Deciphering national identity
- a discourse analysis of India’s foreign policy behaviour during the 2014 Crimean crisis

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India is a pluralist society that creates magic with democracy, rule of law and individual freedom, community relations and [cultural] diversity. What a place to be an intellectual! ...I wouldn’t mind being born ten times to rediscover India.


\[\text{Guha R. India after Gandhi – the history of the world’s largest democracy, UK, Pan Books (2007), preface}\]
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And of course – a big thank you to my sweet family and friends that has put up with me even though my mind has been preoccupied with discourse analysis during our get-togethers. Last but not least, I would like to emphasise that it has been a pleasure to write about such a fascinating country as India with its strong values and principles. The Crimean crisis is important to highlight since it is one of current times most complicated situations that affects many countries in various ways. Even such a distant country as India.

The reader is encouraged to note that this paper uses the term “annexation” in regards to the Russian intervention in Crimea. This term has been debated, and some prefer to use “accession” instead. However, the vocabulary of the UN, who calls the Russian occupation of Crimea an “annexation”, is used in this study.² Last but not least, parts of this paper have been collected from previously conducted assignments during the course “Methods” (15 credits) at the Swedish National Defence College.

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Rebecka

ACRONYMS

BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
EU - European Union
G8 - Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, UK, US)
MEA - Ministry of External Affairs
ONS - Office for National Statistics (in the United Kingdom)
UK - United Kingdom
UN - United Nations
UNSC - United Nations Security Council
US - United States
Q&A - Questions and answers
ABSTRACT

This study builds on the idea that discourses have the power to show that national identity did influence the puzzling foreign policy behaviour of India in March 2014 during the Crimean crisis. When analysing the material and illustrating the identified discourses, discourse-theorists Laclau and Mouffe’s framework is used both as theory and method. Discourse analysis has its starting point in the idea that the reality is accessed by the means of language.\(^3\) The use of Laclau and Mouffe’s discursive framework is motivated by the fact that it aims to create an understanding of the social phenomena in question (e.g. the Indian puzzling foreign policy behaviour) by applying discourse analytical tools on texts.\(^4\) Moreover, discourse analysis claims that identities are the result of discursive processes and that political articulation, e.g. foreign policy behaviour, creates the society; ideas that goes well with this paper.\(^5\) Since language is “structured discourses” and because it creates the world which we live in, it is possible to turn to the use of language when conducting a discourse analysis.\(^6\) To decipher which discourses that evolved around the Crimean crisis in March 2014, and to make the connection between national identity and foreign policy behaviour, articles from the three most read Indian newspapers in English are used as material. These articles are triangulated with statements published during 2014 on the homepage of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. This paper tells a rather alternative story compared to that of interest- and power based explanations with roots in realism, since it emphasises that national identity influences foreign policy behaviour. The analysis concludes that two discourses can be deciphered in the material, namely Democracy and Multipolarity, which thus can be seen as elements of Indian national identity. These two discourses imply that the Indian national identity can explain its puzzling foreign policy behaviour in the Crimean crisis in March 2014.

Keywords: national identity, discourse analysis, Laclau and Mouffe, India, foreign policy, 2014 Crimean crisis


\(^5\) Jorgensen M., Phillips J. L. (2002), 34

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Chapter 1: Introduction

We hope that whatever internal issues there are within Ukraine are settled peacefully, and the broader issues of reconciling various interests involved, and there are legitimate Russian and other interests involved.... We hope those are discussed, negotiated and that there is a satisfactory resolution to them.⁷

- Shivshankar Menon, Indian National Security Adviser

This statement which concludes the Indian official assessment of the 2014 events in Crimea was made on the same day as Crimea’s parliament voted to hold a referendum for secession from Ukraine. India has avoided condemning the Russian annexation of Crimea, whilst it has called for a diplomatic solution to the crisis.⁸ The fact that India in March 2014 seemed to recognise and emphasise “other interests” instead of giving its full support for Ukraine can be seen as a foreign policy statement. India has been ambiguous and nuanced regarding the Crimean crisis, even though it indirectly supports Russia by acknowledging the Russian interests as legitimate.⁹ Moreover, to be able to achieve one of the greatest Indian foreign policy goals, namely to get a seat in the UNSC, India would do well to protect its relationship with the US.¹⁰ Also, India has been emphasising the rights of sovereignty and territorial integrity since 1947 when India gained independence from Britain, thus – the Indian support of the Russian annexation of Crimea is suspect since it violates the Ukrainian independence and territorial integrity. According to realist John Mearsheimer, foreign policy behaviour is driven by factors such as national interest and power. A realist would claim that foreign policy behaviour is shaped by material wealth in relation to what other states have, thus the Indian foreign policy behaviour could, according to this explanation, mean that India has more to win than to lose by not seeing the Russian annexation of Crimea as illegal. This aspect also puts states in competition with each other, limiting cooperation and dialogue, and manifests military power.¹¹ With regards to this, the Indian foreign policy would probably not emphasise dialogue as a mean to reach a conclusion in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. But how come India has emphasised diplomacy then? This paper argues that there is a need to look beyond the theory of realism and interest-based explanations and instead turn

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to identity-based explanations with roots in constructivism. National identity is an interesting factor because it has the power to influence foreign policy behaviour, especially in the case of India, since it has a history of non-alignment and a society based on strong democratic values.\footnote{Stuenkel O. India’s National Interests and Diplomatic Activism: Towards Global Leadership? The London School of Economics (2012), 35, available at http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/stuenkel.pdf} Foreign policy is therefore seen as reflecting national identity. Writing this paper imposed challenges consisting of how to use the different discursive concepts and how to avoid being subjective in the interpretation of the material. However, by acknowledging these challenges and by including chapters regarding the benefits and limitations of both the discursive method and the material, this paper would like to emphasise the possibilities that discourse analysis can bring to the table.

The aim and the research questions are addressed as starting points in this paper. Contrasting explanations that are included in “Previous research” are also described to make the reader aware of that there are many different explanations available concerning foreign policy behaviour. Thereafter, chapters about discourse theory and method are following. But what is national identity and what happened in Crimea in 2014? These issues are addressed in the parts concerning the Indian national identity and the Crimean crisis. Then a chapter concerning the material is included. The reason for collecting articles published in March 2014 is because the Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law that formalised Crimea to be part of Russia in March 2014.\footnote{BBC News Europe, Ukraine: Putin signs Crimea annexation, 21 March (2014), available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26686949} Later on, the analysis and conclusion follows. The paper finishes up with a list of references and two appendixes, which include all statements and articles used in the analysis.

1.1 Research problem
The importance of identity in foreign policy behaviour has been emphasised by many in the past, and most foreign policy scholars agree on that national identity can influence foreign policy behaviour.\footnote{Aggestam L. Role Conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy, ARENA Centre for European Studies, University of Stockholm (1999), available at http://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/1994-2000/1999/wp99_8.htm} Can the Indian standpoint in the 2014 Crimean crisis be explained by existing discourses and by an emphasis on the connection between national identity and foreign policy behaviour? India has traditionally not been very selective regarding which global powers to do business with – instead it has kept a good relationship with most of them. This could perhaps be linked to India’s non-alignment policy and its unwillingness to be...
associated with alliances.

