

**India and the Quest for World Order:
Hegemony and Identity in India's Post-Cold War
Foreign Policy Discourse**

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List of Abbreviations

ABKM	<i>Akhil Bhartiya Karyakarini Mandal</i>
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BJP	<i>Bharatiya Janata Party</i>
BASIC	Brazil-South Africa-India-China
BRICS	Brazil-India-China-South Africa
CBM	Confidence-Building Measure
CD	Community of Democracies
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
EAM	External Affairs Minister
FDI	Foreign direct investments
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBSA	India-Brazil-South Africa
IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
J&K	Jammu & Kashmir
LoC	Line of Control
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NAM	Non-Alignment Movement
NATO	North-Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDA	National Democratic Alliance

NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPT	Non-proliferation Treaty
NSA	National Security Adviser
NSAB	National Security Advisory Board
NSC	National Security Council
PM	Prime Minister
RSS	<i>Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh</i>
R2R	Responsibility to Protect
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SATP	South Asian Terrorism Portal
SLOCs	Sea Lines of Communication
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
WTO	World Trade Organization

1. Introduction

There is today a strong sense, among scholars and practitioners of international relations, that the 21st century witnesses profound shifts in the global configuration of power. The International Relations (IR) discourse after the end of the cold war was shaped by the wide-spread conviction that the ideological and geopolitical struggles between great powers were over and the ultimate triumph of liberal democracy and market economy¹ would gradually lead to peace, prosperity and cooperation in a complex global governance system. Only two decades later, the IR discourse talks of a deep crisis or even the end of the Western-liberal world order (see Jacques 2009, Sørensen 2011, Friedman/Oskanian/Pardo 2013, Morgan 2013, Acharya 2014a, Stuenkel 2016). The shifts in the economic, political and military distribution of power from the ‘West’ to the ‘East’² are represented by the discourse as the main embodiment of this crisis: While so-called emerging powers such as China, India and Russia could expand their power and act with a greater self-confidence on the world stage, the global leadership role of the U.S. and its Western allies has declined after the military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq and the recent economic and financial crisis. The global power shifts are, therefore, seen as a challenge or even threat to the Western-dominated order and its values such as the rule of law, free trade, liberal democracy and human rights (see Cox 2007, Ikenberry 2008, Mearsheimer 2010, Kupchan 2012, Layne 2012).

At the same time, there is today a greater awareness in the IR discourse for the potential repercussions of this shift in material capabilities and resources on the level of knowledge and theory production in the sense that existing theories and concepts of IR are always also a result of the existing power distribution, i.e. contemporary mainstream IR theories and concepts, informed predominantly by ‘Western’ experiences, conditions, values and interests, are increasingly challenged for their Western-centric conception of world politics and there are calls for ‘re-writing’ the discipline by ‘de-centering’ the West and introducing ‘non-Western’ ideas and theories into IR (see, inter alia, Tickner 2003, Nayak/Selbin 2010, Lizée 2011, Shilliam 2011, Hobson 2012, Tickner/Blaney 2012, Acharya 2014b).

Against this backdrop, this study re-conceptualizes the phenomenon that is subsumed under label of ‘global power shifts’ through the lenses of poststructuralist discourse theory and

¹ This notion was most prominently articulated by Francis Fukuyama (1992) who coined “the end of history” thesis.

² When using binary categories such as West/non-West, this study is fully aware of the problems that these dichotomies entail and thus puts them in parantheses. In so doing, this study precisely wants to point out the dangers of such essentialism.

postcolonialism as a shift of representational power that challenges ‘Western’ (discursive) hegemony in the political and academic domain. By understanding ‘global power shifts’ and world order as discursive phenomena, it argues that discourses materialize their attributes or effects by fixing particular meanings and establishing a field of intelligibility. ‘Global power shifts’ intensify the hegemonic struggle for the fixation of meanings by disrupting existing identities, exposing tensions or contradictions in the prevalent conceptions of world order and enabling ‘new’ agents, namely the emerging powers, to assert particular representations of the world as universal.

Hence, the question arises what perspective on world politics those states which are seen as agents of this power shift have.³ The present study seeks to reconstruct the dominant world order models in India’s foreign policy discourse and examine how these interpretative frameworks have informed India’s post-cold war foreign policy: *How does India conceptualize world order and its place in it? What different world order concepts can be identified in the foreign policy discourse and what are their political and ideological underpinnings? Has a particular world order model reached a hegemonic status in the foreign policy discourse and, if so, how could this discursive dominance be achieved?*

It is widely believed today that India is emerging as an influential power pole in Asia and the global system (see Cohen 2002, Mohan 2004, Pant 2008a, Gordon 2014, Ogden 2014a). However, there is little agreement on what kind of power India is or will become. As the largest democracy in the world, India is often depicted as a natural partner of the United States and the West in general (see Burns 2007, Zakaria 2008, Fontaine/Kilman 2013). Other scholars and practitioners stress India's striving for foreign policy autonomy (see Mattoo 2005, Sikri 2009, Narang/Staniiland 2012, Khilnani et al. 2012) and its role in ‘counter-hegemonic coalitions’ such as the non-alignment movement (NAM) or the BRICS group (see Koshy 2006, Narlikar 2006, Dubey 2013), which oppose the prevalent inequality, injustice and ‘Western’ imperialism in world politics and put India often at odds with the United States and European Union in international organisations. Moreover, India's foreign policy decision-makers are occasionally reproached for thinking in moral categories instead of coming to terms with the ‘realities’ of world politics (Pant 2008b). At the same time, however, India is one of the biggest military powers in the world with steadily growing military capabilities. In this context, some scholars also lament the absence of foreign policy frameworks or a grand strategy in India (see Mazumdar 2011, Mehta [P.B.] 2009, Pant 2009, 2011a).

³ As we will see later, this means that the discourse of ‘global power shifts’ constitutes these agents as emerging powers and allocates them privileged subject positions from which they can claim to have a legitimate voice in the negotiation of and struggle for world order.

