SHAPING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDENTITY
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE BHARATIYA JANTA PARTY

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Abstract

This research paper uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse texts produced by the political party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India. The analysis uses Machin and Mayr’s (2012) concepts of Language and Identity and Nominalisation and Presupposition with the aim to understand how the BJP can influence the democratic society in India through discourse. The text was taken from BJP's website and parts of their 2014 manifesto. The theoretical framework and literature review are built on the role of Hinduism in the democratization of India. In this research, Hinduism acts as an important factor in defining identity in India and Hindutva as an important factor in defining identity for the BJP.

The analysis concludes that when looking at identity, the BJP demonstrate that their texts can have both a positive and a negative effect on the democracy in India. The BJP strongly use ‘India First’ to state that they want to unify the country under one identity and similarities can be drawn to their previous use of ‘Hindutva’. By promoting ‘India First’ the BJP includes a large audience and a somewhat tolerant outlook by stating to include all castes and ethnicities. However, the analysis demonstrates that their strong promotion of ‘India First’ conceal who is responsible to uphold this identity and that in turn could affect the tolerance in society. The analysis also shows that their definition of ‘India First’ is left vague and this can conceal certain interest. Their use of ‘India First’ as an identity can lead to a fear that everything that does not belong under this category is a threat. This combined with the diffuse definition of what ‘India First’ mean could have a negative effect on the pluralistic and tolerant society that was needed for India to transform to a democracy. The research also explores whether the strong promotion of ‘India First’ can be compared to a religious or spiritual movement and touch upon the implications that could follow from that.

Keywords: Religion, Democracy, Identity, Hinduism, Hindutva, Pluralism, Caste System, Secularisation, Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In many countries the transition from authoritarian religious institutions to democratic governments have opened for support to civil society and mediation between government and oppositions. However, after the transition, religious organisations and elites are not always content, especially regarding social and political pluralism. Several writers have noted that where religion did contribute to democratization it was primarily in Western, Christian form, and this led to a discussion about the compatibility of democracy and differing religious traditions (Anderson, 2013:1). Religious traditions may, depending on circumstances, prove more or less supportive of democratic elements within the wider political culture, whilst religious actors may act in ways that promote or hinder the emergence of democratic political habits (Anderson, 2013:193). India is the world's largest ‘electoral’ democracy and the rise of Hindu nationalism is a major challenge. Even if India was established as a secular state, increased challenge by religious nationalism has occurred (Anderson, 2013:31). The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is one of the largest political parties in India, along with the Indian National Congress. The party originally has its roots in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist party. Nationalism in India has been defined in different terms by different scholars. By some Hindutva nationalism has been described as a collective cultural force whose opinion was that people are under the same identity parole (Karlsson 2004:68). Nationalism in India has also been defined as a social phenomenon in which Hinduism got a more central role (Cossman, 1999:20). It’s debatable whether the BJP still represent the strong nationalistic party they once were or if they moved to a more centric role. However, if civil society is to contribute positively towards democratization it needs to be dominated by groups that have an interest in democratic civility and in pushing the state in a liberal democratic direction (Sahoo, 2014: 483).

The study of conversation, religion and social problems both touch upon the concept of identity and has been described as central to discourse-analytical research (Stausberg and Engler, 2011:144). Some researcher points out that the aim of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as explanatory critique is to promote more egalitarian and liberal discourse and thereby to further democratisation (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:77). The current discourse of ideology sees power as increasingly exercised through the use of convincing language (Choulia raki and Fairclough...
1999:26) and hegemonic discourse is described as the peak of ideology, when all alternatives are suppressed in favour of one dominating view (Stausberg and Engler, 2011:141). The study of religion and media was for a long time only interested in discourses on religion in the media, but recent development in research have moved towards how religious discourse and identities are constructed through the use of seemingly non-religious media products (Clark 2005, Stausberg and Engler, 2011:145). Ideology is often understood as something similar to a worldview and has sometimes been explicitly compared with religion (Thompson 1990:77, Stausberg and Engler, 2011:140-141). Clark (2005) looks at what we learn from the media and how we incorporate it into our beliefs related to spirituality and religion (Clark,2005:4). Previously religious identity was something you were born into, it was taken for granted, like racial/ethnic identity but we now see religious identity as something we choose for ourselves (Clark, 2005:9). More and more people are interested in how religion and spirituality are continuing in an increasingly religiously plural world, and how they are changing in relation to the highly mediated cultural and historical context (Clark, 2005:7) Stausberg and Engler (2001) state that this area of research could easily be broadened to include the discursive construction of all kinds of individual and communal religious identities (Stausberg and Engler, 2011:144).

1.2 Aim and research question

The research idea, to study discourse on religious identity related to democracy arises from a personal interest of why support for traditional religion is decreasing in some parts of the world. Yet, religion and democracy both rely on the support from the people to continue to exist. With regards to previous research and the current political climate in India, a CDA will be carried out on texts produced by the BJP. The aim is to analyse how their definition of identity in India can affect the democratic landscape. As described, religious actors may act in ways that promote or hinder the emergence of democratic political habits. Therefore, Hindutva will play the important role in defining the BJPs identity from an historical point of view and Hinduism’s will define the role of Hindu identity in the democratization of India. With identities being constructed through discourse, the research aims to answer the following question:

How does the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) effect the democracy in India in regard to identity?
2. Methodological framework

2.1 Literature review

In the next chapter, a literature review will be carried out on the current democratic landscape in India and on the role of Hinduism in the democratization of India. When structuring the theoretical framework, Laclau and Mouffe’s nodal points with master signifiers and myths will be used, as described by Jorgensen and Phillips (2008). Nodal points organise discourses, master signifiers organize identity and myths organize a social space. For example, if our nodal point would be ‘liberal democracy’ our master signifiers that organize identity could in this case be ‘man’. Myths then, organise a social space and could for example be ‘society’. All of these refer to key signifiers in social society of meaning. When key signifiers are identified in the material, the investigation can begin of how discourses, identity and the social space respectively are organised discursively. This is done by investigating how the key signifiers are combined with other signs. What the key signifiers have in common is that they are empty signs: that is, they mean almost nothing by themselves until they are combined with other signs that fill them with meaning (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:47). According to Laclau and Mouffe, it is important to remember that electoral observers, and the physical set-up of parliament for example, also belong to the discourse of liberal democracy (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:47). For the literature review, Hinduism acted as the first nodal point and democracy acted as the second nodal points and separately, they generated in different master signifiers and myths. After having collected a significant amount of master signifiers the background research resulted in a few key signs that was central for the research as they all had a significant impact on the democracy in India. They were 1.) pluralism, 2.) the separation between state and religion and 3.) the caste system and will be further described in the theoretical framework and literature review section.

2.2 Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis will be applied when analysing the collected data. Discourse analysis as a general form of method gives the researcher the possibility to create their own methodological framework by combining elements from different discourse analytical perspectives. Discourse analysis also intertwines the methodological and theoretical framework
Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory aims at understanding the social as a discursive construction, meaning that all social phenomena can be analysed by discourse analysis. The idea of discourse theory is that social phenomena are never finished or total. Meaning can never be ultimately fixed and this opens for constant social struggles about definitions of society and identity, with resulting social effects. The discourse analyst’s role is to plot the course of these struggles to fix meaning at all levels of the social (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:27). Laclau and Mouffe’s concept of ‘discourse’ does not only mean language but all social phenomena. Their theory mean that discourses try to structure signs, as if all signs had a permanently fixed and unambiguous meaning in a total structure. The same logic applies to the whole social field: we act as if the ‘reality’ around us has a stable and unambiguous structure; as if society, the groups we belong to, and our identity, are objectively given facts. However, just as the structure of language is never totally fixed, so are society and identity flexible and changeable that can never be completely fixed. Laclau and Mouffe’s aim of analysis is, not to find out what groups society ‘really’ consists of, but to explore how we create this reality so that it appears objective and natural (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:34). For Laclau and Mouffe political articulations determine how we act and think and thereby how we create society. Politics in discourse theory is not to be understood as only party politics but it’s a broad concept that refers to how we constantly constitute the social in ways that exclude other ways. Laclau and Mouffe understand politics as the organisation of society in a way that excludes all other possible ways (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:35-36). What we can take with us from Laclau and Mouffe’s theory is that power and politics are two sides of the same coin, where ‘power’ refers to the production of ‘society’ and ‘identity’, while ‘politics’ refers to the always present contingency of these. To Laclau and Mouffe’s this represent the world we take for granted, a world that we have forgotten is always constituted by power and politics (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:38). The data collection will in other words analyse how the BJP produce ‘identity’ and ‘society’ through their discourse.

2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

In order to analyse the texts a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as described by Machin and Mayr (2012) will be used. Discourse is central to CDA and can be described as language in real contexts of use. Doing CDA means for example to look at different choices of words and
grammar in texts to discover the underlying discourses and ideologies. That way the researcher can analyse which ideologies are being highlighted in a text and which are in turn being concealed (Machin and Mayr, 2012:20). The question of power has been at the core of CDA where power comes from access to social resources, which provides authority, status and influence. The person or groups that sit on this power can then dominate and control subordinate groups. The aim in CDA has been to reveal what kinds of social relations of power are present in texts both explicitly and implicitly (Van Dijk, 1993: 249).