India’s foreign policy could in March 2014 be driven out of national identity rather than of interests, since if India would act from an interest-based point of view, India would do well in keeping a stable relation with the US.\textsuperscript{15} Moreover, economic growth which is of great importance for India, would not be possible without a unified Indian strategy that officially points out the direction for the Indian relations. So, how come India still emphasise ”all interests” in the Crimean crisis when it is obvious that the territorial integrity of Ukraine has been violated?\textsuperscript{16} Moreover, the relationship between the US and India can be linked to their emphasis on liberal democracy and related values, which provides India with a stable ground to develop the US-India relation.\textsuperscript{17} Yet India has taken a step back from aligning with the US regarding Crimea by e.g. not joining the Western posed sanctions.

The Indian national identity and foreign policy that was conducted in March 2014 during the Crimean crisis from a discursive perspective is rather unexplored. It is moreover important to highlight puzzling foreign policy behaviours to be able to understand what factors that determine certain actions in disputed conflicts like that of Crimea. Could it be the Indian national identity that determined the Indian foreign policy in the Crimean crisis?

1.1.1 \textbf{Aim and research questions}

The aim of this study is to describe which discourses that can be deciphered in the material regarding the Crimean crisis and to highlight the connection between the discourses and India’s national identity. Moreover, it wants to examine whether or not the Indian national identity influenced its foreign policy behavior during the 2014 Crimean crisis. Thus, the research questions are:

- Which discourses can be deciphered in the material regarding the Crimean crisis?
- What can these discourses reveal about Indian national identity?

According to Shapiro (2002) discourse theories and methods are separate parts, but they often morph into one another - especially in discourse analyses due to the fact that the researcher


\textsuperscript{16} Malone D., Mukherjee R. (2010), 18

\textsuperscript{17} Malone D., Mukherjee R. (2010), 18
need to accept them both to be able to conduct the analysis.\textsuperscript{18} Moreover, all phenomena admit of multiple descriptions.\textsuperscript{19} Thus, this paper addresses one of the many perspectives of the research problem by focusing on discourses. The author does not attempt to reject other explanations but to highlight that discourse analysis may be one way of getting knowledge about Indian national identity and foreign policy behaviour during the 2014 Crimean crisis. This paper attempts to contribute to the broader field of Indian national identity and its influence on foreign policy behaviour from a discourse analysis perspective by using Laclau’s and Mouffe’s theoretical and methodological framework.

1.2 Previous research

There are many existing theories that examine foreign policy behaviour from different angles, thus the identity-based theory used in this paper is far from being the only one. By mapping up the research field, this study is put in a broader context.

According to Hasenclever et al. (2000), there are two schools of thought that have forged the field of International Relations, namely neoliberalism and realism, which both portray states to be maximizers of utility.\textsuperscript{20} As been stated previously, realist John Mearsheimer argues that foreign policy behaviour reflects materialistic aspects and that power relations shape foreign policies. If India should reach one of its most wanted goals – to strengthen its international presence by e.g. getting a seat in the UNSC – it would need to accommodate the US.\textsuperscript{21} The power-balancing theory finds its roots in neorealism and Stephen Walt (1987), who argues that states either join the powerful one or balance against it.\textsuperscript{22} Walt underlines that the most common behaviour is to balance against the threat and to align with other states, whilst bandwagoning behaviour, which means that the state accommodates the most threatening state, is less likely to occur.\textsuperscript{23} Deepa Ollapally (2015) however argues that realists have failed to explain India’s puzzling behaviour. Even though realists argue that India would do well to conduct a balancing behaviour, and despite the fact that the Indian adversary China poses a

\textsuperscript{18} Shapiro I. Problems, methods and theories in the study of politics, or what’s wrong with political science and what to do about it, Yale University (2002), 3, available at http://igrand.lsu.edu/Readings%20for%20POLI%207961%20(Fall%202005)/Week%2009/Shapiro%20(Political%20Theory%202002).pdf
\textsuperscript{19} Shapiro I. (2002), 8
\textsuperscript{21} Paul T.V., Welch Larson D., Wohlforth C. W. (2014), 81
\textsuperscript{23} Walt S. (1985), 13
threat in “India’s own backyard”; India has historically not kept a balancing position.\textsuperscript{24} Ollapally (2015) therefore holds that “[…] identity variables, which have a long historical and cultural basis, inform policymaking more than most international relations analysts allow”.\textsuperscript{25} Thus, foreign policy behaviour can be seen as the anchor of national identity.\textsuperscript{26} John Owen (2010) moreover claims that states intentions can be explained by their ideologies; therefore state leaders promote other states that have a similar worldview.\textsuperscript{27} India would thus, with respect for its emphasis on democratic values, have accommodating other states that promote the same values in the Crimean crisis, e.g. the US.

Swapna Prabhu and Niranjan Mohapatra (2014) stress that there is a tension between “power and principle” which affects the Indian foreign policy since there is an underlying need to justify the Indian interests by looking through the lens of its values and norms. They also argue that Indian diplomatic interactions with other states are formed by the constructed Indian national identity.\textsuperscript{28} Thus, interest-based explanations cannot, according to Prabhu and Mohapatra (2014), tell the whole story as to why Indian foreign policy is conducted the way it is. Interests and identity are however compatible explanations, but according to Prabhu and Mohapatra it is necessary to start an analysis of a country’s foreign policy behaviour by describing its identity. This is also brought up by Girgio Gvalia et al. (2013), which argue that interest and material factors do matter for small states, but that the importance of how much they matter depends on the national identity.\textsuperscript{29} Tina Freyburg and Solveig Richter (2008) stress the need to look beyond national interest to understand the driving factors of political action since national identity is the foundational source of which national interests are born.\textsuperscript{30} Thus, it is now time to start thinking in terms of discourses and national identity.


\textsuperscript{25} Ollapally M. D. (2015)


Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

2.1 Constructivism and post-structuralism

Discourse analysis stems from social constructivism and post-structuralism. The former states that there is no objective truth about the world – it cautions people to be suspicious about how the world appears.\(^{31}\) Laclau and Mouffe e.g. state that discourse constructs “the social world in meaning” and that the instability of language means that the social world never can be fixed.\(^{32}\) The world is a changing place and so are language and people’s perception of it. Even though there are many different approaches in social constructivism, discourse analysis is the most commonly used one.\(^{33}\) Critique against social constructivism stems from the argument that if there are no regularities in social life, there is reason to question everything.\(^{34}\) This might be true according to philosopher Jean Baudrillard, but most social constructivists argue that the social field does includes rules. These rules stem from the fact that identities are relatively static in some situations since different situations restrict the identity in various ways.\(^{35}\) Constructivist theories emphasise the shortcomings of materialistic or interest-based explanations, especially in cases concerning foreign policy.\(^{36}\) This is due to the idea that it is the particular identity of a state that influences the interests and not the other way around. Thus, to be able to explain foreign policy behaviour it is necessary to start at the bottom line, i.e. to look for traces of identity. Social constructivism functions as the broader category of “which post-structuralism is a subcategory”.\(^{37}\) Post-structuralism draws upon the importance of language and argues that the social space, e.g. concepts and identities, are discursive in nature.\(^{38}\)

2.1.1 Saussure and the linguistic tradition

Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure introduced the concept of signs, which Laclau and Mouffe

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31 Burr V, An introduction to Social Constructivism, Routledge: Taylor and Francis, (2006), 2, available at http://eclass.uoa.gr/modules/document/file.php/MFDI156/%CE%A3%CF%85%CF%80%CE%B9%CE%BD%CF%AC%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%BB%CE%B0%CE%B5%CE%B1%CF%82%CE%B0%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%86%CE%AF%CE%B1%20%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BF%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B3%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BF/5BVivien_Burr%5D_An_Introduction_to_Social_Constructivism.pdf


33 Jorgensen M, Phillips J.L (2002), 4

34 Jorgensen M, Phillips J.L (2002), 6


later includes in their work. He argued that individual signs gain their meaning and value when they are connected to other signs. These signs are part of a structure of other words that they refer to. Thus, they do not gain their meaning from “reality”, but from internal relations. The basic idea of linguistic tradition rests upon the assumption that language is “structured discourses”.