Existing studies (see Bajpai 2002, 2003a, 2014; Sagar 2009; Ollapally/Rajagopalan 2012), which seek to illuminate Indian thinking on international relations, identify various different worldviews, strategic visions, world order conceptions or schools of thought in India's foreign policy debate ranging from 'Gandhianism' and 'Moralism' to 'Nehruvianism' and 'Neoliberalism' to 'Hindutva' and 'Hyperrealism'. While these studies – with the exception of one book chapter by Kanti Bajpai (2003a) – do not deal with Indian world order models, they share with the present study a research interest in how India 'views' world politics or certain aspects of it. Though these accounts provide some important insights, they tend to discuss India's foreign policy thinking at a very general level without providing a sound theoretical and analytical framework for the arguments they put forward. For instance, Bajpai, whose work on India's strategic culture is widely cited by scholars, does not explicate how he has arrived at the conclusion that there are three dominant strands of thought in India – Nehruvian, Neoliberal, and Hyperrealist – that guide India's foreign policy. As a result, we neither know what actually constitutes a dominant school of thought nor how and why this dominance could be achieved. Like Rahul Sagar, Bajpai also heavily relies on the classical texts by Nehru, Gandhi and the Hindu nationalist thinkers Savarkar and Golwalkar for advancing his arguments without proving that this classical thought actually influences contemporary policy-makers (e.g. by analysing Indian parliamentary debates or conducting interviews with policy-makers). While it is, of course, fully legitimate to focus on the way how India's nationalist leaders thought about international relations or strategy, both authors claim to discuss India's contemporary foreign policy thought and simply assume that Indian policy-makers are today still heavily influenced by the thought of these nationalist leaders. Another drawback of this procedure is that the schools of thought or strategic visions presented by Bajpai and Sagar therefore appear rather static and do not take into account the possibility of evolutionary change.

Problematic is also their rather careless conflation of ideas and policy practices: Bajpai's attempt to establish a causal relationship between culture and policy practices by simply searching for overlaps between ideational preferences articulated in public debates and actual foreign policy decisions remains tautological, since culture (understood as a set of ideas) serves here as both a source and an expression of political structures and decisions. Sagar, by contrast, argues that these different strategic visions merely "represent ideas about politics that wax and wane with circumstances" (Sagar 2009: 802), i.e. they simply reflect the conditions of and changes in the political, economic and security environment. This one-dimensional view ignores the multiple ways in which the 'material' and 'ideational' dimensions are close-

ly intertwined and can – as this study will show – only acquire meaning through discourses in the first place.

Moreover, all works on Indian foreign policy thinking tend to place greater emphasis on India's strategic community, i.e. scholars, journalists and retired governmental/military officials, than India's actual decision-makers. This suggests that the authors assume that the strategic community has a substantial impact on policy-making in India. However, existing research points out that this impact is in fact rather limited – an assessment also shared by policy-makers (see Markey 2009, Mohan 2009a, Sikri 2009, Chatterjee-Miller 2014, Mattoo/Medcalf 2015). By privileging the strategic community over policy-makers, these studies thus create a rather distorted image. For example, Bajpai, Sagar and Ollapally/Rajagopalan all argue that a '(neo)liberal' worldview, which is characterized by a more 'pragmatic' approach to international affairs, has emerged as a powerful, or even the most influential, school of thought in India's foreign policy debate.⁴ Interestingly, however, there is no political party in India that has really embraced this worldview and its main proponents are almost exclusively located outside the political establishment. This corresponds to a certain extent with a common assertion found in contemporary studies on Indian post-cold war foreign policy which argue that India has shifted from Nehruvian 'idealism' or 'moralism' to a foreign policy driven by 'realism' or 'pragmatism' (cf. Mohan 2004, Kapur 2006, Ganguly/Pardesi 2009, Ganguly 2010, Malone 2012). However, often these studies neither provide a theoretically informed discussion of these very broad and unspecific terms nor explore their actual significance and meaning in the Indian context.

The present study seeks to overcome these shortcomings and introduces a novel framework to analyse India's foreign policy thinking and practices in the post-cold war era. It adopts a discourse analytical approach that explores how the 'structures', 'actors', 'processes' and 'issues' of global politics are endowed with meaning in discourses and thus come into being in the first place: first, instead of simply taking for granted the universal applicability of 'Western' concepts and theories, this study examines how Indian policy-makers order the world through discourses which confer it with significance. In doing so, it also goes beyond the current general reading of India's positioning in global issues with respect to the compliance to 'Western' norms and looks at India as a potential norm-shaper and creator of ideas – and thus as a full agent in global politics. Second, the study does not only offer a descriptive account of

⁴ One reason why Bajpai and Sagar in particular arrive at this conclusion is possibly that they draw for their discussion of the '(neo)liberal' school of thought exclusively on contemporary sources, which makes this school of thought appear to be very current and topical, while their discussion of the other schools of thought is partially based exclusively on sources which were written around the time of Indian independence.

Indian world order models, but also explains how and why particular world order concepts have emerged and became dominant in the discourse. Thus, it provides, unlike previous research, an analysis of various world order issues as well as the political and ideological underpinnings of these world order concepts.

Third, understanding foreign policy, world order and global power shifts as discursive phenomena enables us to overcome the artificial dichotomy between the ‘material’ and ‘ideational’ dimension of international relations prevalent in realist, liberal and constructivist approaches. Instead of believing in the possibility of separating both dimensions or privileging one dimension over the other, this study understands the ‘material’ and the ‘ideational’ as discursively constructed, i.e. neither ‘material’ phenomena (e.g. military power) nor ‘ideational’ phenomena (e.g. ideas or norms) can be rendered meaningful and intelligible outside of discursive systems of signification. This enables us not only to comprehend the relationship between the global power shifts and contemporary debates on the ‘Western’-centric nature of IR theory, but also how world orders emerge in the first place and what kind of implications the current rise of ‘new’ powers has for the world order in the 21st century.