Using CDA, the researcher can study what world is produced through text. The idea is that language is not simply for persuasion and communication, but a means of social construction and domination. As Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 258) state, ‘the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them’. It is important to note that power can be more than simple domination from above; it can also be jointly produced when people believe or are led to believe that dominance is legitimate in some way or another. For example, in our Western democracies, people elect politicians because they believe that they have the authority to govern a country. We also believe that doctors have the ‘power’ to provide us with the care we need. In other words, power in democratic societies, needs to be seen as legitimate by people in order to be accepted. This process of legitimation is generally expressed through language and other communicative systems (Machin and Mayr, 2012:24). Language is also a common social behaviour to share our views of how the world works, what is natural and common sense. It is through language that we share the idea of things like ‘British culture’, ‘nationalism’ and what immigrants are like. People and institutions then gain on this language as it appears to be natural and common sense. Ideology can obscure our unequal societies and prevents us from seeing alternatives. It limits what can be seen and what we think we can do (Machin and Mayr, 2012:25). Machin and Mayr (2012) describe several ways of analysing a text within CDA. In this research 1.) Language and Identity and 2.) Nominalisation and Presupposition will be used.

2.3.1 Language and identity

Language and identity include to look at representation of persons in texts. The creator of the text can use all kinds of different ways of describing individuals and groups who in CDA are often called social actors or participants. These choices allow us to place people in the social
world and to highlight certain aspects of identity we wish to draw attention to or neglect. In any language there exists no neutral way to represent a person. And all choices will serve to draw attention to certain aspects of identity that will be associated with certain kinds of discourses (Machin and Mayr, 2012:77). Van Dijk (1993) has shown that how the news aligns us alongside or against people can be thought of as what he calls ‘ideological squaring’. He shows how texts often use referential choices to create opposites. This way the author can simplify events and issues to control their meaning. Representational choices will always bring associations of values, ideas and activities, such as whether we describe a group of 18-year-olds as ‘young people’, ‘youths’, or ‘students’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:78).

2.3.2 Nominalisation and Presupposition

There are two linguistic strategies of concealment: nominalisation and presupposition. Nominalisation typically replaces verb processes with a noun construction, which can obscure agency and responsibility for an action, what exactly happened and when it took place.

Presupposition is one skilful way by which authors can suggest meaning without overtly stating them, or present things as taken for granted when in fact they may be contestable and ideological (Machin and Mayr, 2012:137). Presupposition analyse what kind of meaning is assumed as given in a text, what Fairclough calls the ‘pre-constructed elements’ (1995a: 107) (Machin and Mayr, 2012:153). Looking at what is assumed in a text can be revealing. What is a text setting out as ‘the known’? We can see this in a sentence such as: British culture is under threat by immigration. This assumes that there is such a thing as ‘British culture’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:153). Nominalisation and presupposition are important tools where authors wish to persuade without stating ideologies overtly. Nominalisation is explicitly important when authors seek to represent processes and events through abstractions of who did what to whom. The researcher can then analyse which participants and actions that are abstracted and which that are not. The researcher can also analyse how the author of a text try to promote certain kinds of concepts as taken for granted and what the consequences can be when doing. (Machin and Mayr, 2012:162)
2.4 Limitations

The limitations in the research is that the it will be based on specific master signifier that is assumed to organise identity and society. By excluding certain signifiers or taking out signifiers that are not of the same relevance the research can be pointed into a favourable direction and favour a ‘preferred’ result (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:47-48). The research will not either go into detail of the ‘other side’ of the nodal point either. For instance, nationalism is not only constituted through discourses but also through state violence and material force (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:88). The research won’t address nationalism through other factors such as violence. Another limitation is that democracy results in many different master signifiers that are of importance to my understanding of the subject such as ‘open society’, ‘equality’, ‘free speech’ etc. (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:47). The research will only consider Hinduisms role in democratization. Critique can also be pointed to the fact that the analysis is limited to single texts. It is easier to show how dynamic discursive practices take part in constituting and changing the social world when analysing discourses across a range of texts (cf. Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 51, Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:78). Another critique is that the research could tend to neglect people’s possibilities for resistance. It might take the ideological effects of texts for granted for example, that people will accept racist messages (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2008:79).
3. Literature review and theoretical framework

3.1 Democracy in India

For this research it is important to gain an understanding of the democratic landscape in India. Robert Dahl (1998) describes India as an unusual case when it comes to democracy. According to his theories many factors point against the possibility of a functioning democracy in India. With the population reaching over one billion, Indians are divided among themselves more than any other country in the world. The divides among Indians include caste, language, region, class, religion and each has subdivisions within them. Even if 80 percent of the population in India are Hindus and one would think that Hinduism provides a unified country, the caste system within Hinduism still divides Hindus. The rest of the population are mainly Muslim with exception of a few Christians (Dahl, 1998:159-160). India's widespread poverty and its multicultural divisions could appear to be a great place for the growth of anti-democratic movements powerful enough to overthrow democracy and install an authoritarian dictatorship. The reason why this has not happened Dahl (1998) explains to be because every Indian is a member of a cultural minority so small that its members cannot govern India alone. Each cultural divide within India are too small to build a majority and too small to rule over multicultural India. No Indian minority could rule without employing overwhelming coercion by military and police forces. In most cases members of a cultural minority also don’t live together in a single area but tend instead to be spread over different regions of India. Therefore, most minorities cannot hope to form a separate country outside India's boundaries. Whether they like it or not, most Indians are destined to remain citizens of India. Because disunion is impossible, the only alternative is union, within India. Finally, for most Indians there is simply no realistic alternative to democracy. None of India's minorities, by itself, can overturn democratic institutions and establish an authoritarian regime, count on the military and police support it would need to sustain an authoritarian government, hope to form a separate country, or propose an appealing ideological and institutional alternative to democracy. Experience indicates that any sizable coalition of different minorities will be too divided to sustain a takeover, much less an authoritarian government (Dahl, 1998:162-163). India has been defined as a highly pluralistic society by many theorists and mainly because of its plurality of religions. Some theorists argue that Hinduism and Buddhism were the earliest advocates of religious pluralism. The religions
granted the individual the right to choose his or her own personal faith (Fisher, 2017:193-194). Despite Dahl (1998), using pluralism to describe why India manage to remain a democracy, religious communal differences are also vulnerable to exploitation by sectarian politicians. This form of exploitation has happened in India before (Sen, 1999:6). In the last two decades, the focus of the Indian debate has been the secular crisis, some argue that the strong separation between political and religious spheres has resulted in the rise of Hindu nationalism. The decreased involvement in religion in Indian society has led to the increased support for Hindu nationalism (Roover, Claerhout, Balagangadhara, 2011:573).

3.2 Hinduism and democracy - shaping society

This section will describe Hinduism’s role in the democratization of India. The three factors that will be presented are 1.) pluralism, 2.) secularisation and 3.) the caste system as they will play a key role in defining Hindu identity in the democratic society in India.

3.2.1 Pluralism

Pluralism is an important identity factor as it had a strong impact during the transition to a democracy in India. Mehta (2004) says that pluralism is an advantage in the transition to a liberal democracy as it means that no group alone can dominate. Pluralism also promotes tolerance among all the different sects of Hindus. Hinduism never had one or two dominant sects, as within Christianity (Protestantism or Catholicism), therefore Hindus were used to different views and that benefited the transition to a democratic state (Mehta, 2004:115). Anckar (2011) describes that the pluralistic view within Hinduism created a great tolerance in India: ‘When every man is allowed to worship his own god and no authoritarian ecclesiastical organization exists, the prospects for democracy should be quite good’. The pluralism in India created a great tolerance for differences which was key in the democratization of India (Anckar, 2011:77).

Respecting different space and striving for a multi ethical order are characteristics of the Hindu moral that reinforce democracy as well as set good boundaries for it. Since Hinduism can separate the political and the religious space, Hinduism promotes a tolerance of differences in a political society. Hindu intellectuals also often seem to compare discussions around democracy
with a kind of pluralism. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's influential Hindu View of Life sees democracy, for the most part, as a way of ensuring that each group “should be allowed to develop the best in it without impeding the progress of others” (Mehta, 2004:114-115). Mehta (2004) address the importance of Hindu identity for democracy and points out the transformation of Hindus’ self-understanding. For India to become a democracy it was important that the population understood that democracy wasn’t against Hindu traditions. You can say that democracy was promoted as a tolerant form of government that wouldn’t interfere with Hindu traditions. To be able to move the country to a democracy Hinduism was used to promote it. As an example, Gandhi argued that self-rule in all its senses was at Hinduism’s core and others tried to show that a certain conception of democratic practice had always been central to Indian society. Tolerance comes from the pluralistic view of Hinduism and created a better platform for democracy and was then easier accepted among the population (Mehta, 2004:110).