### 2.2 Theory of discourse analysis

The discursive approach has not been widely used within the field of political science, mainly because it is said to be lacking in scientific value, which makes it controversial to use discourse analysis both as a theory and a method. The use of Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory in this paper can however be motivated by their idea that identity are the result of discursive processes and that political articulations create the society. Moreover, the discourse theory and methodology are closely linked together, which means that the theory needs to be considered if e.g. using discursive analytical tools. Discourses can be given meaning through the analysing of texts, which is why this study rests upon articles; they can convey information and thus also affect the social world. Discourse theory moreover rejects the search for regularities and scientific laws and can be seen as opposing positivism and naturalistic theories and methods.

Viviene Burr (2006) is emphasising the connection between identity and discourse. She underlines the importance of language since it creates the world we live in. She refers to a discourse as “a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events”. She also claims that identity is constructed out of the available discourses and that the discourses therefore affect behaviours and actions. According to Laclau and Mouffe, identity is a product of discursive and political processes, in which identity is assigned and negotiated. Moreover, all identity is

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42 Jorgensen M., Phillips J. L. (2002), 34
43 Bergström G. Boréus K. Textens mening och makt: metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalyse, Lund: Studentlitteratur (2005), 305
45 Howarth D., Norval J. A., Stavrakakis Y. Discourse theory and political analysis, Manchester University Press (2000), 6, available at [https://books.google.se/books?id=QrzR8B2Me6uC&pg=PA6&dq=discourse+theory+stands+firmly+opposed+to+positivist+and+naturalistic+conception&source=bl&ots=AYdnV72Aa4&sig=7NeYe1VqQBBBBKRs1RYYoWgeHuA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiQv_fn5WTcAhUJh7oKHZ3beAoQ6AEI
46 Burr V., (2006), 32
47 Burr V., (2006), 36
relational which means that e.g. a state can criss-cross between different discourses and adopt different identities.\textsuperscript{48} The subject is produced through articulatory practice, which means that a human is only a human if it is articulated. Identity could thus always change. Moreover, discourses are in a constant battle with each other since they represent different understanding of the social world. The struggle is about fixating the meaning of language.\textsuperscript{49} What is unique with Laclau and Mouffe’s theory and method is that their different concepts can be linked to each other in a chain, which in turn makes it possible to reject some discourses and to embrace others.\textsuperscript{50}

By using Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, it is possible to discern potential discourses to which India’s national identity can be related, making it possible to explain the Indian foreign policy behaviour in March 2014 regarding the Crimean crisis. Even though there are many other interesting discursive approaches and theories, Laclau and Mouffe’s theory provides an understanding of how discourses and identities are being constructed which makes their theory appropriate for this study.\textsuperscript{51}

**Chapter 3: Method**

The method was chosen with respect to the research questions, which requires a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach. Qualitative methods are concerned with the meaning of a given phenomena and not the frequency of it, which means that it is compatible with this case study. Moreover, when textual data are quantified, there is a risk that valuable information is excluded. However, due to the amount of included articles in this paper, there was a need to include tables that e.g. illustrates the deciphered nodal points to make the analysis easier to follow. This study may be a bit limited in scope but because it doesn’t try to build a new theory or to make the result applicable to other studies, it does possess richness in description and explanation in the case chosen. Case studies can achieve high levels of validity, even though they might not be as representative as a study with a large number of cases.\textsuperscript{52} By using Jorgensen and Phillips’ (2002) interpretation of Laclau and Mouffe’s theory of discourse, it is possible to limit this paper to only focus on three concepts rather than on all of them. Their comprehensive theory includes many different aspects and concepts, but not all of them are useful in this paper. Thus, Jorgensen and Phillips’ (2002) description of how to navigate

\textsuperscript{48} Laclau E., Mouffe C. (2001), 114-122
\textsuperscript{49} Jorgensen M., Phillips J. L. (2002), 7
\textsuperscript{50} Dabirimehr’ A., Fatmi T. M., (2014), 1284
\textsuperscript{51} Jorgensen M., Phillips J. L. (2002), 2
\textsuperscript{52} George A. Bennett A. *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*, Cambridge: MIT Press (2005), 18
amongst Laclau and Mouffe’s concepts and how to conduct a discourse analysis has been useful. The staring point in a discourse analysis is to map up and to scrutinize the chosen material, e.g. the articles and statements, for nodal points and signs. Thereafter it is necessary to use the indicators, which are described at p. 17, to be able to illustrate the Indian national identity in the deciphered discourses.

3.1 Methodological concepts

Nodal points, signs and the chains of equivalence construct the discourses, which makes these concepts necessary to include in a study focusing on national identity. A discourse is formed by fixations of meanings around nodal points. A nodal point is a sign, by which other signs are ordered and whose meanings are acquired from their relationship to one another and the nodal point. A sign does only acquire meaning when it has been put in a discourse. Signs that can imply different things, and thus fit many different discourses, are called floating signifiers. The discourses can be fixated by the exclusion of other possible meanings that the signs could have included which makes the discourses to “reduction[s] of possibilities”. The chosen concepts are interdependent since the nodal points and the signs define what the particular subject is, by the creation of the chain of equivalence.

3.2 Indicators of national identity

It is necessary to include indicators of what national identity may constitute of, to be able to interpret the material and thus to know when it speaks about national identity. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which is the largest producer of statistics in the UK and which has published various publications about the English national identity, useful indicators that define national identity are:

- Political Institutions. Does the material bring up concepts relating to e.g. democracy?
- Socio-economic circumstances. Does the material bring up concepts relating to e.g. race, gender, status?
- Culture. Does the material bring up concepts relating to e.g. religion, language,
Complementary to the above-mentioned indicators, Bhikhu Parekh’s (2006) indicators of Indian national identity are also used since they concern the Indian national identity rather than national identity in general. Indian national identity is said to be formed by its:

- Age, rich history and size.
- Important values and distinct worldview.\(^60\)
- Elements of democracy and sovereignty.\(^61\)

The indicators above are used when scrutinizing the material for fragments of national identity. To be clear – if an article includes concepts that can be related to the indicators above, that particular article will be placed in a suitable category of nodal points (see table 3, p. 28).

3.3 Epistemology

The epistemological approach is dominating and enhanced in discourse analyses.\(^62\) According to Shapiro (2012), the epistemological dimension works at two different levels; the first with regards to the text’s claim to knowledge and the second referring to that comprised of the linguistic gestures which aim is to give the text epistemic authority.\(^63\) Studies that are based on constructivism and discourse theory are interested in new ways of constructing knowledge and therefore reject classical thoughts of objectivity since they instead emphasises intersubjectivity.