Fourth and finally, the present study provides a novel approach to India’s contemporary foreign policy that questions the widespread claim that India’s foreign policy has moved from Nehruvian ‘idealism’ to ‘realism’ or ‘pragmatism’ and explicates the changes and continuities in Indian post-cold war foreign policy against the backdrop of a (intensified) struggle for discursive hegemony which was provoked by the ultimate disruption of the erstwhile hegemonic Nehruvian discourse after the end of the cold war. This disruption resulted in an Indian identity crisis and the gradual transformation of the hegemonic discourse into the Post-Nehruvian discourse. In other words, the changes in India’s recent foreign policy have largely taken place within the framework of the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse, which has informed Indian post-Independence foreign policy and was successfully reinterpreted and adapted to the ‘new structural context’⁵ and ‘defended’ against the hyper-nationalist discourse – the main counter-hegemonic discourse in India.

Discourse, Hegemony and Postcoloniality

For exploring India’s world order concepts, the present study does not treat ‘world order’ and ‘foreign policy’ and linked concepts such as state sovereignty or security as given entities but as discursive practices. Drawing on poststructuralist discourse theory, also referred to as Es-

⁵ As will become apparent in the course of this study, this ‘new structural context’ is no ‘objective’ condition, but endowed with meaning and thus (re-)produced through discourse(s).

sex School of Discourse Theory, and insights of postcolonialism, the subsequent analysis is based on a discursive, anti-essentialist ontology and thus understands reality as discursively constructed, i.e. the objects and subjects of the social world have no pre-given, fixed meanings or identities, but are constituted by discourses that confer significance to them in the first place. The poststructuralist discourse theory devised by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985: 105) understands a discourse as a “structured totality of articulatory practices”, that constitutes the meanings and identities of subjects and objects by linking together and modifying contingent elements into relational and differential systems of signification. This anti-essentialist, discursive ontology does not imply, however, that ‘reality’ can simply be reduced to language or that material factors do not matter. Rather, it means that the world cannot be accessed, understood and made meaningful independently of discursive practices, as ‘reality’ cannot constitute a simply given empirical referent point to which knowledge and truth could refer. Discourse is thus understood as the ontological horizon in the sense of being coterminous with social reality. Hence, material capabilities (e.g. military and economic) also obtain their meaning and relevance only through discourses (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 105ff.).

In contrast to the largely materialist and deterministic notions of hegemony prevalent in IR, Laclau and Mouffe’s poststructuralist reformulation of the concept of hegemony underscores the discursive character of the social world and understands hegemony as a discursive struggle for the fixation of particular meanings or a particular meaning system. Different discourses stand for specific representations and understandings of social reality and seek to hegemonize the discursive space. The main objective of discourse analysis is to apprehend the processes of meaning fixation and to elaborate how certain fixations of meaning could prevail as the ‘natural’ or ‘normal’ understanding of the world and thus achieve a hegemonic status. If a certain particularity (of subjects, interests and demands) is represented as universal in the sense that the same ‘reality’ is reflected in the discursive practices of all relevant agents, then a hegemonic constellation has emerged (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 127ff.; Torfing 2005: 15; Nabers 2015: 142-143).

Postcolonialism (see Gandhi 1998, Chakrabarty 2000, Shilliam 2011a, Seth 2013a) can provide additional insights into this hegemonic operation and is of particular relevance for understanding the role of the colonial encounter in the identity formations of both colonizers and colonized. In general, postcolonialism studies the relationship between location, knowledge systems and knowledge production, and contests the ‘Western’- or Eurocentric nature of the social sciences and humanities, particularly their parochial supposition that modern ‘Western’ thought is superior, progressive and universally applicable. By creating awareness for the co-

constitution of the self (colonizer) and the other (colonized) and for the way how the self gains its privilege only by renouncing its dependence on the subordinated other, postcolonialism sheds light on the impact of the colonial encounter on both the colonizers and the colonized. This is captured by the postcolonial concepts of hybridity and mimicry (Bhabha 1994), which can help us in comprehending the way how postcolonial societies simultaneously adopted and reproduced the ideas and practices of the former oppressors, but also misappropriated and perverted their meanings, thereby contesting and subverting postcolonial rule as well as generating new – hybrid – identities that transcend the confines of one socio-cultural space.

On the basis of this ontological framework, this study examines how world order is articulated in India's post-cold war foreign policy discourse. In doing so, it illuminates how competing discourses seek to endow world order with meaning and to fix India's identity in this order. The study argues that there is a discourse – framed in this study as Post-Nehruvianism – which managed to gain discursive hegemony. The Post-Nehruvian discourse is contested by the Hyper-nationalist discourse – the main counter-hegemonic discourse in India. It is argued that foreign policy and world order are key sites for the (re-)production of India's identity, because they institute a political boundary between the 'inside' and 'outside' and place India into a system of differences that constitutes 'what India is'. At the same time, the study shows how both the hegemonic and the counter-hegemonic discourse seek to defuse this difference by articulating a particular representation of political order as having universal significance and drawing on a mythical narrative that defines India as an exceptional agent which has demonstrated the world how diversity and difference can be managed peacefully in a polity – and thus how a peaceful, just and stable world order could be achieved.

Outline of the Chapters

Chapter 2 "*Discourse, Hegemony and Postcoloniality*" outlines the study's main ontological commitments and presuppositions. It discusses, in detail, the key insights and concepts of the Laclauian-Mouffian poststructuralist discourse theory. In particular, the chapter elaborates the different stages and dimensions of the struggle for discursive hegemony and thus how and why a discourse becomes hegemonic, dislocated, contested or transformed. Having discussed the main facets of discourse theory, the chapter introduces postcolonialism and outlines how its analytical concepts of mimicry and hybridity can supplement poststructuralism by problematizing the ethnocentrism and parochialism in knowledge production in the social sciences

and the implications of the colonial encounter for the identity formations of both colonizers and colonized.