3.2.2 Secularisation

Another important factor in the democratization of India was that the political and religious spheres were separated within Hinduism. The Hindu were able to imagine and honour the political without expecting it to give meaning to everything or comprehensively relieve the human estate something that has been of great value in defining the secular space that liberal democracy requires (Mehta, 2004:114-115). As mentioned, the separation of political and religious societies creates a better tolerance for differences both in the political world and among individuals. The modern Indian state was also secular and for equal citizenship to people of all religious descriptions, it favours no establishment of religion (Mehta, 2004:116). Philpott (2007) describe how Hinduism promoted secularism in India by explaining that in Hindu tradition and political rule is grounded in the divine cosmos but differentiated from spiritual functions. Philpott (2007) explained that the modern Hinduism of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Party have also supported differentiation. We can see that secularism has been existing in the Hindu tradition through years (Philpott, 2007:517), (Fisher, 2017:194), (Mehta, 2004:116). Ungureanu and Monti (2017) also analyses the role of religious heritages and theologies in shaping democratic public discourse and defends the necessary separation between the democratic state and religion in pluralistic societies (Ungureanu and Monti, 2017:523). Doinger and Nussbaum (2015) state that secularisation was needed in India’s diverse religious, ethnic, cultural, and
linguistic strands to be able to function together as a single national unit (Doniger, Nussbaum, 2015:91). Many authors demonstrate the importance of secularism and pluralism for a functioning India. It can be concluded that secularism and pluralism were relevant for the democratization of India.

3.2.3 The caste system

The caste system is a hierarchical system where each person mainly interacts with people from the same caste. It’s an important identity factor in this research as the caste system is not compatible with democracy. Even if India legally put an end to the caste system in 1650 it remains in some communities and acts as an anti-democratic system. However, it does have less importance today in Hindu society and a decreasing roll in politics (Anckar, 2011:75-76). Spinner-Halev (2015) address an important aspect about the caste system that organise Hindu identities in India and it’s the discussion of internal and external toleration. Spinner-Halev (2015) describes Hindu toleration as external and describe that Hinduism allows other groups to live by their religious practices. However, within the caste system, individual autonomy and equality are not central in Hinduism. Spinner-Halev (2015) mean that Hinduism can be quite externally tolerant and accepting of other religions, but Hinduism is not internally tolerant. Hinduism also allows other religions to be intolerant internally as well within their religion. Hinduism is tolerant towards some parts of Hindu culture, for example how and if you pray, how you pursue salvation and so on are of your own choice within Hinduism. However, when it comes to different castes the toleration is different. Hinduism’s social practices usually wants to keep people in unequal structures. They restrict liberty and equality for particularly women untouchables and lower-caste members. Internal tolerance is linked to liberty and is needed for a liberal democracy. The Hindu tolerance accept other religion such as Judaism and Christianity but their internal intolerance effect lower-castes, untouchables, and women in all religions (Spinner-Halev, 2005:37-38).

3.3 Hindutva and nationalism

Before moving on to the data collection it is important to understand Hindutva and nationalism. The BJP have been strongly influenced by Hindutva. Hindutva was named for the
first time by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar who, during the 1920s, invented the concept in an attempt to define Hinduism, the Hindu nation and Hindu race from a political, social and cultural perspective (Cossman, 1999:6). The term Hindutva translates to ‘Hinduness’ in English and the initial idea of the term Hindutva was the nation's cultural identity struggle against the British empire. Some say that Savarkar gave Hindu nationalism an ideology to follow. Savarkar's literary work Hindutva: Who is Hindu? Gave a comprehensive framework for a nationalist ideology although it gave no corresponding specific plans for how this should be followed (Jaffrelot 2007:17). Savarkar did not define Hindutva as a religion or claimed that the term should correspond to Hinduism. Hindutva would rather be a collective cultural force whose opinion was that the population are under the same identity parole (Karlsson 2004:68). The founder of the RSS was influenced by Savarkar who was looking for a way of giving India an identity that can encompass all other differences. His answer is that being Indian means essentially possessing a common ethnicity, which he names Hindutva or ‘Hinduness’. Claiming that this is what all Indians have in common, including Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists. For Savarkar and the many to whom he appeals, the call of blood or the race answers the questions of what it is to be an Indian (Mehta, 2004:118).

Hindu nationalism is still active in India today. It finds its expression taken the concept of communalism. Hindu Nationalism has had many different definitions and Chandra (2009) explains it as “Communalism has been defined as a discourse based on the belief that because a group of people follow a particular religion, they have as a result, common social, political and economic interests” (Chandra 2009:1) while Cossman (1999) describes it as ‘It is a discourse that attempts to constitute subjects through communal attachment, particularly, though religious community’ (Cossman, 1999:6). The nationalist ideology and Hindutva are now a description of a class, religion and social affiliation. By popularizing the concept among the masses, Hindutva has today been defined by India Supreme Court as “a way of life or a state of mind”. After the failures to make nationalism active in politics, it has instead been defined as a kind of social phenomenon in which Hinduism got a more central role (Cossman, 1999:20).

Anderson (2006) understand the nation and nationalism as a concept and how they are constructed by describing it through ‘Imagined Communities’ and ‘Print Capitalism’. Anderson (2006) implies that the nation is an imagined community because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them.
He believes that ideology is given, that categorization based on nationality is as basic as gender in post-traditional and modern society. In the same way as a person is a woman or man, the person in question is American or Swedish (Anderson, 2006:5-6). To re-illuminate the ideological basis of this kind of imaginary communities he describes two other historical paradigms that have been the markers of community, dynasty and religion. Just as nations today are taken for granted, these paradigms were taken for granted and created communities based on these categories. Anderson (2006) also brings up religious communities as he talks about the perception of the nation as eternal. A community that stretches from the unborn to the living and further to the desolate (Anderson, 2006:11).

3.4 Limitations

The theories presented are based on what was needed for India to transform to a democracy, but some theories argue that what obtains democracy is not necessarily what also sustains it. Anderson (2013) explains that there are many other factors that may be of greater importance in explaining successful democratization processes (Anderson, 2013:193). This research won’t compare the significance of religion in comparison to other factors. There’s also critique against the theory of India as a secular state. Even if India was considered a secular state, some Christians think that it wasn’t always the case and that discrimination against Christians took place (Anderson, 2013:31). The democracy in India might not to be considered as a strong democracy, looking at surveys they drop and/or remain rather low on measurements of a strong democratic state (Robert Dahl, 1998:198). This means that the current democracy in India might not be something to strive for or use as a definition. It is important to note that the research looks specifically at the democratic state in India and not democracy as a generic concept.
4. Data collection

4.1 Text(s) no. 1: Nation First

The first text was collected from the Bharatiya Janata Party Jharkhand Pradesh website under the section Governance; Core Issues; Nation First; The BJP’s take on Nations First’. The text was produced by the BJP to define their definition of Nations First for the population of India. It’s is unknown what year the text was published on their website. The text collected has been broken down in seven parts below to better follow the analysis of the text. See Appendix 1 for full description.

The BJP's take on Nations First (Annex 1)

1. A firm belief in the ideal that a truly rich and diverse nation like India is optimally united when its people give precedence to their identity as ‘Indians before everything else’ is what led to the birth of the BJP.

2. The party's staunch commitment to this principle is what has ensured its unparalleled rise to becoming one of the largest, most representative political parties in India.

3. The BJP believes in true ‘National’ politics, where every Indian, irrespective of his caste, creed or religion is an Indian first. It doesn’t believe in narrow politics of compartmentalisation and division of society.

4. The party's agenda is to unite people on the basis of their love for the country. Primacy to this identity is what will once again chart the path for India’s re-emergence as a cultural and economic superpower.

5. This should also be looked at in light of BJP’s core commitment to its guiding philosophy of ‘Integral Humanism’, which considers all Indians as one united entity.

6. Our leadership has walked this path for years and believes that it will ensure our precious energies aren’t wasted in petty differences.

7. Keeping the interest of the nation above everything else is what will ensure a united and powerful India, wherein each one of its 1.25 billion citizens contributes in his or her unique way and fulfils his or her unique dream.
4.1.1 Language and Identity

The text starts by referring to the birth of the BJP to demonstrate why they became successful and show that they value and find their past important and see it as vital to mention where their success came from. Their emphasize on ‘nation’ and ‘Indians before everything else’ in the first part of the text can serve to add a form of ‘moral panic’ about the population’s identity, that the current identity is out of control. We need give precedence to ‘Indian’s before everything else’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:79). In this statement: 4. ”The party's agenda is to unite people on the basis of their love for the country. Primacy to this identity is what will once again chart the path for India’s re-emergence as a cultural and economic superpower” they can add to the moral panic that everything that does not belong under that identity creates problems for the country and will hinder the re-emerge of the country's success. Machin and Mayr (2012) describes how this can create a feeling of ‘What is society coming to?’ ‘We need greater discipline, law and order in this society.’ Another aspect is that everyone might not have the same opportunity to show love for the county. The text chooses to silence how people can fit under that category and foreground a certain ‘other’ (people who don’t show love for the country). Thereby signifying a specific discourse which suggests a threat to the moral order (Machin and Mayr, 2012:79). To leave that particular part out can be concealed as the party’s agenda. A technique pointed out by Van Dijk (1991), denial of racism, where the text first states that it normally has no problem with a person, but in this case does (Machin and Mayr, 2012:82) could be applied here as well. In a sense, the author states to have no problem in uniting people as long as they show love for the country, but without adhering to that criteria people can’t belong to this unity.