3.4 Benefits and limitations of discourse analysis

Discourses are always changing meanwhile discourse analysis also is relativistic, which means that if everything is minted by language, there is no external criterion to relate the discourse to.\(^64\) Thus, the information in this paper does not mean anything if it is not seen in its context, so to get a glimpse of the context, one could ask; when and by who was the paper written, how did the world appear to be at that point etc. Moreover, to be fully objective when


\(^{61}\) Parekh B. (2006), 4

\(^{62}\) Shapiro I. *Discourse, Culture, violence*, Abingdon: Routledge (2012), 18

\(^{63}\) Shapiro I. (2012), 18

\(^{64}\) Bergström G. Boréus K. (2005), 350
analysing material is not possible due to the fact that humans always perceive and sort information in different ways. Even though the author of this paper has strived for objectivity, factors such as previous knowledge and the context in which the material was interpreted do influence the research result. This is an inherent problem in discourse theory, thus a discourse analysis like this need to underline that it does not attempt to make a conclusion that is universal. Burr (2006) also states that it is important to acknowledge the findings of one’s own paper as open to other readings and explanations. Thus, the result presented in this study is applicable to this particular case. The result can however still be interesting, as long as the method and theory are used in a stringent manner, since it contributes to the broader field of discourse analysis and national identity.

Despite the fact that there are some questions regarding the use of discourse analysis as a method in social sciences, many researchers have come to open their eyes for this way of analysing empirical data. The discourse analysis leaves room for personal creativity, which of course also indicates that it relies on subjective interpretations of the material. Since there is not a single way to conduct a discourse analysis, Laclau and Mouffe’s theory and methodological framework can be adapted in the way that suits the study the best. Laclau and Mouffe’s explanation of how to make a discourse analysis is also rather inaccessible since they presuppose that the reader has previous knowledge of various theories and concepts within the theory of discourse. It was therefore not without despair that the toolbox of discourse methodology has been used and interpreted in this paper. However, by sorting out the relevant concepts, it was possible to make use of Laclau and Mouffe’s toolbox after all.

Chapter 4: National identity

National identity defines conventionalised structures and links national political characters with cultural features to create a fusion between the state and the particular culture. Laclau and Mouffe identify national identity as a discursive construction of sameness and difference. It moreover serves as the link between a particular nation and the world, functions as a self-definition and contains values and goals specific for the nation in question. This implies that national identity can mean one thing in the context of this analysis, and something completely

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65 Burr V. (2006), 125
69 Parekh B. (2006), 2
different in another situation. Moreover, Anthony Smith (1991) discusses national identity and states that it is “pervasive and persistent”, and that it is “less subject to rapid changes”. He describes national identity as something that is both complex and abstract, and that cultural identity also plays a role in how the national identity is being formed. Smith (1991) argues that a national identity is shaped by:

- Territorial boundedness of separate cultural populations;
- Shared nature of e.g. historical memories;
- Common bond of a standardized culture;
- Common territorial division of labour;
- Common legal rights and duties.

4.1 ‘Nation’

There are many different definitions of what a nation is, but in this paper Jorgensen and Phillip’s (2002) interpretation of Laclau and Mouffe’s definition is used. According to their interpretation, national politics is possible due to the myth of “the country”, which is a floating signifier. The myth, “the country”, is a false representation of reality, but on the other hand it provides a platform where different politicians can discuss, both within and outside the particular country. Moreover, nations are “systems of cultural representations”, where the people plays an important role, and is thus not only a political construct. Wodak and Meyer (2011) are also arguing that nations are “imagined communities”, and that they are limited by boundaries. These boundaries should signalling sovereignty and territorial claim, which e.g. relates to Smith’s (1991) first dimension of “[t]erritorial boundedness of separate cultural populations”.

4.2 ‘Identity’

According to Laclau and Mouffe, identity is not individual but entirely social. They reject the idea that material- and economic interests are shaping the collective identity; instead they

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71 Smith A. (1992), 60
76 Smith A. (1992), 60
argue that it stems from discursive processes.\textsuperscript{78} The formation of the collective identity means that there has been a process, which has reduced the many different individual identities.\textsuperscript{79} The concepts of \textit{signs} and \textit{chains of equivalence} moreover create the particular ‘identity’. The chains can be put in opposition to other chains and define what the subject is and what it is not.\textsuperscript{80} Moreover “[i]dentity is thus ‘identification’ in a discursive structure”, and it is always relationally organised and changeable.\textsuperscript{81}

\textbf{4.3 Non-alignment and Gandhi’s concept of “Satyagraha”}

One may seldom find a place such as diverse and cultural pluralistic as India.\textsuperscript{82} Modern India has multiple religions with a part of the population subscribing to more than one of them. It is necessary to grasp a state’s foreign policy in order to understand its particular identity, since foreign policy may be the truest expression of what a nation really is.\textsuperscript{83} Historically, India has been keen to build bridges between itself and different global powers and remained equidistant from the two blocks during the Cold War. However, the end of the war made it difficult for India to keep its non-alignment policy, which meant that the Indian foreign policy had to be restructured.\textsuperscript{84} India however kept the flexibility in its foreign policy, which allowed India to strengthen its relationships with all major powers even though the US came to be a prominent allied in the beginning of the 90’s.\textsuperscript{85} Contemporary India has since been more market-oriented with a foreign policy highlighting India’s global role in a multipolar world, with changing relationships.\textsuperscript{86} The non-alignment policy moreover states that the US will have to face competition from countries such as India and Brazil and that India wants the world to be multipolar rather than unipolar.\textsuperscript{87} Additionally, the US is said to be “too demanding in its friendship”.\textsuperscript{88} India’s foreign policy is built upon strategic autonomy and values known as embracing independency and sovereignty, which may be the reason to the

\textsuperscript{78} Jorgensen M., Phillips L. (2002), 41
\textsuperscript{79} Jorgensen M., Phillips L. (2002), 57
\textsuperscript{80} Jorgensen M., Phillips L. (2002), 43
\textsuperscript{81} Jorgensen M., Phillips L. (2002), 43
\textsuperscript{83} Bosch Stiftung R., Edit. Godement F. (2015), 28
\textsuperscript{87} The Indian Non-alignment Policy 2.0 (2012), 32
\textsuperscript{88} The Indian Non-alignment Policy 2.0 (2012), 32
Indian scepticism towards alliances since that could mean a decrease in autonomy.\(^89\) Moreover, Gandhi and Nehru, both involved in the Indian struggle for independence from Britain, had one single ambition for India: to be a site for an alternative universality.\(^90\) If India takes the right steps, it could find its rightful place in the world.\(^91\)

In order to understand Indian foreign policy, the concept of “satyagraha”, coined by Gandhi himself in the early 20th century, needs to be addressed.\(^92\) For Gandhi, politics had only one single purpose, namely to erase violence. “Satyagraha” means that the practitioner of the concept is less violent than the opponent – a thought still present in Indian politics.\(^93\) Since 1964, there have not been any major foreign policy changes, but when shifts do occur, “they are not sudden or has much, if anything to do, with the Prime Minister’s personal ideology.”\(^94\) Prime Minister Manmohad Singh’s National Congress Party (in power May 2004-May 2014) had five key principles in their foreign policy, most of them shaped by many important Indian values.

[...] The single most important objective of Indian foreign policy has to be to create a global environment conducive to the well being of our great country. Second, that greater integration with the world economy will benefit India and enable our people to realize their creative potential. Third, we seek stable, long term and mutually beneficial relations with all major powers. We are prepared to work with the international community to create a global economic and security environment beneficial to all nations. Fourth, we recognize that the Indian sub-continent’s shared destiny requires greater regional cooperation and connectivity. [...] Fifth, our foreign policy is not defined merely by our interests, but also by the values which are very dear to our people.\(^95\)

### Chapter 5: A brief background

In March 2014, The Republic of Crimea was illegally annexed by the Russian Federation.\(^96\)

\(^89\) Ollapally M. D. (2015)  
\(^90\) The Indian Non-alignment Policy 2.0 (2012), 69  
\(^91\) The Indian Non-alignment Policy 2.0 (2012), 69  
The Crimean situation is one of the worst crises since the Cold War and emerged after the Ukrainian pro-Russian leader Viktor Yanukovych lost power due to a public uproar and violent protests in Kiev.\(^97\) The Russian annexation of Crimea has led to widespread international isolation by Western powers such as the US. According to Russia, the Crimean people have their right to self-determination.\(^98\) Prior to the crisis in 2014, Crimea used to be an autonomous republic of Ukraine with its own parliament and laws, which permitted the use of e.g. the Russian language.\(^99\) Though India has been uncomfortable about the annexation of Crimea, it has also been cognizant of Russia’s very deep civilizational and historical linkages with the area.