Chapter 3 “*Global Power Shifts and World Order: The Contestation of ‘Western’ Discursive Hegemony*” applies this theoretical framework to the phenomena of global power shifts and world order. It shows that world orders can be understood as the outcome of a successful struggle for discursive hegemony that has managed to universalize a particular representation of world politics and particular subjects as (privileged) agents in world politics by fixing a certain meaning system and concealing the radical contingency of all social relations. The chapter argues that the ‘West’ has obtained discursive hegemony in the prevalent international relations discourse in the sense that the ‘West’ as a particular historical subject with particular experiences, values, interests etc. managed to assert a particular representation of world politics as having universal significance and thus representing ‘reality’. Against this backdrop, the chapter re-conceptualizes the global power shifts in the international system as a shift of representational power that has dislocated and contests ‘Western’ hegemony in the political and academic discourse of international relations by unravelling existing subject positions and constituting emerging powers such as India as agents of this power shift and privileged actors in the deliberation and struggle for world order.

Chapter 4 “*Studying India’s Foreign Policy Discourse: Analytical Strategy and Data Corpus*” explicates the study’s analytical approach and data corpus for analysing India’s foreign policy and the world order models constituted therein. It introduces and discusses the logics-approach developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007) as a promising mode to put the poststructuralist discourse theory into practice. Drawing on Laclau’s later work, Glynos and Howarth distinguish between the three different ontological dimensions: social, political and fantasmatic. The chapter shows that this three-fold typology can help us to guide the analysis in that we, first, carve out what world order means and implies in the discourse (social dimension), how these understandings of world order are constituted, contested and changed (political dimension) and why actors are gripped by a (hegemonic) discourse and take it to be ‘real’, ‘desirable’ or ‘natural’ (fantasmatic dimension). In addition, the chapter explicates the generation, scope and handling of the empirical data used in the discourse analysis by outlining the way how the body of textual material was processed, structured and interpreted.

Chapter 5 “*The Evolution and Disruption of the Nehruvian Foreign Policy Discourse*” discusses the cornerstones of India’s post-independence foreign policy which was to a great extent shaped by the state founder Jawaharlal Nehru. It outlines the main characteristics and the

development of the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse from independence till the end of the cold war. The chapter argues that the end of the cold war symbolizes a disruption – or in the terminology of discourse theory – a dislocation of the hegemonic discourse, i.e. there is an event or phenomenon⁶ that cannot be fully represented by the discourse and provokes a failed structural identity in the sense that actors cannot any longer (entirely) identify with the subject positions provided by the discourse, throwing the identities of actors into a crisis and prompting them to act in order to re-construct subject positions and thus the interpretative framework through which the transformation and the ‘new context’ can be understood.

Chapter 6 “*Post-Nehruvianism: India’s Hegemonic Foreign Policy Discourse in the Post-Cold War Era*” discusses the outcome of this discursive transformation. Post-Nehruvianism gradually emerged against the backdrop of the dislocatory moment in India’s foreign policy discourse and successfully transformed the traditional Nehruvian discourse by reinterpreting and adapting it to the changed ‘structural’ circumstances of the post-cold war world. The chapter shows how the nodal point of the discourse shifted from non-alignment to multi-alignment. The main part of the chapter is devoted to a thorough investigation and discussion of the social logics of the Post-Nehruvian discourse – state sovereignty, enlightened self-interest, non-violence, non-discrimination and international unity in diversity –, the political logics based on which the hegemonic discourse and a common identity are formed – that is, the temporal ‘others’ embodied by ‘Western’ colonialism and the cold war as well as the spatial-political ‘others’ represented by Pakistan and China – and, finally, the fantasmatic logics that constitute the ideological underpinning of the discourse – namely, the meta-narratives of ‘Indian Greatness’ and ‘Indian Exceptionalism’. The chapter also shows in what political contexts and issue-areas the different logics were invoked by policy-makers and thus offers an interpretative framework for understanding and explaining India’s foreign policy practices in the post-cold war period.

Chapter 7 “*The Hyper-Nationalist Discourse: Making India Strong*” discusses the main counter-hegemonic discourse in India. The Hyper-nationalist discourse emerged and developed parallel to the mainstream Nehruvian discourse and gained in importance after the disruption of the erstwhile hegemonic discourse. The discourse consists of two overlapping sub-discourses, the *Hindutva* and ultrarealist discourses, which converge in the social logic of national strength (*shakti*). It represents India’s foreign policy as overly idealistic and moralistic, deploring a lack of strategic thought, a nonchalant dealing with the country’s national security

⁶ As will become clear in this study, this event or phenomenon is no extra-discursive entity, but endowed with meaning and thus (re-)produced through discourse(s), with which India’s foreign policy discourse interacts and which have undermined the meanings and identities articulated by the discourses.

and a disregard of power. Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse did not manage to gain discursive hegemony in the moment of dislocation, it contributed to the transformation of the Nehruvian discourse and left its mark on the transformed hegemonic discourse, as is shown by an analysis of the foreign policy practices during the tenure of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government led by the Hindu nationalist *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP). Under the NDA government, however, the transformation of India's dislocated hegemonic discourse was rather substantiated and accelerated, while the direction and parameters of India's foreign policy remained in place. By discussing the social, political and fantasmatic logics of the Hyper-nationalist discourse in particular, the chapter shows when the Hyper-nationalist discourse shortly surfaced in India's foreign policy and discusses some of the reasons for the discourse's failure to gain discursive hegemony.

Chapter 8 "*Conclusion*" summarizes the main findings of the study and reflects on the stability of the hegemonic Post-Nehruvian discourse in light of the current BJP government under prime minister Narendra Modi who could unexpectedly secure an absolute majority in the last national elections. It concludes that the Post-Nehruvian discourse is relatively resilient and can integrate various social demands and interests, not the least because it has generated a collective foundational imaginary of India as an enduring cultural and political agent with exceptional virtues such as non-violence, pluralism and tolerance.

2. Discourse, Hegemony and Postcoloniality

As the notion of ‘discourse’ in the title might already suggest, this study does not treat ‘world order’ and ‘foreign policy’, and linked concepts such as ‘state sovereignty’ or ‘security’, as given entities but as discursive practices. That is because every way of understanding the world and world politics always depends on certain categorizations, abstractions and representations, and policy-makers or scholars engaging in these practices necessarily do so from particular vantage points – that is, they draw on particular systems of signification that confer meaning to the world. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to answer how world order is endowed with meaning by the different and competing foreign policy discourses in India instead of studying or taking for granted the essentialist character of world order. These propositions raise a set of theoretical issues that necessitate a discussion and substantiation of the ontological commitments and presuppositions of this study.