Impersonalisation is used to give extra weight to a particular statement, it is not just a particular person but a whole institution that requires something. It can been seen when politicians use ‘Our nation believes...’ or ‘Britain will not be held responsible...’. It conceals who actually believes what and who is responsible in each case (Machin & Mayr, 2012:79-80). It can be seen in the following statement: 7. "Keeping the interest of the nation above everything else is what will ensure a united and powerful India.", this can add to the confusion of who actually is responsible of keeping the interest of the nation. Since the party defines ‘National politics’ and ‘India first’ above everything else, it creates the feeling that it’s not just a particular
person or the party who wants something but it’s the whole nation and the population of India that’s responsible to keep the interest of the nation above everything else.

The concept of ‘we’ can be slippery and can be used by text producers and politicians to make vague statements and conceal power relations. ‘We’ can mean ‘the political party’, whereas in the next sentence it can mean ‘the people of India’. These sentences can conceal some of the strong commitment to what national politics mean and who is responsible (Machin and Mayr, 202:84) It can be seen in the following statements: 3. The BJP believes in true ‘National’ politics, where every Indian, irrespective of his caste, creed or religion is an Indian first” and 7. “Keeping the interest of the nation above everything else is what will ensure a united and powerful India”. Instead of having to say “Every Indian is Indian first and for Indians keeping the interest of the nation is above everything else” splitting the information into two sentences helps the writer to conceal this (Machin and Mayr, 2012:85).

4.1.2 Nominalisation

Often politicians speak of ‘the changed global economy’ as reason for the fact that life is now different. By presenting it as a fact they hide that they have contributed to this state of affairs and have made decisions that have (Machin & May, 202:139). It could be questioned why the BJP use nominalisation in this statement: 3. “The BJP believes in true ‘National’ politics, where every Indian, irrespective of his caste, creed or religion is an Indian first. It doesn’t believe in narrow politics of compartmentalisation and division of society”. In this part they state that they believe in true ‘National’ politics and describe that this means all caste, creed or religion. However, in describing the opposite side, what it doesn’t believe in they nominalise the words and use ‘compartmentalisation’ and ‘division’. Taking about compartmentalisation and division of society as nouns rather than processes, they can foreground that they might have contributed to this division or made decisions that have. The can then also talk about it as if it’s natural that there is a division in society and not have to address it. By presenting it as a fact, they don’t have to go into any greater details of what other problems there is or what has caused the problem (Machin and Mayr, 2012:39).

Again, the text show signs of nominalisation in this phrase: 7. “Keeping the interest of the nation above everything else is what will ensure a united and powerful India”. Here the author of the text avoids concrete explanation where the text uses nominalisations and nouns rather than
processes. Rather than saying ‘We need to keep the interest…’ the author is able to background the facts by saying ‘Keeping the interest’. What should be kept and who is responsible for keeping the interest becomes vague (Machin and Mayr, 2012:146). To nominalise the division that they see in today’s society, as well as who should be keeping the interest of the nation, it can be interpreted as if the BJP don’t want to take responsibility for the divide and hide that they might have contributed or will contribute to this.

4.1.3 Presupposition

Using words such as ‘Nation First’, ‘India first’, ‘Indians before everything else’ or ‘Primacy to this identity’ assumes that there is such thing as ‘India First’, ‘Identity’ and so on. Studies in Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies have shown that this idea of monolithic or ‘essentialism’ cultures is mostly an illusion. Concepts like ‘British culture’ hide massive variation, differences and change within that culture. Yet such concepts can be used to advance particular interests and ideologies (Machin & Mayr, 2012:153). Presupposition can be used in order to build a basis for what sounds like a logical argument. In this case the author indicates that there is such a thing as an ‘identity’ based on one’s love for the country and therefore everything that is not in line with this ‘identity’ must be seen as a threat to the country’s success. This is how text producers can establish what is to be known and shared (Machin & Mayr, 2012:154). Language can reconstitute the social world. In this case, that there is such thing as ‘India First’ and an ‘identity’ becomes accepted as a given, then we sideline the fact that it is open for contestation, that it is part of political decisions and choices that are being made right now. If we can make everyone accept that there is such identity then people can be more easily persuaded that it is something that must be protected, and that things and people that are not part of this identity can be identified and dealt with (Machin & Mayr, 2012:154).

The same goes for the following statement: 3.” The BJP believes in true ‘National’ politics, where every Indian, irrespective of his caste, creed or religion is an Indian first. It doesn’t believe in narrow politics of compartmentalisation and division of society” and 4. “The party’s agenda is to unite people on the basis of their love for the country. Primacy to this identity is what will once again chart the path for India’s re-emergence as a cultural and economic superpower”. Here the presupposition is that there is such thing as an ‘identity’. When a politician uses this presupposition they can also make the assumption that citizens do actually
have concerns and that the politician is claiming to know what they are. Politicians often use this presupposition to control what concerns you are permitted to have (Machin & Mayr, 2012:160). By framing their take on ‘Nation first’ to be about the importance of ‘India first’ and ‘one’s love for the country’ they create and control the concerns to be around not having this ‘identity’. By making the reader believe that what is important is maintaining ‘India first’ they can create and control what concerns people have and make them more inclined that this identity must be protected (Machin and Mayr, 2012:160)

Another, common presupposition is that the text presupposes that there is an old model of doing things and their new model is better. Because ‘old’ is generally accepted as bad and the ‘new’ as good (Machin and Mayr, 202:57). It can be concealed in the text by the BJP in how they use the words ‘once again’ and ‘re-emergence’ that can creates the assumption that there is an old way of doing things and it’s not working. The text does this by assuming that there currently is a wrong identity in India, it needs to be re-emerged. Without stating what is wrong the reader can only assume that people are currently not united under the love for one’s country. Neither do they have India or the nation's best interest at heart. This becomes the assumption that is not stated.

4.2 Text(s) no.2: 2014 Manifesto

The second text analysed is collected from the BJP’s website, found under their Library section. It was produced by the BJP to present their politics to the population in India in order to gain votes in the 2014 election. See Appendix 2 for full description.

The 2014 election manifesto address how the BJP will tackle different issues they saw in India at that time. Among many, they address corruption, employment, crime, minorities and so on. Due to the nature and the size of this research, parts of the document that refer to their definition of ‘India First’ and ‘Nation First’ will be analysed. Section 1-6 are parts taken from the ‘Preface’ where Dr. (Prof) Murli Manohar Joshi, Chairman of the Manifesto Committee introduce their politics. Section 7-9 is a text under the headline ‘Integrating the Nation - Its Vastness and Voices’ and section 8-10 is text taken under the headline ‘India First’.
Preface (Annex 2)

1. BJP recognizes that no nation could chart out its domestic or foreign policies unless it has a clear understanding about itself, its history, its roots, its strengths and failings. In a highly mobile and globalized world, it is imperative for a nation to know its roots that provide sustenance to its people.

2. Even after nearly seven decades of our independence, the country has not been able to discover its innate vitality, the sense of time and the will to act.

3. If India has to survive as a nation, which it has to, in order to play its destined role in the comity of nations, it has to make its voice heard for creating a peaceful and egalitarian world order, then we must take up the challenges with urgency and determination and provide proper solutions for them.

4. It is a pity that we have a demoralized leadership presiding over the state apparatus, which is incompetent to handle the present problems. What is needed today is to arrive at a consensus about the ‘Idea’ of India and also to think and redesign our approach in consonance with the seeking’s and preferences of the Indian people.

5. The situation in the country is deteriorating rapidly. Delay in resolving the crisis would be dangerous. What is needed is to take lessons from history, recognise the vitality and resilience of India, the power of its world-view and utilize its strength, which drove it to glorious heights and analyse its weaknesses, which led to this abysmal fall.

6. What we need is a political party committed to deliver and a leadership with strong determination and political will. As Vivekananda had said, "All power is within you. You can do anything. Believe in that." Yes, the power lies in the people of India, in the inner sanctum sanctorum of Mother India. What is needed is to ignite the spark and Mother India would rise in her full glory.

(Manifest, 2014:1-3)

Integrating the Nation - Its Vastness and Voices (Annex 3)

7. In a democracy, everyone is not only free, but also encouraged to voice his or her concerns. It is also necessary that these voices be heard and concerns redressed. However, all this should happen within the framework of our constitution and with the spirit of ‘India First’.

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8. We have to keep the Nation at the forefront of our thoughts and actions. Any activity, which disrupts the integrity of the nation, cannot be in the interest of any segment of the society or any region of the country.

