encompasses all mentions of Germanys borders.	3	3
Grenzen von der EU_Europa (borders of the EU_Europe)	This code encompasses all mentions of the external borders of the EU and Europe.	3	4
Land (land)	This code describes when Germany was defined as das Land (the land).	2	2
Zielland (final destination)	This code refers to when the country Germany was described as das Zielland (the destination country).	1	1
Europa_EU (Europe_EU)	This code shows all mentions of Europe or the EU in regard to the national identity.	3	3
Familie (family)	This code is used for all mentions of family in relation to the national identity.	2	2
Frieden (peace)	This code is used when there are mentions of peace in relation to the national identity.	2	2
Gerechtigkeit (justice)	This code encompasses direct and indirect mentions of justice in relation to the treatment of Germans and the treatment of migrants and refugees.	1	2
Geschlecht (gender identity)	This code refers to mentions of gender in relation to the national identity.	4	5
Sicherheit deutscher Frauen (safety of German women	This code is used whenever there in an explicit mention of the safety of German women.	2	3
Gesellschaft (Society)	This code shows all mentions of the German society in claims of national identity.	2	4

Grundgesetz (basic law)	This code is used whenever there are direct mentions of the Grundgesetz (basic law).	3	3
Heimat (homeland)	This code refers to all mentions of the concept of Heimat.	9	13
Nachhause (Home)	This code encompasses all mentions of the term Nachhause (home).	1	1
Pass(passport)	This code is used when the possession of a German passport was used to define the belonging to Germany.	2	4
Sicherheit (Security)	This code is used when there are mentions of security in relation to Germany.	4	11
Security of EU_Europe	This code is used whenever there are explicit mentions of the security of Europe or the EU.	1	1
Sprache (language)	This code refers to mentions of the German language as exclusionary criteria of belonging.	4	7
Vernunft (reason)	This code encompasses al mentions of reason in relation to a common national identity.	1	1
Volk (the people)	This code refers to mentions of the Volk (the people) of Germany.	3	3
Werte (values)	This term is used when there was explicit and implicit mention of common German values.	2	2
Willkommenskultur (welcoming culture)	This code encompasses direct mentions of the Willkommenskultur in Germany	4	4
Wirtschaft (economy)	This code refers to mentions of the German economy as describing a commonality amongst Germans.	3	7
Finanzen (finances)	This code encompasses all mentions of finances in relation to Germanys economy.	3	6
Description of the Other	This code encompasses all direct and indirect mentions of an Other.	26	137

Categorization of different migrants &refugees	This code refers to all direct and indirect categorizations of different types of migrants and refugees. It has sub-codes, which are divided into different direct mentions of different types of refugees and migrants.	7	12
(Un)echte Migrant_innen und Geflüchtete (un)real migrants and refugees	This code refers to direct mentions of real migrants and refugees and unreal migrants and refugees.	7	8
Afrika & Orient (Africa and the Orient)	This code is used whenever the origin of the refugees and migrants was determined to be either the Africa or the Orient.	5	8
Analphabet_in (Illiteracy)	This code encompasses the characterization of migrants and refugees as being illiterate.	1	1
Bootsmigrant_innen (boat migrants)	This code refers to the description of some migrants as boat migrants.	1	1
Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge (economic refugees)	This code refers to the description of some refugees as being economic refugees.	2	2
Age	This code is used whenever there is a reference to the age of migrants and refugees, which determines whether that person should be allowed to seek asylum in Germany or not.	3	4
Ausländer_innen (foreigner)	This code refers to direct mentions of people who are not from Germany as Ausländer_innen (foreigners).	1	1
Fremde (alien	This code refers to direct mentions of people who are not from Germany as Ausländer_innen (foreigners).	1	1
Gender	This code refers to mentions of the gender as a defining marker of the Other	6	6
Klimaflüchtlinge (climate refugees)	This code refers to direct descriptions of refugees as Klimaflüchtlinge (climate refugees).	1	2

Kriminalität (crime)	This code refers to the implicit or explicit mention of crime in regards to migration.	15	33
Betrug (fraud)	This code encompasses mentions of fraud in relation to migration.	4	8
Gefährder (potential offender)	This code is used when foreigners are described as potential offenders.	1	1
Illegale Migration (illegal migration)	This code refers to the explicit characterization of some migration as being illegal.	6	7
Religion	This code encompasses all mentions of religion.	10	25
Terror	This code refers to the mention of terror and terrorism in combination with mentions of religion.	5	14
Verschleierung (veiling)	This code refers to mentions of veiling in relation to religion.	1	1
Sozialtourismus (benefit tourism)	This code refers to the description of migrants and refugee flows as benefit tourism.	1	1
Wirtschaftsmigrant (economic migrant)	This code encompasses direct mentions of the classification of some migrants as economic migrants.	1	1
Description Migration	This code is divided into sub-codes which are different descriptions of the category of migration.	0	0
Ansturm (surge)		1	1
Asyltourismus (asylum tourism)		1	1
Damm Einbruch (dam breakage)		1	1
Fließband (conveyor belt)		1	2
Flut (flood)		1	1
Karawane (Caravan)		1	1

Krise oder Problem (crisis or problem)		2	4
Masseneinwanderung (mass immigration)		1	1
Migrationstrip (migration trip)		1	1
Postkoloniale Politik (postcolonial politics)		1	1
Shuttle Service		1	1
Strom (current)		1	1
Welle (wave)		1	1
Reasons for Migration	This code encompasses all instances where reasons for the migration were mentioned.	8	11
Sozialsystem (welfare system)	This code refers to mentions of the welfare system in Germany as reasons for migration.	7	10
Lockung (enticement)	This code refers to specific mentions of enticement for migrants and refugees due to the welfare system in Germany.	4	5
Gegenüberstellung Deutsch & Ausländer_in (Comparison German & Foreigner)	This code refers to instances where the German national identity and the identity of the Others were mentioned as opposing categories.	10	17