5.1 The 2014 Crimean crisis

In November 2013, the Ukrainian president Yanukovych had to make a choice between an initial painful deal with the EU regarding integration and trade, and to take a $15 bn loan from Russia and to be integrated in a planned Eurasian Union.\(^100\) The president chose the latter alternative, which came to result in protests in Kiev’s Independence Square, Maidan. After fights with the police turned deadly, thousands of people joined and the purpose of the protests shifted to be more focused on the problem of corruption, symbolised by the government. During this period, the Russian president Vladimir Putin also gave order of military drills on the Ukrainian border and at the Russian Black Sea base on the Ukrainian Crimean peninsula.\(^101\) Armed gunmen surrounded the regional parliament in Crimea, whilst a new pro-Russian government was voted in and a referendum came to be held regarding the future of Crimea. With a population of 59% being ethnic Russians the Crimean peninsula has strong bonds to both Russian culture and history.\(^102\) It is thus difficult for Russia to see Ukraine as just another foreign country.\(^103\) When the referendum took place 16\(^{th}\) March 2014, officials reported that as much as 97% of the people had voted in favour of Russia. However, the EU, Ukraine and the US have denounced the referendum.\(^104\) Russian President Putin did moreover sign a treaty to formally annex Crimea.\(^105\) The EU and the US came to adopt

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\(^{98}\) UN General Assembly, GA/11493, 27 March (2014)


\(^{101}\) Yuhas A., (2014)

\(^{102}\) McMahon R., (2014)


\(^{104}\) Yuhas A., (2014)

\(^{105}\) UN General Assembly, GA/11493, 27 March (2014)
sanctions to punish and limit Putin and his allies. The Russian government answered by placing symbolic sanctions against e.g. the US. Putin has stated that Russia never has intended to invade Ukraine, and has thus denied involvement in the Ukrainian crisis.

5.2 India-Russia relations

Even though India has a foreign policy history as a non-aligned state, the relationship with the former Soviet Union has been of considerable importance to both countries. The non-alignment policy of India made it possible to accept Soviet support in the disputes with Pakistan and China, without being forced to subscribe to any Soviet policies regarding Asian collective security. The period between 1971 and 1976 may be the most intimate period regarding Indian-Soviet relations since it was the twenty-year anniversary of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The treaty made Soviet to support the Indian position on Bangladesh, and it did also function as a deterrent to China. However, the relationship came to be strained with the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the early 80’s, urged the Soviet troops to withdraw and to restore Afghanistan’s independence. The relationship was then normalised after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, when India had to reorient its foreign relations with the former Soviet states, and most importantly Russia. The relation with Russia is said to be a “key pillar” in Indian foreign policy. For half a century, Russia has been New Delhi’s foremost military supplier, however, the Indian-Russian defence sale is declining in present time due to the increased cooperation between India and the US.

5.3 India-US relations

Since the end of the Cold War India has been outward looking. The relationship between India and the US developed after the US suspended the military and economic assistance to Pakistan in 1989 and because the US got a more nuanced picture regarding the problem in Kashmir. US foreign policy makers saw the ancient Indian democratic tradition as an important factor to uphold the relationship since the US itself is a rather young nation. Even though the relationship strengthened in the 90’s, India’s strong principle of non-alignment was perceived as a problem for the US. India has moreover been worried about the US

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emergence as the single superpower in the world. The high-level visits to India in 1995 did however strengthen the India-US ties, which also resulted in a signing of a “landmark agreement” on military cooperation.\textsuperscript{111} India-US relations have flourished most recently and the two of them have created strong ties with each other just in case one of them would end up in a difficult situation with China.\textsuperscript{112}

Chapter 6: Material

As previously mentioned, discourse analysis can be applied to anything containing meaning, e.g. text material. Regarding data collection and size, it is convenient to use a small sample of texts since this kind of analysis does not try to find regularities. However, the size of the data should of course fit the aim and the research questions of the analysis, and since this study is interested in using news articles and statements as material, a relative large amount of data is included. This is due to the fact that the articles and statements do not include that much text. Thus, it is easier to decipher discourses out of many articles rather than just a few.

6.1 Articles

Discourse analysis can be based on any kind of material that uses language, both spoken and written. Analysing languages can decipher national identities, which is the main reason to why articles published in the top three most read Indian newspapers in English, are being used as material. Indian newspapers are indirectly presenting the Crimean crisis from an Indian perspective and reflect Indian national identity features externally. English is one of the official languages in India, which motivates the use of newspapers published in English. Moreover, the press functions as a medium through which societies gain knowledge of events, which makes it appropriate to use in this paper.\textsuperscript{113} Newspapers also construct “the nation” and gives incentives to how the nation should be understood in time and space.\textsuperscript{114} The reason for collecting articles published in March 2014 is with regards to the signing of the law that formalised Crimea to be part of Russia by the Russian president Vladimir Putin.\textsuperscript{115}

The three newspapers were chosen with regard to readership numbers. The Readership

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111} Heitzman J., Worden R. (1995)
\item \textsuperscript{112} Bosch Stiftung R., Edit. Godement F. (2015), 26
\item \textsuperscript{113} Silverstone R. Why study the media, Great Britain: Sage (1999), 9, available at https://books.google.se/books?id=UKKsottIl3MC2J1pg=PAA2&pg=PP6&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
\item \textsuperscript{114} Brookes R., Newspapers and national identity: the BSE/CJD crisis and the British press, Cardiff University, Sage (2016), 249, available at http://mcs.sagepub.com.proxy.annalindhbiblioteket.se/content/21/2/247.full.pdf+html
\end{itemize}
Studies Council in India (RSCI), created by the Media Research Users Council (MRUC) and the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC), is once a year conducting and publishing the world’s largest survey of media usage in India, the so-called Indian Readership Survey (IRS). The top three English newspapers in India 2014, according to the survey of that year, were The Times of India, Hindustan Times and The Hindu, based on readership.

Table 1. Indian newspapers ranked by readership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News platform</th>
<th>Readership* in 2014, Daily</th>
<th>Number of collected articles in March 2014**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Times of India</td>
<td>7,590</td>
<td>49 articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindustan Times</td>
<td>4,515</td>
<td>21 articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hindu</td>
<td>1,622</td>
<td>80 articles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In millions  
** When including the search word “Crimea”

The Times of India is the world’s largest broadsheet English daily and the most favoured news website in India. It is a centrist newspaper with a bias towards The United Progressive Alliance (UPA), which is a coalition of centre-left parties. Articles collected from this website are full articles published in March 2014 which can be found in categories such as “World-> Europe”, “World-> US” and “Home-> India” depending on the content and perspective of the articles. Hindustan Times was founded in 1924 and inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi and is one of India’s largest media companies. It is also centrist with a bias towards Pro-Congress, which has its roots in the Indian freedom movement. Articles collected from the Hindustan website cannot be found under special categories due to the lack of an advanced search function. The third newspaper, The Hindu became a daily in 1889 and has since then been growing. It’s an independent platform presenting various news in a

118 Times Internet, News and content, (2016), available at http://timesinternet.in/  
balanced and nuanced manner.\textsuperscript{121} Even though it is said to be independent, it favours the left wing side in Indian politics and must be seen as a centre-left newspaper with biases for the Left parties.\textsuperscript{122} Due to the large amount of articles published on the website of The Hindu, articles collected from this website was found under the category of “News”. Even though all newspapers in this study are more or less centre-oriented, there are tendencies that they are biased in different ways. However, when scrutinizing the articles, no differences regarding the reporting of the Crimean crisis were made. Thus, the political stance of the newspapers does not affect the analysis. Even though the articles could be found in different categories depending on how the particular newspaper’s webpage is constructed, it was not possible to decipher any differences between full articles and articles that did not have a label.