9. All Indians living in different regions of the country have an equal stake in the progress of the country and they have to be assured of the fruits of the progress. (BJP Manifesto, 2014:7)

**India First** (Annex 4)

10. BJP believes in India being one country, one people and one nation. BJP recognizes the importance of diversity in Indian society, and strengthen and vibrancy it adds to the nation. They party believes in the principle of unity and diversity.

11. India constitutes of all its’ people, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex. It constitutes of all the communities -ethnic, social and cultural groups and also our cultural, which is defined by tolerance and co-existence. The hallmark of India is “Unity in Diversity”. It constitutes of each and every inch of our land, it’s natural resources and mental and physical energy we possess. It constitutes of all the institutions made in the past and present.

12. India First simply means nurturing and protecting all the elements, which India is made of. It does note exclude anyone or anything – it only includes everything and everyone, which India is made of. It is complete India: without exclusion, without exception. It also means that whatever is in the interest of India will be in the interest of all the elements that India is made up of, including its citizens.

13. The counter to ‘India First’ is what is happening today; appeasement of one, at the cost of the other, using Institutions for protecting the interest of a particular party or persons. It is reflected in the thinking that whatever is not in the interest of a party is not in the interest of India. Clearly, Governance on these lines is not in the interest of India.

14. Simply speaking, ‘India First’ puts the national interest first while taking any decision or step both by the Governments and citizens. Even more simply put, you have to see the face of India and Indians when you are in doubt. This is what separates India First from the present day politics and Governance of the Congress-led UPA. (BJP Manifest, 2014:10)
4.2.1 Language and identity

Once again, the text in the preface starts with emphasising the importance of the nation’s history and roots: 1. “BJP recognizes that no nation could chart out its domestic or foreign policies unless it has a clear understanding about itself, its history, its roots, its strengths and failings”. They then go on in section 2 to state that since the independence, the country has not been able to discover its innate vitality. What words the author choose to use can serve psychological, social and political purposes for the writer and reader (Machin and Mayr, 2012:77). Here again we can find a case of impersonalisation to give extra weight to a particular statement. It is not just a particular person but a whole institution that requires something (Machin and Mayr, 2012:78-79). The ‘nation’ needs to know it’s roots, the ‘country’ has not been able to discover its innate vitality. This can be found throughout the text, using phrases such as ‘if India has to survive as a nation’ and ‘the nation needs to change’ and ‘Mother India would rise in her full glory’. It can appear as if the ‘nation’ and ‘Mother India’ express these needs but is itself a set of goals established by interests, in this case the interest of the BJP. This can again conceal certain issues such as, who actually believes what and who is responsible (Machin and Mayr, 2012:80).

The text state that: 4. “It is a pity that we have a demoralized leadership presiding over the state apparatus, which is incompetent to handle the present problems”. The use of ‘demoralized’ and ‘incompetent’ could function to create a type of ‘otherness’, the reader does not want to familiarize with that ‘side’, hence the current leadership is part of something that is problematic. The solution, however, is presented as the ‘Idea’ of India and ‘the Mother India’ and ‘the power lies in the people of India’. Crime reporting usually involves creating moral ‘others’, so that the perpetrator is not like ‘us’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:78). In the text the current leadership is painted up with negative wording, but the solution is made more friendly using words such as ‘Mother’ and ‘power of the people’. Pronouns like ‘us’, ‘we’ and ‘them’ are used to align us alongside or against particular ideas. Text producers can evoke their own ideas as being our ideas and create a collective ‘other’ that is in opposition to these shared ideas (Machin and Mayr, 2012:154). As mentioned, Van Dijk (1993) shows how texts often use referential choices to create opposites, as he calls ‘ideological squaring’ to make events and issues appear simplified in order to control their meaning (Machin and Mayr, 2012:78). This can
also be demonstrated in the following two phrases: 13. “The counter to ‘India First’ is what is happening today” and 14. “Even more simply put, you have to see the face of India and Indians when you are in doubt. This is what separates India First from the present day politics and Governance of the Congress-led UPA”. The text present ‘India First’ as the solution, meaning that they can now create an opposite, the problem. The opposite is as they state is ‘what is happening today’ and ‘the present day politics’. This can then allow the party to distract from actual concrete social processes and issues. The party can create a moral panic by choosing to silence what the ‘actual’ problems are as they instead use this specific discourse which suggests a threat to the moral order. This again shows how the BJP create a feeling of ‘what is society coming to?’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:78-79).

The BJP again use the technique pointed out by Van Dijk (1991) where the author state that he normally has no problem with this person, but in this case he does (Machin and Mayr, 2012:82). In the following statement the BJP does it with democracy: 7. “In a democracy, everyone is not only free, but also encouraged to voice his or her concerns. It is also necessary that these voices be heard and concerns redressed. However, all this should happen within the framework of our constitution and with the spirit of ‘India First’”. In this statement they are denying everyone’s right to a voice without having to state it. First, they encourage everyone to raise their voice in a democracy but then they add ‘however’ and clearly deny people to raise any concern. It can only be allowed within the framework of our constitution and with the spirit of ‘India First’. Levinson (1983) points out that ‘but’ works as a presuppositional trigger (Levinson, 1983, Machin and Mayr, 2012:82) In this case ‘however’ works as the presuppositional trigger. The text continues with the following statement: 8. “We have to keep the Nation at the forefront of our thoughts and actions. Any activity, which disrupts the integrity of the nation, cannot be in the interest of any segment of the society or any region of the country”. In this case, they expand by also denying certain activities within the society and in the country. What activities they are referring to are left unknown. This example also contributes to a certain ‘us’ and ‘them’ as mentioned previously, either you speak and act in the spirit of ‘India First’ or you don’t’. In the latter case you are not allowed in the democratic society. The BJP then continue to state that: 9. “All Indians living in different regions of the country have an equal stake in the progress of the country and they have to be assured of the fruits of the progress” and this conceals who is responsible of what, by breaking up the text in several sentences. As mentioned previously, this
can be used by text producers and politicians to make vague statements and conceal power relations (Machin and Mayr, 2012:84). First, the BJP writes ‘We have to keep the Nation’, whereas in the next part they write that ‘All Indians have an equal stake’. Here it is unclear if ‘we’ means the political party or all Indians. This can be seen in several parts of the texts such as 3. “We must take up the challenges” and 6. “What we need is a political party”. Splitting the information into two sentences helps the writer conceal who is responsible to take up the challenges because ‘we’ is slippery (Machin and Mayr, 2012:85).

Under another headline in the Manifesto they define ‘India First’: 12. “India First simply means nurturing and protecting all the elements, which India is made of. It does not exclude anyone or anything – it only includes everything and everyone, which India is made of”. This part becomes contradicting as they have denied voices and activities that are not within the spirit of ‘India First’ and here they state that ‘India First’ does not exclude anyone or anything. Perhaps it can mean that everyone can support ‘India First’ but not everyone is allowed to voice their concerns. As a researcher one can also question if it is on purpose that they choose the word ‘India’ in the following part and not ‘India First’. 11. “India constitutes of all its’ people, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex”. Since ‘India First’ is what they want to move towards and the existing India is everything that is wrong, one can question why the only part of the text where they mention the inclusion of caste, creed, religion and sex is to describe India and not ‘India First’.

Machin and Mayr (2012) describe that globalisation tend to be used as something that appear natural and inevitable, something that must be responded to and adapted to rather than something that should be questioned (Machin and Mayr, 2012:85). One can ask if the BJP use ‘India First’ as something that is natural and has the power to change the society. It can be demonstrated in the following statement: 14. “Simply speaking, ‘India First’ puts the national interest first while taking any decision or step both by the Governments and citizens”. ‘India First’ is presented as something that can act - it puts the national interest first. The same can be found in this statement 3. “If India has to survive as a nation, which it has to, in order to play its destined role in the comity of nations, it has to make its voice heard”. Here, the BJP makes it seem as a ‘nation’ can make its voice heard, and that there is such thing as a nation that must be responded to. It appears natural and as if it has the power to change things, but actually it lays
within the interest of the party.