This chapter elaborates the study’s theoretical framework, which draws on poststructuralism⁷, in particular the poststructuralist discourse theory devised by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, and insights of postcolonialism. The chapter is divided into four parts: In the first part, the development of poststructuralism as a critique of structuralism and the main research theme of poststructuralist scholarship will be very briefly outlined. The second and main part of this chapter introduces and discusses the poststructuralist discourse theory. In particular, it explicates the theory’s two main concepts, discourse and hegemony, and related analytical categories such as antagonism, nodal point or empty signifier which are essential for understanding the constitution and operation of discourses and hegemony. The third part then turns to postcolonialism and sets out how postcolonialism and its analytical concepts of mimicry and hybridity can supplement poststructuralism by problematizing the ethnocentrism and parochialism in knowledge production and the implications of the colonial encounter for the identity formation of both colonizers and colonized. The fourth section of the chapter discusses the implications and directions of this meta-theoretical framework for the mode of in-

⁷ Poststructuralism shall not be confused or conflated with postmodernism. Postmodernism argues that we have entered a new era, ‘postmodernity’, which is, inter alia, characterized by a new complexity, changes in the temporal and spatial organization of the world and the loss of known parameters, and has repercussions on culture, politics, science, economics, architecture and so on. This new era is said to have replaced ‘modernity’, a period that is said to have ranged from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century and is associated with substantial technological, scientific and medical innovations (Diez 2003: 450; Campbell 2010: 221). As will become clear in this chapter, postmodernism is only a new meta-narrative that offers a particular representation and interpretation of the world. Though many poststructuralists stress the differences between both approaches, the relationship between poststructuralism and postmodernism is often not so clear cut in some works (see, for example, Shapiro/Der Derian 1989 or George 1994).

quiry of this study and elaborates a post-foundationalist and reflexive perspective on the relationship between ‘knowledge’ and ‘reality’.

2.1 Structuralism and Poststructuralism

Poststructuralism emerged from a critical engagement with structuralism, a linguistic theory of meaning that was pioneered by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and shares a common research interest in the way how meanings and identities in the social world are constituted through difference and how particular meanings and identities could become dominant. Poststructuralism found its way into International Relations mainly through the works of R.B.J. Walker (1984, 1993), Richard Ashley (1984, 1987), James Der Derian (1987) and David Campbell (1998) who sought, above all, to deconstruct or denaturalize the taken-for-granted knowledge of traditional IR theories and shed light on the way how these approaches generate knowledge claims about ‘the world’ through hierarchical meaning systems which are based on binary oppositions (for instance, order/disorder, national/international or sovereignty/anarchy) and privilege certain actors, perspectives and interests, while marginalizing, excluding or threatening others.

Poststructuralism’s call for studying how particular entities such as the state, foreign policy or world order are practiced and spoken of, rather than what their essence is, is derived from a particular understanding of language. Language is ontologically significant and productive since it is primarily through language that the objects and subjects of our studies are brought into being and endowed with particular identities. Instead of treating language as an expressive and transparent instrument for communication and indexing data from a clear and objective view on reality, poststructuralists understand language as a rule-system with specific effects and constraints on our modes of thought and expression – a system of temporarily fixed and contingent meanings that does not simply mirror reality (Shapiro 1981: 218; Hansen 2006: 15-16; Mills 2007: 8). Complying with the ‘linguistic turn’ in the social sciences initiated by Wittgenstein⁸, poststructuralists do not understand reality as “a unified, systemic whole, understandable in objectivist terms. Rather [...] the objects and subjects of reality are socio-linguistically constructed, and their meanings are not given but made and remade by people in different times and places, representing themselves and their world as part of discursive prac-

⁸ According to Wittgenstein’s proposition, “[t]here are no independent or objective sources of support outside of human thought and human action [...]. There is no standard of objective reality (always fixed, never changing) against which to compare or measure a universe of discourse [...] nothing exists outside of our language and actions which can be used to justify, for example, a statement’s truth or falsity” (Phillips 1977: 30).

tices” (George 1994: 156). Hence, there are no ‘objective’ or ‘true’ meanings behind the socio-linguistic representations (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 108).

Poststructuralism’s understanding of language and discourse, which will be further explicated below, is derived from a critical engagement with structuralism, which is associated with the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and conceptualizes culture as a structure modelled on language that transmits cultural knowledge and values. According to Saussure (1983: 15), language can be understood as a closed system of signs. This system consists of specific linguist rules (*langue*) that are a necessary presupposition for meaningful communication. *Langue* is distinguished from individual acts of speaking (*parole*), which only become possible in the first place through *langue*. The meaning of individual signs in this system is not determined by their relation to a pre-given external reality but their relations to other signs. A sign has two dimensions: the signifier (sound or visual appearance) and the signified (meaning or concept). The relationship between both dimensions is, as Saussure argues, contingent and arbitrary in the sense that neither the signifier expresses the meaning nor the signified resembles the form or sound of the signifier (Saussure 1974: 68). Thus, meaning depends on difference and not on reference to the world or particular ideas. According to this relational and differential understanding of language, any element gains its significance and identity only through its relations with and difference from other elements in the linguistic system.

Following the deconstructive reading of structuralism by Jacques Derrida (1976), poststructuralists reject the ‘phonocentrism’ of structuralism – the privileging of spoken to written language – and the concept of language as a stable, fixed system with a centre or origin. The theory of deconstruction is premised upon the insight that Western thought is characterized by a reasoning in binary oppositions. This represents, as Derrida argues, a logo-centric procedure of identity and hierarchization that generates meaning and understanding by distinguishing a privileged entity (the ‘self’) from an inferior ‘other’. In other words, the binary oppositions (e.g., speech/text, identity/difference, man/woman or domestic/international) are conceptualized as mutually exclusive and in a hierarchical order, even though the ‘other’ is necessary for securing the inherently instable identity of the ‘self’. Against this backdrop, a deconstructive reading of a ‘text’ aims to expose the propositions and dichotomies whereby meaning is produced, and unravel these propositions, dichotomies and hierarchies by drawing attention to co-constitution of the ‘self’ and ‘other’.