When collecting material from the respective webpage, “Crimea” was included as search word, which refers to the place where the annexation took place in March 2014. Most of the newspapers’ webpages have an advanced search function, which made it possible to focus on articles published during the period between 1\textsuperscript{st} and 31\textsuperscript{st} March 2014. However, the search functions varied in terms of user-friendliness, e.g. when searching for relevant articles at the Hindustan Times, words such as “annexation”, “referendum” and “crisis” had to be included to get any results regarding the Crimean crisis. This was however not seen as a problem since most of the articles published in the newspapers where “Crimea” was used as the only search word, referred to the annexation and the referendum in different ways. Moreover, quotes are included in the analysis since they increase the transparency of the study and due to the fact that most discourse analyses is based on interpretations.\textsuperscript{123} To make sure the quotations were written in a correct manner, directions from the Stockholm University Language Council was used.\textsuperscript{124}

6.2 Statements
The information collected from the articles are triangulated with information from official statements published on the Indian Ministry of External affairs (MEA) homepage. The statements made by representatives of the Indian foreign ministry regarding the Crimean crisis may be considered as the official standpoint in this matter since MEA represent the Indian government. Thus, the statements are useful because of their high level of

\textsuperscript{121} The Hindu, About Us, (2016), available at \url{http://www.thehindu.com/navigation/?type=static&page=aboutus}
\textsuperscript{122} Thakur A., (2013)
\textsuperscript{123} Bergström G. Borénus K. (2005), 408
\textsuperscript{124} Stockholm University, Att citera, available at \url{http://www.su.se/polopoly_fs/1.140521.1372667744!/menu/standard/file/Att%20citera.pdf}
representativeness. Moreover, many of the included articles refer to statements made by the MEA, which makes it natural to include them as material in this paper. However, only 7 official statements could be found on the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs homepage during the year of 2014, and only two statements were published in March 2014. Because of the limited number of published statements in March 2014, statements published during the whole year of 2014 have been included. The chosen search words were “Ukraine” and “Crimea”, since that provided a greater number of available statements than when searching for only “Crimea”.

6.3 Benefits and limitations of the material

Pre-existing data sources can vary in terms of accessibility, and they can also reflect biases and highlight certain aspects of a phenomena rather than reflecting the whole spectrum of factors and variances. According to George and Bennett (2015), the nature of pre-existing sources have downsides since they could be silent in a way more interactive data-collection methodologies are not. This is not considered to be a problem in this study since discourse analysis does not attempt to reach a fully objective conclusion since that, according to discourse theory, is not possible. Moreover, the online world is growing and sources such as electronic media can be rich in information and thus relevant in various analyses that are based on texts. More newspapers could have been included, as well as more articles, but due to the limited scope of this paper it was not preferable. The chosen articles are selected strategically since they had to be published in March and contain specific information referring to the Crimean crisis.

By complementing the articles with statements from the Indian Ministry of External Affair’s (MEA) homepage, the validity and representativeness of the paper increases. Even though pre-existing materials may help to formulate a research question, and to help scholars identifying the universe of cases for particular phenomena, social anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu would probably have rejected this paper due to its lack of objective, first-hand information. From his point of view, participant objectivation, i.e. to “step into another persons shoes”, is necessary to gain true knowledge. However, for a discourse analyst,

\[\text{George A. Bennett A. (2005), 157}\]
\[\text{George A. Bennett A. (2005), 158}\]
\[\text{George A. Bennett A. (2005), 161}\]
primary sources are not interesting since the purpose of discursive research is to explore patterns in e.g. text documents and thus not to find the reality behind the discourses. Since most articles published in March 2014 describes the same events, e.g. the Crimean referendum, the Russian signing of the law which stated that Crimea should belong to Russia and that sanctions against Russia have been posed, it would have been repetitive to describe all 153 articles in the analysis. The author of this paper has thus made a conscious choice to quote articles that have the power to speak for most articles. This could mean that articles that in fact would have been interesting to quote or to highlight are left out. Information about the 153 articles can however be found in Appendix 2.

Chapter 7: Analysis

The material under analysis consists of 153 articles from the three most read Indian English newspapers as well as 7 statements published at the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs’s (MEA) homepage. Discourses can be found when using Laclau and Mouffe’s analytical framework. Thereafter it is possible to state if the discourses reveals features of Indian national identity and whether or not it can explain the Indian foreign policy behaviour in the 2014 Crimean crisis.

Most of the statements and articles are emphasising the importance of dialogue and the ability to see all parties’ interests in the crisis. Articles and statements regarding the official Indian position often states that India calls for a “legitimate democratic process to find full expression trough free and fair elections”. The content of the articles moreover focus on concepts such as sovereignty, sanctions and the association to the politics conducted during the Cold War by major powers. The times of India published an article 5th March 2014 about a discussion between representatives from NATO and Russia regarding Ukraine. It brings up the question of competition between the two powers by stating that:

The situation is complicated only by hardliners in both countries -- those in Russia who want a not just a re-assertive Russia protecting its interests in the region, but also regaining its lost pride and glory as a counterforce to the USA, and those in Washington thirsting for continued

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American dominance that has been unchallenged for the last two decades.\textsuperscript{131}

Throughout the analysis of the articles and statements, concepts that are making up the key pillar of the content are being targeted. This is done with the help of Laclau and Mouffe’s analytical tools as well as the national identity indicators posed by the ONS and Parekh (2006). First, the nodal points, signs and the chains of equivalence are presented since they make up the discourses. The discourses are thereafter described.

7.1 Nodal points

It is possible to identify two nodal points in the empirical material regarding the Crimean crisis in March 2014. The identified nodal points are “Political system” and “Foreign policy”. The nodal points are seen as privileged signs through which other signs are ordered. The signs are presented together in the chains of equivalence in the end of the presentation of each nodal point.