4.2.2 Nominalisation

What is being backgrounded and left out by the author can be analysed in the following phrase of the text: 5. “The situation in the country is deteriorating rapidly. Delay in resolving the crisis would be dangerous”. In a passive sentence like this, those responsible for the action may be either backgrounded or left out completely (Machin and Mayr, 2012:137). A passive verb form is useful for backgrounding who performed the action represented by the verbal process. The text use ‘delay’ and avoid having to write who is behind the ‘delay’. The BJP can for example avoid writing ‘the current government have delayed resolving the crisis’. By talking about the delay as a fact they can also hide that they might have contributed to this state or made decisions that have created this situation in the country (Machin and Mayr, 2012:138-139). Nominalisation is used several times in the text, another example can be found in the following statement: 1. “BJP recognizes that no nation could chart out its domestic or foreign policies unless it has a clear understanding about itself, its history, its roots, its strengths and failings”. Instead of saying we need to understand our history they use ‘understanding’ and distance themselves from the statement. 12. “India First simply means nurturing and protecting all the elements, which India is made of”. Here they use ‘nurturing’ and ‘protecting’ instead of writing ‘we need to nurture’ and ‘we need to protect’. The nominalisation obscures those responsible even further and also distances the event from any moment in time (Machin and Mayr, 2012:146). In statement 11 the BJP write: “The hallmark of India is “Unity in Diversity””. By talking about ‘unity’ as nominalisation and a noun rather than a process the author can background what exactly it is that we need to know. Instead of saying “We need to unite…” the text just writes ‘Unity’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:146). By avoiding saying what we need to unite or what we need to know the author can give a humane speech filled with hope and certainty (Machin and Mayr, 2012:147). This can also be shown when they define what problems are happening today in the following statement: 13. “The counter to ‘India First’ is what is happening today; appeasement of one, at the cost of the other, using Institutions for protecting the interest of a particular party or persons”. Here the author uses nominalisation of the word ‘appeasement’. This way the author can avoid having to write in detail what is actually happening today. Using nominalisation when it is a process can make it appear as a simple fact rather than the result of political decisions.
By presenting it as a fact the BJP can hide that they might have contributed to the current state of today that they are referring to as the problem (Machin and Mayr, 2012:139).

4.2.3 Presupposition

Again, presupposition can be found in the texts and what kinds of meanings are assumed as given, the ‘pre-constructed elements’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:153). Throughout the texts a lot of things are presented as given. The BJP presuppose that there is such a thing as ‘India First’, ‘spirit of India’, ‘Mother India’ and so on. Often, what is presented as given, as not requiring definition, is deeply ideological (Machin and Mayr, 2012:153). As previously mentioned, concepts like ‘British Culture’ can be used to advance particular interests and ideologies. Presupposition can be used in order to build a basis for what sounds like a logical argument. There is such a thing as ‘India First’ and everything that goes against it must be seen as a threat (Machin and Mayr, 2012:154). The BJP writes as if there truly is such thing as ‘India First’ and that is how they then go on and build what sounds like a logical argument such as in statement 13: “The counter to ‘India First’ is what is happening today”. If they can make everyone accept that there is such thing as ‘India First’, similar to ‘British Culture’, then people can be more easily persuaded that it is something that must be protected, and that things and people that are not part of this can be identified and dealt with (Machin and Mayr, 2012:154). The following argument: 5. “The situation in the country is deteriorating rapidly. Delay in resolving the crisis would be dangerous” becomes logic without even having to state an actual problem or having to present any numbers, facts or background (Machin and Mayr, 2012:155). The counter to ‘India First’ they describe as ‘what is happening today’ and that can also suggest that what we have discussed is just the surface. “What is happening today” becomes unknown and may be purely an opinion and ideolog (Machin and Mayr, 2012:157). The text also presupposes that there was an old way of doing things. As written in statement two, that the country has seven decades of bad governance in the past becomes a logical argument and their ‘new’ solution of ‘India First’ becomes more appealing, as ‘new’ is generally accepted as good (Machin and Mayr, 2012:157).

Together, presuppositions can create a sense of a coherent Indian society who have a shared heritage and shared opinion (Machin and Mayr, 2012:156). These two statements presuppose that a large number of Indians have the same concerns: 9. “All Indians living in
different regions of the country have an equal stake in the progress of the country and they have to be assured of the fruits of the progress” and 3. “If India has to survive as a nation, which it has to…” It assumes that ‘India’ and ‘all Indians’ share this opinion. The words ‘you have to’ can also presuppose that if you are not in agreement then you are not reasonable, similar to statements such as ‘every sane person knows that’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012:160).

An author can also present a situation as a difficult one, to be able to present an opportunity (Machin and Mayr, 2012:159). It can be demonstrated in the following: 4. “It is a pity that we have a demoralized leadership presiding over the state apparatus, which is incompetent to handle the present problems. What is needed today is to arrive at a consensus about the 'Idea' of India”’. Here details about what demoralized leadership means is left out and instead the BJP use it as an opportunity to present their solution. When a politician uses this presupposition, they can make the assumption that citizens do actually have concerns and that the politician is claiming to know what they are (Machin and Mayr, 2012:160). It can also be seen in the following statement: 5. “What is needed is to take lessons from history, recognise the vitality and resilience of India, the power of its world-view and utilize its strength, which drove it to glorious heights and analyse its weaknesses, which led to this abysmal fall”. By presupposing that India has had an ‘abysmal fall’, they can use this to lay out what kind of concerns people should have to fit their own aims and interests. The same can be shown in the following statement: 14. “Even more simply put, you have to see the face of India and Indians when you are in doubt”. Here the text assumes that the reader is or will be in doubt. A presupposition indicating that you do or should have some kind of plan of action (Machin and Mayr, 2012:161) Here described by telling the reader what you have to do – you have to see the face of India.
5. Discussion

The aim of the research is to analyse how the BJP use identity in their texts and how it can affect the democratic society in India. In other words, how the BJP's text can affect pluralism, secularisation and the caste system as described in the theoretical section considering their background of Hindutva and nationalism. The texts found on BJP's website demonstrate to have both a positive and negative effect on the democratic landscape in India.

5.1 Pluralism

In the theoretical framework it was described that Hindus were used to different views and that benefited the transition to a democratic state as they never had one or two dominant sects. That in turn benefited the transition to democracy. In the text produced by the BJP they show strong signs of a two-sided identity, either you belong to ‘India First’ or you don’t, you either show love for the country or you don’t. Respecting different space and striving for a multi ethical order are characteristics of the Hindu moral that reinforce democracy. The denial of racism as described by Van Dijk (1991) can be found in BJP's text which can influence the pluralistic society negatively. As described in the theoretical framework, respecting different space and striving for a multi ethical order reinforce democracy as well as set good boundaries for it. The BJP state that they deny voices and activities within the society that are not in the spirit of ‘India First’. For India to become a democracy it was important that the population understood that democracy wasn’t against Hindu traditions. However, in BJP's text, democracy is promoted as only being tolerant for voices and activities within the spirit of ‘India First’. Since Hinduism can separate the political and the religious space, Hinduism promotes a tolerance of differences in a political society. The texts show signs of going against the idea that each group should be allowed to develop the best in it without impeding the progress of others as described in the theories. In the parts of the text that do show tolerance, there are also cases of nominalisation and presupposition which can indicate that they hide their true interest.

5.2 Secularisation

Another important factor in the democratization of India was that the political and religious spheres were separated within Hinduism. Metha (2004), Fisher (2017), Ungureanu and
Monti (2017) and Doinger and Nussbaum (2015) all stress the importance of political life being separated from religious life in the democratization of India. In the text analysed the BJP do not refer to Hinduism or Hindu and do expresses inclusion of caste, creed or ethnicity. However, one aspect to consider when looking at secularisation is that depending on how you determine religion one can analyse whether ‘India First’ and ‘ones love for the country’ can act as a religious or spiritual movement. Similar to what Clark (2006) discuss, how religious discourse and identities are constructed through the use of seemingly non-religious media products as well. Even if the BJP do not talk about Hindutva in the texts analysed, similarities can be discovered.

Hindutva was defined a collective cultural force whose opinion was that the population are under the same identity parole. The founder was looking for a way of giving India an identity that can encompass all other differences, which he names Hindutva or ‘Hinduness’. In the texts we can question if Hindutva has been replaced by ‘India First’ and ‘India-ness’, joining the population under the same identity. The initial idea of the term Hindutva or ‘Hindu-ness’ was the nation’s cultural identity struggle against the British empire but gave no corresponding specific plans for how this should be followed. Similarly, the BJP use ‘India First’ to join the nation under the same identity and can go on to make what seems as logical arguments but give no specific plan for how to follow this. Hindutva has today been defined by India Supreme Court as “a way of life or a state of mind”. Anderson (2006) implies that the nation is an imagined community. In the same way as a person is an American or Swedish. In the texts analysed by the BJP, you either have the identity of belonging to ‘India First’ or you don’t. The presuppositions in the text can create a sense of a coherent Indian society and shared opinion. Since the party defines ‘India first’ above everything else, it creates the feeling that it’s not just a particular person or the party who wants something but it’s the whole nation and the population of India that’s responsible to keep the interest of the nation above everything else. As described in the theories, Hinduism promoted secularism in India because Hindu tradition and political rule is differentiated from spiritual functions. If ‘India First’ is viewed as a religious or spiritual movement, it’s clear that the text favours that establishment. Since some argue that the strong separation between political and religious spheres has resulted in the rise of Hindu nationalism. The decreased involvement in religion in Indian society has led to the increased support for Hindu nationalism. The same increased support could happen for ‘India First’, if people are in search to belong under a new identity as a response of decreased involvement in religion. This shift from Hindutva to ‘India

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First’ could potentially lead to increased pluralism within ‘India First’ but without acceptance of people standing outside this identity.