Accordingly, it is not possible to capture, as Saussure presumes, the essential character of language – or any other concept or object – in its entirety. By focusing on language as a product rather than a process, Saussure is not able to grasp the construction and historicity of struc-

tures, which also results in an initially rigid separation of signifier and signified and then later re-connection through a one-to-one correspondence, thereby implying that the ‘material’ signifier can exist independently from the ‘ideal’ signified. This runs counter the very premises of Saussure’s theory and would suggest that it would be possible to understand a signifier (sound-image) without understanding the signifier (concept) or to distinguish between two different signifiers without recognizing differences which are themselves not solely material but ideational (Derrida 1981: 223ff.; Howarth 2013: 39-40).

Derrida reworked Saussure’s structuralism by introducing the concept of *différance* to demonstrate that meaning is both differential and deferred and thus that things and words are always co-constituted, even though this co-constitution is itself never fully complete, because words can never entirely saturate the meaning of things due to their relational nature, i.e. in the production of meaning through difference, other possibilities available in the system of difference are deferred and thus not actualized (Zehfuss 2002: 199; Derrida 1982: 8ff.). While signs, in this reading, still obtain their meaning by being different from other signs, these meanings also depend upon the context in which the sign is used, thereby making the structure of language changeable and recognizing that the signs from which they differ can alter with the context.

These insights from Derrida have motivated poststructuralist IR scholars to deconstruct and criticize the binary oppositions or dualist categorizations on which International Relations is based upon by highlighting the processual, context-specific and contingent nature of meaning generation, the inherent contradictions and exclusions of the dominant representations of world politics and the possibility of putting the elements (of world politics) together in another way. Despite the criticism of structuralism, the prefix ‘post’ in poststructuralism may not be interpreted as anti-structuralism, since poststructuralism shares with structuralism the crucial insight that meaning is a result of linguistic structures, namely that meaning is produced by the constitutive differentiation of signs, and not through reference to reality or ideas (Münker/Roesler 2012: 29-30). Departing from structuralism, however, poststructuralists point out that these systems of difference are not fixed or closed.

In sum, for poststructuralism, language is structured in patterns, i.e. there exists no single general system of meaning, but a series of historically contingent systems of meaning, with meanings being subject to change between these different patterns or systems of meaning. The settling of meaning is the outcome of social and political practices. Understanding language as social is to acknowledge that our thoughts are only becoming comprehensible to others, if there is a collectively shared system of codes, rules and conventions to which we must adhere

in order to be comprehended and participate in social life. Understanding language as political is to acknowledge that it is also a site for (re-)producing and denouncing specific subjectivities and identities, a site for (political) inclusion and exclusion (Hansen 2006: 15-16; Jørgensen/Phillips 2002: 12). This notion of language is captured by the concept of discourse and also underlies the poststructuralist discourse theory by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, which will be discussed in detail in the next section. As Laclau (2005: 24-25) notes: “The unfixity of the relationship between words and images [or sounds] is the very precondition of any discursive operation which is politically meaningful”.

2.2 Poststructuralist Discourse Theory: Discourse and Hegemony

The poststructuralist discourse theory, or so-called Essex School of Discourse Theory, builds upon Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s seminal work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) and the further refinements and development of the theory by Laclau and other scholars since then.⁹ In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe deconstruct and criticize the essentialism and determinism in (post-)Marxist theory and offer a poststructuralist reformulation of the notion of hegemony by emphasizing the contingency and historicity of all social formations and the role of the political and power in the constitution of these formations. In doing so, Laclau and Mouffe carve out the particularity, the silences, hierarchies and exclusions in the seemingly objective and universal orders and practices (re-)produced by hegemonic projects. In devising their approach, Laclau and Mouffe and the other members of the Essex School draw on and critically engage a variety of different theoretical sources, including poststructuralism (e.g. Derrida and Foucault), post-Marxism (e.g. Gramsci and Althusser), post-analytical philosophy (e.g. Wittgenstein and Rorty), psychoanalysis (e.g. Laclau and Žižek) and phenomenology (e.g. Husserl and Heidegger), for elaborating a novel discourse theory.

2.2.1 Discourse

The core of the ontology of the Essex School of Discourse Theory is a particular (re-)conceptualization of discourse, which presumes that “all objects and actions are meaningful, and that their meaning is conferred by historically specific systems of rules” (Howarth/

⁹ Some important members of the Essex school are Laclau’s students David Howarth, Aletta Norval, Jason Glynos and Yannis Stavrakakis. In IR, the Essex School has been introduced and further elaborated, inter alia, by Roxanne Lynn Doty (1996), Ty Solomon (2009), Dirk Nabers (2010, 2015), Eva Herschinger (2012), and Martin Nonhoff and Frank A. Stengel (2014).

Stavrakakis 2000: 2). In contrast to the prominent understanding of discourse that distinguishes between the discursive and non-discursive realm, reduces discourses to the linguist (or ideational) dimension of social relations or remains ambiguous about the existence of extra-discursive phenomena (such as Foucault in his work), the Essex School seeks to overcome these dichotomies (e.g. thought/reality, mind/matter, realism/idealism) and asserts that all aspects of ‘social reality’ depend on the orders of discourses which constitute their identity and significance. Stressing the discursive character of the social world, Laclau and Mouffe understand a discourse as a “structured totality of articulatory practices”, a structure of meaningful practices that constitutes the meanings and identities of objects by linking together and modifying contingent elements (e.g. subjects, interests or demands) into relational and differential systems of signification. An articulation thus “establishes a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 105). These articulations take place in the discursive field which is the “theoretical horizon within which the being of objects is constituted”; hence, “*all* objects are objects of discourse” (Howarth/Stavrakakis 2000: 3) in the sense that the discursive field is the structural context in which meanings and identities can be articulated through relational and differential systems of signification that relate differences to confer meaning.¹⁰ In other words, the discourse as a system of meaningful practices constructs a field of intelligibility that makes specific beings, practices and relations in the social world knowledgeable to us by attributing them meaning and thus generating – what John Dryzek calls – “a shared way of apprehending the world” (quoted in Glynos et al. 2009: 8).