7.1.1 “Political system”

The first nodal point refers to signs that can be related to ONS’s first indicator of “Political Institutions” and Parekh’s third indicator of democracy and sovereignty. It is a floating signifier since it can be ascribed many different meanings depending on the context in which it is put in. However by searching for signs, the nodal point of “Political system” acquires its meaning in this paper. In the statements published on the Ministry of External Affair’s (MEA) homepage, the Indian position in the Crimean crisis favours the Russian annexation and states that India admits that there are many different interests involved and that they all need to be considered. A statement published 6\textsuperscript{th} March, which later was quoted by the Times of India\textsuperscript{132} concludes that:

\[ \text{[i]t would be important, in this context, for a legitimate democratic process to find full expression through free and fair elections that provide for an inclusive society.} \]

After elections had been conducted in Ukraine, India however congratulated the Government and the Ukrainians in a statement published 30\textsuperscript{th} May. It is said that:

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{131} The Times of India, \textit{Nato and Russia agree to meet as Ukraine tension eases}, 05 March (2014), available at \url{http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/Nato-and-Russia-agree-to-meet-as-Ukraine-tension-eases/articleshow/31442919.cms} Reassertive\[sic\]
\bibitem{132} The Times of India, \textit{Crimea cloud over Indian students}, 21 March (2014), available at \url{http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Crimea-cloud-over-Indian-students/articleshow/32386738.cms}
\end{thebibliography}
India is a firm believer in the power of the expression of democratic will by the people. As the largest democracy in the world, India has recently seen a vibrant election where the people have voted a new Government with a clear mandate.\textsuperscript{134}

In a statement published 13\textsuperscript{th} August, a Q&A with the Indian foreign minister states that “India has been calling for an end to the violence” and that the main concern for India was the 4700 Indian nationals that at that time lived in Ukraine.\textsuperscript{135} This information coming from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs is included in the article published in The Times of India, which also adds, “there are legitimate Russian and other interests involved”.\textsuperscript{136} An article published in the Hindustan Times, 7\textsuperscript{th} March, concerning the referendum in Crimea concludes that it, according to the Obama administration and international laws, violates Ukraine’s constitution. It is said that Obama underlines that “[a]ny discussion about the future of Ukraine must include the legitimate government of Ukraine”.\textsuperscript{137} It is also assumed that it is not possible to redraw borders when there are so many democratic leaders in the world. An article in The Hindu, published 19\textsuperscript{th} March, recognises the Indian emphasis on e.g. respect for sovereignty, which in the article is seen as contradictory since India has been supporting Russia by argue that “all sides” should use dialogue as the resolving mean to the crisis.\textsuperscript{138} The article moreover adds that the Indian Prime Minister has been able to see the historical dimension of the crisis, which is seen as an explanation for the Indian ambiguity. An article in The Hindu published 19\textsuperscript{th} March, says that the Russian President Putin saw Crimea’s reunification with Russia as historic whilst he emphasised that a majority of the Crimean population voted in favour of Russia and called the vote a “free choice of their destiny”.\textsuperscript{139} Another article published in The Hindu 15\textsuperscript{th} March, moreover states that the US has expressed its support for Ukraine’s sovereignty whilst it urged other countries not to recognize the result of the referendum.\textsuperscript{140} Russia did, as stated in the Hindustan Times published 16\textsuperscript{th} March, use its veto in the UNSC when the members of the council voted in favour to regard the Crimean
referendum as illegitimate. The Times of India also published an article 28th March, regarding the UN-voting of the annexation of Crimea, and moreover stated that the UN charter concludes that:

[…] all states must refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, and to settle their international disputes by peaceful means.

The chain of equivalence in the first nodal point of “Political system” includes signs such as: referendum - free and fair elections - inclusive society - power of expression - all interests - peace.

7.1.2 “Foreign policy”
A second nodal point that can be deciphered in most of the articles and statements concerns foreign policy matters, both Indian foreign policy but also Russian, Ukrainian and American, foreign policies. India’s unwillingness to interfere in the conflict is reflected in its foreign policy towards countries such as Ukraine, Russia and the US. This nodal point was detected when turning to the ONS’s second indicator of “Socio-economic circumstances” and Parekh’s (2006) second indicator referring to “Important values and distinct worldview”. This nodal point can also be seen as a floating signifier since there are as many foreign policies as there are countries in the world. By placing it in the contexts which are brought up in the articles and statements, it is however possible to give it meaning. An article published at the Hindustan Time’s website stresses that “India is faced with tricky foreign policy choices over the Crimea dispute […]”, and that “India has to delicately balance its stated position on preserving territorial integrity and the demands of its trusted friend, Russia”. It is also said that Russia is very positive regarding the Indian standpoint in the crisis. An Indian official should also have claimed, according to the article, that “[i]t’s a balanced position, factoring in all aspects”. Moreover, The Times of India published an article 28th March, saying that as many as 58 countries abstained from voting regarding whether or not the annexation of Crime...
Crimea should be seen as illegal. It is also mentioned that this might be a new way of staying non-aligned. Members of BRICS, India, China and Brazil, have moreover decided not to join international sanctions against Russia, instead they prefer political dialogue. India seems to be emphasising all countries part and interests in the conflict, according to an article in Times of India, 23rd March. An article published in The Hindu 20th March, says that India wants all countries to strive for a diplomatic solution rather than sanctions. This was also brought up in a statement on the MEA homepage stating that:

[…] the [Indian] Government has emphasized the need for all sides to exercise restraint and work together constructively to find political and diplomatic solutions, involving all stakeholders […].

It is stated in The Times of India, 29th March, that the talks between the US, India and China, as part of the American diplomatic efforts to isolate Russia and to get them to join the sanctions, did not fructified. In The Times of India, 6th March, an article regarding the sanctions against Russia, it is stated that the British foreign secretary William Hague said:

I think what happens at the European Council will partly be determined by Russia’s willingness to talk to Ukraine today.

In The Hindu, it is mentioned 17th March, that the Russian Foreign Ministry calls for a reform that would provide for regions in Ukraine to be autonomous from e.g. Kiev’s foreign trade policy. Moreover, it is stated 20th March, that India did not want to join any sanctions against Russia whilst India also called for a diplomatic solution. In an article published 20th March in the Hindustan Times, it is stated:

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146 The Times of India, Attempts to isolate Russia will be counterproductive: India, 23 March (2014), available at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Attempts-to-isolate-Russia-will-be-counterproductive-India/articleshow/32562345.cms
The spiralling crisis prompted the White House to warn Russia it was ‘creating a dangerous situation’ and the NATO commander to call the Kremlin’s seizure of Crimea ‘the gravest threat to European security and stability since the end of the Cold War’. 

To isolate Russia, sanctions were thus being discussed as the mean to success, where first and foremost the US and the EU have been on the frontline. It is also stressed that the diplomatic efforts between the US and Russia were failing on 14th March, when the American Foreign Minister John Kerry threatened Russia with sanctions. In The Hindu, an article published 15th March, states that “[d]iplomatic solution for Ukraine fades after London talks”, regarding the same meeting between the Russian and American Foreign Ministers. In The Times of India, an article published 4th March, concerns the suspending of Russia from the G8 and freezing of Russian assets as punitive measures. Russia moreover did respond to the suspension from the G8 by saying “[…] it will be a minus for the G8”. It is also mentioned that Putin tries to re-assert Russia’s power, which was lost with the end of the Cold War. Regarding the link between the Crimean crisis in 2014 and the Cold War, it is stated in an article published 4th March in Times of India, that:

Two aspects of the Cold War stand out. One, the two dominant powers, US and Soviet Union, avoided direct confrontation. Two, they were locked in fierce competition on account of a clash of ideologies and beliefs.

Moreover, the Hindustan Times published 31st March an article which elaborates on how the Crimean crisis might change the world. It is mentioned that Russia has diminished from G8, that NATO and EU are united and that the European energy map is being redrawn, only to mention a few of the suggestions. Moreover, it is said the American global leadership might weaken as a result of other emerging powers. In an article in The Hindu 27th March, it

says that the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa made a joint statement:

The escalation of hostile language, sanctions and counter-sanctions, and force does not contribute to a sustainable and peaceful solution, according to international law, including the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.\footnote{The Hindu, \textit{U.S., allies ask Russia to change course}, Moscow, 25 March (2014), available at \url{http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/us-allies-ask-russia-to-change-course/article5829832.ece}}

The chain of equivalence in the second nodal point of “Foreign policy” includes concepts such as: diplomacy - sanctions - non-alignment - Cold War - dialogue - all interests.