5.3 The caste system

As presented in the theoretical framework, the caste system organises Hindu identities in India and is presented as internally intolerant and externally tolerant. The BJP show a tolerance for differences within ‘India First’ in their text, by stating to include all caste, creed or ethnicity but not towards anything outside of ‘India First’. In other words, it could be seen as internally tolerant and externally intolerant – the opposite of how the theories describe the caste system. As the theories showed, internal tolerance is linked to liberty and is needed for a liberal democracy. In that case the text analysed by the BJP are in greater favour of democracy if we compare with the caste system. However, the texts leave it up to the reader to define what ‘India First’ actually mean. Since the meanings are assumed as given in their texts and in many cases, what is presented as given, as not requiring definition, is deeply ideological and can be left out on purpose. If the BJP would like to take a stand against exclusion, using nominalisation and presupposition could conceal other interests not stated. It is unknown how they define ‘one’s love for the country’ and does everyone have the same ability to show love for the country. Requirements needed to belong under this category are vague which could advance particular interests and ideologies. Their texts can indicate that there is a threat to the moral order and if they can make everyone accept that there is such an ‘identity’ as “India First’ then people are more easily persuaded that it is something that must be protected. That things and people that do not belong under this ‘identity’ can be identified and dealt with. Since it’s unclear who is responsible for upholding this moral order it could potentially create a divide even within ‘India First’ when people decide to define it themselves. A case when people take the moral order in their own hands. Through presupposition and nominalisation the texts side-line that it’s all part of political decisions and choices being made by the BJP.
6. Conclusion

The analysis concludes that the BJP shows signs of trying to form a unified identity they refer to as ‘India First’. They continuously use ‘India First’ as the solution to today’s problems and something the population should want to protect and belong to. The vagueness of what defines ‘India First’ can lead to a confusion and the text chooses to silence how people fit under that category. Only voices and activities that reflect what is best for ‘India First’ are accepted and this in turn can affect the pluralistic society. By foregrounding a certain ‘other’ (the people that speak or act against ‘India First’) they can create a divide in the society. As they leave it up to the reader to define what ‘India First’ truly means and conceal who is responsible to uphold this identity, the texts could negatively affect the external and internal tolerance in society. By leaving parts in the text as presupposed or given, the BJP show signs that they might be concealing an ideology or certain interests. The text doesn’t show any indication of directly upholding the caste system or referring to Hinduism or Hindutva. However, depending on how you define religion, ‘India First’ could be seen as imposing a form of spiritual movement. Since it is important for democracy that the institution favour no establishment of religion, this could negatively affect the democratic society in India. In this research, religious ideas are seen as something that may promote or hinder the emergence of democratic political habits, but without support of these ideas neither will be possible.

7. Future research

Future research could involve comparing discourses around ‘India First’ and ‘Hindutva’ by analysing their later manifestos with older texts produced by the BJP. Another future research could be to analyse the difference between larger manifestos and smaller published text on the website produced by BJP to find out how daily, more frequent communication to the public differ from their manifesto. One important aspect would also be to analyse the different discourse between different states in India produced by BJP, to see if and how they differ throughout the country.
Sources


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Appendix

Appendix 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where did the text come from?</th>
<th>Bharatiya Janata Party Jharkhand Pradesh website under Governance; Nation First: <a href="http://www.bjpjharkhand.com/governance/nation-first/">www.bjpjharkhand.com/governance/nation-first/</a></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who produced the document?</td>
<td>Bharatiya Janata Party, BJP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For what purpose/function were the document produced?</td>
<td>To define Bharatiya Janata Party Jharkhand Pradesh definition of Nation First.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did the document come to be in your possession?</td>
<td>Online research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who was the intended audience?</td>
<td>For the population in India and in particular the state Jharkhand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the institutional and/or historical context of the document?</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the documents relate to each other (if at all)?</td>
<td>The BJP Jharkhands take on Nation First relate to the 2014 Manifesto as it defines their take on Nation First as a form of governance.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Questions to consider when using documents for analysis (Stausberg and Engler, 2011:153)
Appendix 2

<table>
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<td>Who produced the document?</td>
<td>Bharatiya Janta Party, BJP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For what purpose/function were the document produced?</td>
<td>The election manifesto 2014 published by the Bharatiya Janta Party to present their politics and gain votes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How did the document come to be in your possession?</td>
<td>Online research</td>
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<td>Who was the intended audience?</td>
<td>Population in India</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do the documents relate to each other (if at all)?</td>
<td>Parts of the 2014 manifesto directly refer to Nation First that is the title of the first text.</td>
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</table>

*Questions to consider when using documents for analysis (Stausberg and Engler, 2011:153)*
Annexes

Annex 1 (BJPs take on Nations First)

Bharatiya Janta Party
Jharkhand Pradesh

Press Release 25-01-2019

Nation First

A firm belief in the ideal that a truly rich and diverse nation like India is optimally united when its people give precedence to their identity as 'Indians before everything else' is what led to the birth of the BJP. The party's staunch commitment to this principle is what has ensured its unparalleled rise to becoming one of the largest, most representative political parties in India.

The BJP believes in true 'National' politics, where every Indian, irrespective of his caste, creed or religion is an Indian first. It doesn't believe in narrow politics of compartmentalisation and division of society. The party's agenda is to unite people on the basis of their love for the country. Primacy to this identity is what will once again chart the path for India's re-emergence as a cultural and economic superpower.

This should also be looked at in light of BJP’s core commitment to its guiding philosophy of 'Integral Humanism', which considers all Indians as one united entity. Our leadership has walked this path for years and believes that it will ensure our precious energies aren't wasted in petty differences. Keeping the interest of the nation above everything else is what will ensure a united and powerful India, wherein each one of its 1.25 billion citizens contributes in his or her unique way, and fulfils his or her unique dream.
Annex 2 (Preface)

Preface

India is the most ancient civilization of the world and has always been looked upon by the world as a land of wealth and wisdom. India has been credited to have developed, apart from philosophy and mathematics, science and technology of a very high order, which had attracted scholars from all over the world. Al-Andalus, a Spanish scholar in the 11th Century, in his monumental work 'Tabaqat al-Umam' had discussed the state of science in different countries. He writes, 'The first nation to have cultivated science is India... India is known for wisdom of its people. Over many centuries all the kings of the past have recognized the ability of Indians in all branches of knowledge.' Al-Andalus further states, "Indians, as known to all nations for many centuries, are the mettle (essence) of wisdom, the source of fairness and objectivity. They are the people of sublime perspicuity, universal apologies, and useful and rare inventions."

India's contribution to the march of civilization goes back to several thousand years before the Christian era. From the Vedas to Upanishads and Gauam - the Buddha and Mahavira - the 24th Jain Tirthankara and then to Kautilya and Chandra Gupta and down up to the eighteenth century, India was respected for its flourishing economy, trade, commerce and culture. It had an international outreach from Korea to Arabia, from Bamiyan to Borobudur and beyond. Before the advent of Britishers, Indian goods were internationally recognized for their quality and craftsmanship. India had a much bigger role and presence in industry and manufacturing than any nation in Europe or Asia. It had a well-developed banking system and equally renowned businessmen, along with its financiers, who were contributing to create a flourishing and progressive economy. According to Suncierland, India was also one of the greatest shipounging nations and consequently had access to international markets. Indian prosperity held the world in thrall. It was this wealth which attracted the foreigners - from Alexander to the Britishers.

Historical records establish the level of progress and prosperity attained by India before the advent of the Europeans. Indian advancement in mathematics, astronomy, physics and chemistry along with the biological sciences has been well recognized. India was a land of abundance, prosperity, affluence, a land of sharing and caring living in perfect harmony and peace with the nature. From ancient times almost all religions practiced in different parts of the world, have existed peacefully in India and will continue to do so. India thus provides the most ennobling experience in spiritual co-existence.

BJP recognizes that no nation could chart out its domestic or foreign policies unless it has a clear understanding about itself, its history, its roots, its strengths and failings. In a highly mobile and globalized world, it is imperative for a nation to know its roots that provide sustenance to its people.

Indian freedom struggle, which was inspired by Tilak, Gandhi, Aurobindo, Patel, Bose and others, had a clear vision of the civilizational consciousness of India. These leaders had directed the freedom movement, keeping the Indian ways and thoughts in the centre of their action. They had a vision to reconstruct the political and economic institutions of India as a continuum of civilizational consciousness, which made India one country, one people, and one Nation.

After achieving independence, the leaders at the helm of affairs lost the spirit and vision, which the freedom movement had evoked. They discarded the vision and adopted the institutional framework of administration created by the Britishers which was quite alien to India's world-view. It is unfortunate that these leaders could not comprehend India's inner vitality, which was the main force responsible for India's survival despite several attacks and prolonged foreign rule and thus, failed to rekindle the spirit of India.
Even after nearly seven decades of our independence, the country has not been able to discover its innate vitality, the sense of time and the will to act. As a result, in spite of being the oldest civilization and a young republic, we are engulfed by a multi-dimensional crisis. A crisis, which has encompassed all walks of life. The rising disparities, social and communal divide and terrorism leading to a fractured society, are worsening the situation rapidly. The present crisis is the result of this confusion and disconnect from the seekings and sensibilities of the people. This is worse confounded by the weak and spineless leadership of the UPA Government. The tragedy is further heightened by their failure to diagnose the malady and find the remedy. Instead of creating a socio-economic and political paradigm of governance drawn from the civilizational consciousness of India, the leaders tried to follow whatever was being practiced in this or that western country.