As we will see in the course of the subsequent discussion, this conceptualization of discourse acknowledges, first, that discourses are inherently political, because their formation depends on difference, an antagonist ‘other’, and thus the exclusion of certain other elements through the drawing of political frontiers between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’; second, that discourses always entail the exercise of power, since their formation involves the exclusion or marginalization of other possibilities and thus a hierarchical structuring of relations between different social forces; third and finally, that discourses are contingent constructions, i.e. the meanings and identities of social elements can always be constructed in different ways. As these elements have no pre-given, fixed essences or characteristics, but acquire their meanings and identities only through their relation and difference to other elements, discourses can fix social meanings and identities only partially and are thus always instable and vulnerable to the

¹⁰ Hence, whenever this study refers to ‘structural context’, it refers to the discursive field as the horizon for the articulation of meanings and identities and not to an extra-discursive realm.

‘surplus of meaning’ located in the field of discursivity. Given the absence of any stable foundations underlying these meanings and identities, and the exclusion of certain other options, every discourse is dependent on and vulnerable to a ‘discursive exterior’ that threatens to subvert (or dislocate) the articulation of meaning, but is also the precondition for discursive articulations in the first place (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 110-112; Howarth 2002: 103, 2013: 11). This anti-essentialist, discursive ontology does not imply, however, that ‘reality’ can simply be reduced to language or that the world does not exist independently of thought, so that we can disregard material facts. Rather, it means that the world cannot be accessed, understood and made meaningful independently of discursive practices, as ‘reality’ cannot constitute a simply given empirical referent point to which knowledge and truth could or must correspond. Likewise, discourse is not synonymous with language, but refers to all – linguistic and non-linguistic – practices through which meanings are produced and identities are constituted.¹¹ As Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 108) note in this regard:

“The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of ‘natural phenomena’ or ‘expressions of the wrath of God’, depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive conditions of emergence.”

Hence, discourses do not simply reflect or represent a reality ‘out there’, but constitute subjects and objects within particular discursive structures that delimit their ‘reality’ in the sense that their intelligibility depends on such placements. In other words, subjects and objects only become meaningful within a discursive context and we cannot draw on or act upon an extra-discursive sphere. We are ‘thrown into’ a world of meaningful practices and significant differences, i.e. the discursive as a horizon, and it is this discursive horizon that enables us to identify and engage with the objects we encounter. There is thus no presence delivered to us by a material reality; there are only historically contingent representations of ‘reality’ in the sense that they categorize, symbolize and organize the world and its objects in a particular way and thus produce this ‘reality’ by making it accessible, knowable and meaningful (Smith 1998: 85; Howarth 2002: 9/104). In this sense, a foreign policy discourse, for instance, refers to the various representational practices that discursively (re-)produce the acting and purposeful subjects of world politics such as states, diplomats or international organizations as well as the objects and concepts they can speak about or act upon such as war or human rights. A

¹¹ Accordingly, there is no *ontological* difference between linguistic and non-linguistic practices in the sense that both can only be comprehended through discursive practices (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 107).

state, for example, is (re-)produced by various discursive or representational practices that encompass, amongst others, border control, ceremonies, political speeches, military deployments, diplomacy and economic investments (Campbell 2010: 226).

Ontologically, as David Howarth (2013: 10-11) argues, this understanding of discourse subscribes to a “minimal realism” by acknowledging “the existence of the objects and processes that we think about, though our practices of reflection are never external to the lifeworlds into which we are thrown” and affirms “a philosophy of radical materialism, in which our conceptual and discursive forms can never exhaust the materiality of objects. Objects are thus constructed in different ways in different contexts, though no conceptual form ever captures their essence once and for all”. However, as we will see in the subsequent discussion of the constitution of the subjectivity and the dislocation of discourses, “this does not preclude moments of transcendence during which human agents can ‘go beyond’ the particular discourses that confer identity and practical possibility by projecting new projects and discourses”.

2.2.2 Subject, Subjectivity and Agency

In poststructuralist discourse theory, the subject is no pre-discursive agent with some intrinsic characteristics but constituted by discourses which delimit what s/he can meaningful say and do. Subjects cannot act and speak within the existing (discursive) structures as they like, but have to organize and identify with these discursive structures to make their practices meaningful. As a result, discourses set clear limits to the way how subjects and practices can possibly be constructed (Laclau/Mouffe 1987: 84-85). In this sense, poststructuralism breaks with the post-Enlightenment notion of an autonomous, rational and centralized subject that is the origin and bearer of meaning and consciousness (Münker/Roesler 2012: 38). This however does not entail the ‘death of the subject’ or human agency.

Given the incomplete nature of discursive constructs, the subject is also incomplete and emerges as a split subject that is located at the intersection of different discourses, which provide various identities and possibilities of articulation. Consequently, the subject attempts to identify with a subject position¹² within a discursive structure in order to acquire a complete identity. A subject can have a number of different subject positions (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 115; Torfing 2005: 16). In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe provided a rather static account of ‘subject positions’ and seemed to suggest that the subject can be reduced to a

¹² “A subject position”, as Anna Marie Smith (1998: 58-59) explicates, “refers to the ensemble of beliefs through which an individual interprets and responds to her structural positions within a social formation. In this sense, an individual only becomes a social agent insofar as she lives her structural positions through an ensemble of subject positions that makes sense to at least one other person in one other time and space”.

formation of different subject positions which are imposed upon it by the respective discursive structure. This structuralist view would negate agency and the possibility of (radical) change (e.g. establishment of new, fundamentally different discourses) by precluding the actors' ability to act strategically in relation to the discourse (i.e. to shape and transform the discursive formation) and to assume multiple identities (ibid.: 16-17).