7.2 Summary of the material

The table below illustrates the number of articles referring to the two nodal points and related signs, which have analysed above. To be able to present such a table and to scrutinize the articles, the parameters of the ONS and Parekh have been used when searching for national identity characteristics of India. Signs that can be related to the mentioned nodal points and the number of articles that relate to each of them, can be seen in the tables below.

\textit{Table 2: The two nodal points with their respectively sigs.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political system</th>
<th>Foreign policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referendum (vote)</td>
<td>Diplomacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free and fair elections</td>
<td>Sanctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive society</td>
<td>Non-alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power of expression</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Cold war references</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All interests</td>
<td>All interests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Table 3: Articles and statements that refers to each nodal point.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political System</th>
<th>Foreign Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of External Affairs</td>
<td>7 (out of 7)</td>
<td>6 (out of 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times of India</td>
<td>32 (out of 49)</td>
<td>36 (out of 49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hindustan Times</td>
<td>16 (out of 21)</td>
<td>17 (out of 21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3 Discourses

No discourse can be completely closed, which means that the two discourses that have been taken into account in this paper might not tell the whole story of what Indian national identity is. However, it is possible to find two discourses in the articles and statements – each of them produces the Indian identity. As Laclau and Mouffe contend, a discourse is made by a nodal point and related signs that are ordered around it, in this paper the nodal points and the signs together constitute the two discourses of *Democracy* and *Multipolarity*. The discourse of democracy is build upon the nodal point of “Political system”; meanwhile the second one is based on the nodal point of “Foreign policy”. The basic ideas of a political system based on democracy is rather simple – states should engage in open and public debate and people of the particular state should be part of the politics. India is emphasised as being the largest democracy in the world and it is stated in many articles that it recognises the importance of sovereignty and independence. The articles and statements that include concepts (signs) referring to democracy, e.g. election, vote and referendum, have been considered belonging to this category. Moreover, it is stated that the US leadership is seen in the light of a decline whilst India calls upon “all interests” to be seen. This second discourse of *Multipolarity* indicates in both statements and articles that there might be a shift of power in the future, meaning that the US have to share its leadership role with emerging powers. India also calls for “all parties” involvement and interests in the Crimean crisis to be recognized. Moreover, the emphasis on the posing of sanctions and the upholding of dialogue with all parties also refers to this discourse. Since multipolarity e.g. is based on the thought that sovereign states should make their own decisions and that the world should be governed by more than one state, these concepts are compatible with the Indian national identity and its conducted foreign policy in March 2014. The three Indian newspapers and the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), thus create these two discourses that is compatible with the Indian national identity and its foreign policy behaviour during the 2014 Crimean crisis.

India’s emphasis on free and fair elections as well as its urge for parties to solve the solution by peaceful means is very much in line with the discourses of democracy and multipolarity. By also stating that there are many interests involved and by not joining sanctions, India did send out signals that non-alignment is as important today as it was when Gandhi still walked on this earth.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to describe which discourses that can be deciphered in the articles published in March 2014 in the top three Indian newspapers in English and in statements published at the homepage of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Moreover it has been to highlight the connection between discourses and the Indian national identity and to examine whether or not it influenced its foreign policy behaviour during the 2014 Crimean crisis. Thus, the research questions that have been the underlying foundation of this paper are:

- Which discourses can be deciphered in the material regarding the 2014 Crimean crisis?
- What can these discourses reveal about Indian national identity?

To be able to provide answers to these two questions, Laclau and Mouffe’s discursive framework has been used. Since their theory and method includes a toolbox containing a great number of concepts, the following ones have been used in this paper: *nodal points, signs* and *chains of equivalence*. These concepts have contributed to the exploration of two discourses. When scrutinizing the articles and statements, indicators of Indian national identity have been based on the ONS’s and Parekh’s definitions of what national identity may constitute of.

Since national identity may be perceived as discourse constructed by the language, written language has thus been used in in the shape of articles of articles and statements.

The first question refers to which discourses that can be deciphered in the material. The first one that could be deciphered refers to *Democracy*. This discourse includes democratic values, which India indeed is very keen to uphold. The nodal point “Political system”, and its related signs of e.g. “election”, “inclusive society” and “power of expression”, can be connected to this discourse. The second one refers to *Multipolarity*, due to India’s emphasis of a non-aligned foreign policy that should recognise all countries interests. The nodal point in this discourse is “Foreign policy” and the related signs are “diplomacy”, “non-alignment” and “sanctions”.

The answer to the second research question regarding what these discourses may reveal about the Indian national identity is that it during the 2014 Crimean crisis was based on democratic values, non-alignment and sovereignty. The concept minted by Gandhi, “Satyagraha”, and the
promoting of non-violence by the emphasis on dialogue is still influencing the Indian foreign policy. The national identity is thus in line with its foreign policy behaviour during the 2014 Crimean crisis since India has called for diplomatic efforts and refused to isolate Russia by joining international sanctions. On the contrary, the Indian support for the Russian standpoint may refer to the discourse of *Multipolarity* which emphasises that all states interests should be accounted for. Thus, the two discourses deciphered in this paper illustrate central features of Indian national identity in March 2014 during the Crimean crisis.

It is beyond the scope of this study to decide if aspects such as interests and power can be completely ruled out when analysing the discourses and the Indian national identity. The line between identity and interests has shown to be fluent, which sometimes makes it difficult to know whether it is the national identity or national interests that shape the particular foreign policy behaviour. The fact that India would like to strengthen its international presence in a multipolar world rather than a unipolar one, could be seen as both a national interest and a feature of the Indian national identity. However, since it has been stated that it is the identity that determines the interests and not the opposite, it is possible to conclude that the Indian foreign policy behaviour during the 2014 Crimean crisis was influenced by its national identity. This paper relies heavily on interpretations, but by using Laclau and Mouffe’s analytical tools and by considering the same methodological steps that has been used in this paper, it is possible for someone else to answer the two research questions in a similar manner. However, since the world is constantly changing, the interpretations made in this paper might not have been done in another time and place. The findings in this paper could however be used in multicase studies or perhaps in a comparative study aiming to describe different national identities and how they affect different foreign policies.

The Indian ambiguous foreign policy behaviour, although more supportive of the Russian side rather than the American, during the 2014 Crimea crisis can be explained by the Indian emphasis on democracy and sovereignty as well as its urge to use diplomacy rather than punitive measures against Russia. India moreover favours a world in which there is more than one leader, which is in line with its non-alignment standpoint. This study has shown that the Indian foreign policy was influenced by the Indian national identity which makes its puzzling foreign policy in the 2014 Crimean crisis, not that puzzling after all.

8.1 **Further research**

Even though India’s foreign policy behaviour can be explained by its national identity in this
paper, it would be interesting to compare the findings here with a study focused on national interests as the driving factor behind a country’s foreign policy. This paper has argued that national identity is the foremost driving factor and that it is the foundation for national interests. However, since national identity and national interests might reflect each other, it would be interesting to compare the two approaches and see whether or not the results can be connected. A comparison like this could thus strengthen the findings in this paper or perhaps point to the need to include both approaches to get a complete understanding of the driving forces behind the Indian foreign policy in the Crimean crisis. Moreover, it would also be interesting to make a study concerned with the history of India, since the author of this paper believes that the Indian history can reveal many exciting perspectives of its national identity.
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APPENDIX 1: ARTICLES

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APPENDIX 2: STATEMENTS