Thus, we have wasted more than half a century. Many other countries, even with smaller size and lesser resources, have surpassed us in development parameters. Another reason for this is that the Governance in these decades was marred by lack of trust, leading to excessive controls. It was also marked by lack of openness in Government and lack of people’s participation. This has led to concentration of power in a few hands and lack of transparency breeding corruption and nepotism on a massive scale. The so-called ‘liberalization’ came in 1990s, but it was half-hearted. It didn’t work because the rest of the eco-system remained the same. However, the beginning of the 21st century showed some light under the NDA rule. India started being reckoned as an economic superpower. The six-year rule of NDA had given the Nation many firsts, building an image in the International community. However, many of the hopes, potentials and projects have not been fully realized in the subsequent years. But after 2004, UPA came into power and the situation started worsening again. We missed a historic national opportunity once more.

UPA’s biggest blow to the Indian political system is that they have taken out Genuineness from Governance; Authenticity from Administration. UPA has shown Governance of Enactment, not Action. It has given an Administration of Entitlement without Delivery. We have become a polity of Promises, and not Performance. We represent an economy of deficits, a work culture of delays and an asset base of deficiency. Worse, Congress-led UPA has made India a global synonym of Corruption, Scandal and Stagnation. To make it even worse, today, we are passing through total Decision and Policy Paralysis. Sluggish economic growth, unprecedented price rise and unstable Currency are its most visible facets.

The following demand urgent solutions; economy including agriculture, energy, environment including natural resources, education and health, employment, external and internal threats to security, empowerment, Governance, and erosion of moral and societal values.

If India has to survive as a nation, which it has to, in order to play its destined role in the comity of nations, if it has to make its voice heard for creating a peaceful and egalitarian world order, then we must take up the challenges with urgency and determination and provide proper solutions for them. It is a pity that we have a demoralized leadership presiding over the state apparatus, which is incompetent to handle the present problems. What is needed today is to arrive at a consensus about the ‘idea’ of India and also to think and redesign our approach in consonance with the seekings and preferences of the Indian people.

The situation in the country is deteriorating rapidly. Delay in resolving the crisis would be dangerous. What is needed is to take lessons from history, recognise the vitality and resilience of India, the power of its worldview and utilize its strengths, which drove it to glorious heights and analyse its weaknesses, which led to this abysmal fall. Pick up the thread from the point where the continuum of our civilizational
consciousness was lost and reorient the polity in consonance with those strong points of Indian psyche which will be the engine for our future glory. Let’s keep the windows open, have a clear understanding of the global scenario and how without destroying our uniqueness we can assimilate the best of the technological advancements.

We can achieve this goal provided the leaders seriously set to this task. What we need is a political party committed to deliver and a leadership with strong determination and political will. As Vivekananda had said, “All power is within you. You can do anything. Believe in that.” Yes, the power lies in the people of India, in the inner sanctum sanctorum of Mother India. What is needed is to ignite the spark and Mother India would rise in her full glory.

As Sri Ma had once said that India had become the symbolic representation of all the difficulties of modern mankind but India will also be the land of its resurrection to a higher and truer life. The BJP will leave no stone unturned to fulfill the dream of 1.22 billion Indians.

Today, India is blessed with the rare capacity and opportunity of Democracy, Demography and Demand. If we are able to consolidate and harness them, we will be able to reach the heights which India deserves. The biggest reason for a sorry state of affairs is bad intentions on the part of those who have ruled the country for sixty years. And that is where we would show the first difference. For BJP, the goal of the policies and practices would be: Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat! The path would be: Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. This is our commitment to the Nation and to the People.

With this determination of the party under the charismatic leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, we enter the elections to the 16th Lok Sabha and would work whole-heartedly to give a stable, strong, visionary and progressive Government to India.

It is an opportunity to change our fate and of our nation.

Glory to Mother India, glory to Her children.

Dr. (Prof.) Murli Manohar Joshi
Chairman
Manifesto Committee -2014

March 26, 2014
Annex 3 (Integrating the Nation – Its Vastness and Voices)

Strengthen the Framework

Team India
Centre-State Relations
India is a diverse country. Diverse communities settled in vastly different regions have their own aspirations. Taking these aspirations into consideration, the centre and the states therefore have to evolve a working system, which leads to harmonious relations. The genuine grievances of every state will be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

- We will place Centre-State relations on an even keel through the process of consultation and strive for harmonious Centre-State relations.
- Our Government will be an enabler and facilitator in the rapid progress of states. We will evolve a model of national development, which is driven by the states.
- Team India shall not be limited to the Prime Minister led team sitting in Delhi, but will also include Chief Ministers and other functionaries as equal partners.
- Ensure fiscal autonomy of States while urging financial discipline.
- Create ‘Regional Councils of States’, with common problems and concerns, with a view to seeking solutions that are applicable across a group of states.
- We will encourage cooperation among states on security-related issues, inter-state disputes and for removing inter-regional economic disparities and promoting tourism.
- We recognize the special needs and unique problems of the hilly and desert states. In consultation with the Governments of these states, state-specific developmental priorities/models will be evolved so that the aspirations of the people are met.
- Given the unique status of Union Territories (UTs), they will receive special attention. We will focus on developing and strengthening the economy of UTs. Tourism will be promoted, tribal welfare and their rights will receive full attention, and infrastructure and coastal area development will be given top priority.
- We reiterate our commitment to the protection and integrated development of our island territories.
- The moribund forums like ‘National Development Council’ and ‘Inter-State Council’ will be revived and made into active bodies.
- Involve the state Governments in the promotion of foreign trade and commerce.
- Help the state Governments mobilize resources through investments in industry, agriculture and infrastructure.

Integrating the Nation – Its Vastness and Voices

In a democracy, everyone is not only free, but also encouraged to voice his or her concerns. It is also necessary that these voices be heard and concerns redressed. However, all this should happen within the framework of our constitution and with the spirit of ‘India First’. We have to keep the Nation at the forefront of our thoughts and actions. Any activity, which disrupts the integrity of the nation, cannot be in the interest of any segment of the society or any region of the country. All Indians living in different regions of the country have an equal stake in the progress of the country and they have to be assured of the fruits of the progress.

- Presently, we see that there is a vast regional disparity between different regions of the country
Reform the System

Good Governance: Transparent, Effective, Involving and Encouraging

India First

BJP believes in India being one country, one people and one nation. BJP recognizes the importance of diversity in Indian society, and the strength and vibrancy it adds to the nation. The party believes in the principle of unity in diversity.

India constitutes of all its people, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex. It constitutes of all the communities - ethnic, social and cultural groups and also our culture, which is defined by tolerance and co-existence. The hallmark of India is "Unity in Diversity". It constitutes of each and every inch of our land, its natural resources and mental and physical energy we possess. It constitutes of all the institutions made in the past and present.

India First simply means nurturing and protecting all the elements, which India is made of. It does not exclude anyone or anything - it only includes everything and everyone, which India is made of. It is complete India; without exclusion, without exception. It also means that whatever is in the interest of India will be in the interest of all the elements that India is made up of, including its citizens.

The counter to the concept of 'India First' is what is happening today; appeasement of one, at the cost of the other, using institutions for protecting the interest of a particular party or persons. It is reflected in the thinking that whatever is not in the interest of a party is not in the interest of India. Clearly, Governance on these lines is not in the interest of India.

Simply speaking, 'India First' puts the national interest first while taking any decision or step both by Governments and citizens. Even more simply put, you have to just see the face of India and Indians when you are in doubt. This is what separates 'India First' from the present day politics and Governance of the Congress-led UPA.

For BJP:

- the only philosophy and religion of a Government should be India First.
- the only epic of a Government should be India's Constitution.
- the only power of a Government should be the power of the people.
- the only prayer of a Government should be the welfare of its people.
- the only way of a Government should be 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'.

Open Government and Accountable Administration

Administrative reforms will be a priority for the BJP. Hence, we propose to implement them through an appropriate body under the PMO. The objective will be to bring in transparency in Government’s decision-making process. Government systems and processes would be relooked to make them citizen friendly, corruption free and accountable. Every effort will be made to meet the development aspirations of the people and make the Government agencies accountable to the citizens. We will set-up an effective Lokpal institution. Corruption at any level will be dealt with firmly and swiftly.

From birth certificate to school admission, from setting up business to paying of taxes, our present systems complicate the lives of our own people. We will reform it and make it easy in terms of access, efficiency and delivery. Following specific action will be initiated:

- digitization of Government records will be taken up on top priority so that they are easily accessible.