For making better sense of the relationship between the subject and the structure and offering a more dynamic view on their interaction, Laclau (1990, 2000) drew on the Lacan's psychoanalytical theory (see Stavrakakis 1999, Žižek 1999). In this view, all social relations and identities are characterized by a fundamental 'structural undecidability' or 'lack' that can never be fully overcome. It results from the paradox that subjects can only constitute themselves as subjects through identifications with certain subject positions generated by a discourse, which can, due to the open, unstable and incomplete nature of discourses, never grasp the 'true essence' of the subject, but only provide partial, temporary and fragile identities. Identifications are thus unavailing attempts to overcome the constitutive 'lack' that is at the heart of the subject, since the subject can only constitute itself as a subject within an alien discursive structure which never fully grasps its 'true' essence (Laclau 2000: 58; Glynnos/Howarth 2007: 131/142f.).

While the subject position illuminates the various forms through which subjects are produced as social agents, political subjectivities account for the way social actors act. The subject, as Laclau (1990: 39-41/92) argues, is compelled to act and can transcend particular discourses due to the contingency of the very discursive structures which confer identity to the subject. Accordingly, the contingency of the discourse opens up this possibility to subjects, provided that a discourse becomes dislocated. Dislocatory moments signify, in the terms of Lacanian psychoanalysis, the presence of 'the real' in a symbolic order, thereby indicating certain disparities and ultimately the contingency of all social relations. In other words, there is an event or phenomenon¹³ that the discourse cannot explain or represent systematically, leading to a failed structural identity of the subject and prompting it to act. Hence, the subject is neither simply determined by the discursive structure nor can it constitute this structure. Rather, the subject is compelled to take action when its identity is thrown into a crisis and the structures must be re-established. Within this process of identification, political subjectivities are formed and later become, on the condition of their stabilization, subject positions that make individuals to social actors with particular characteristics. As a result, by rejecting both essentialist

¹³ These events or phenomena, however, are no extra-discursive entities with some 'objective' characteristics or implications, but their meaning and significance is exactly what is at stake in moments of dislocation and different discourses seek to establish (Nabers 2015: 26/117).

approaches to subjectivity, which assume subjects with fully constituted identities and interests, and structural determinism, which reduces the role of agency to the reproduction of pre-constituted structures, we can dissolve the agent/structure problematique¹⁴ by acknowledging simultaneously the constitution of subjects within discursive structures and the inherent contingency and instability of these structures, which occasionally necessitates and prompts agency to reformulate them (Howarth 2002: 109/121).

2.2.3 The Emergence and Constitution of Discourses and Identities: Nodal Points, Empty Signifiers and Social Antagonisms

Given the presumption that discourses are inherently contingent, instable and contested, this begs the question how even partial fixations can be generated and maintained by a discourse or, in other words, how any form of identity is possible and why the social world appears to be relatively rule-bound. The poststructuralist discourse theory argues that discourses are organized around so-called nodal points. These are privileged signifiers (or reference points) that allow to link various elements (e.g. interests and demands) in the field of discursivity together into a common system of meaning and thus to articulate them – as moments – within a discourse. In other words, an articulation is the practice of constructing nodal points which can partially fix meanings. An example for a nodal point is communism in which various pre-existing and available signifiers (e.g. ‘equality’, ‘freedom’, ‘state’, ‘democracy’) were linked together and obtained a new meaning by being articulated around the (privileged) signifier ‘communism’ (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 113; Howarth/Stavrakakis 2000: 8).

Further refining the notion of the nodal point, Laclau later introduced the concept of the empty signifier to account for the impossibility of any discursive structure to reach full closure of society, but the necessity for any society to maintain the ideal of closure, fullness or universality. The function of empty signifiers is to embody the absent closure, fullness or universality of any discursive system by ‘emptying’ discursive difference to an extent that it can provisionally symbolize the identity of the discourse. Empty signifiers are thus broad and widely appreciated concepts such as ‘freedom’ or ‘order’, whose exact meaning or the way how they can be realized remain unclear and ambiguous (Laclau 1996: 36-37, 2000: 58). This ‘emptiness’ enables a discourse to integrate various different – and even contradictory – positions, interests and demands and is, as we will see later, a crucial precondition for the formation of discursive hegemony.

¹⁴ See for the structure/agency debate: Hollis 1994, Wendt 1999, Hay 2002, Stones 2005 and Wight 2006.

Though nodal points and empty signifiers can to a certain extent shed light on the way how partial fixations of meanings can be achieved, they are insufficient for explaining the emergence and constitution of identities and the maintenance of the unity of a discourse. It is here that the Essex School of Discourse Theory underscores the primacy of the political in any social ontology. The political constitutes the specificity of politics and its autonomy with respect to other spheres such as the social or morality. This specific criterion is, as Chantal Mouffe (2000: 101) explicates, “the dimension of antagonism that is inherent in human relations, antagonism that can take many forms and emerge in different types of social relations. ‘Politics’, on the other side, indicates the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of ‘the political’”. Drawing on Derrida’s insight that the constitution of identities depends on the establishment of difference and that this difference is often constructed on the basis of hierarchy as well as Carl Schmitt’s emphasis on the conflictual nature of politics, the notion of the political affirms that discourses, and the identities (re-)produced through them, imply the drawing of political frontiers between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ and thus the exclusion of certain social forces, possibilities, interests etc., whereby the discourse becomes vulnerable to an ‘discursive exterior’ (Mouffe 2005: 13ff.).

Social antagonisms point to the inherent negativity in all social formations and reveal the limit points or frontiers of any discourse (and society in general), where social meaning is (still) contested and cannot be fully stabilized. Antagonisms, however, do not symbolize the clash of social forces with already constituted – and oppositional – identities and interests, but emerge from the very process of identity formation which always presupposes that there is an ‘other’ which serves as the (negative) reference point for constituting identities (and interests). The ‘other’, the discursive frontier or exterior, is thus *constitutive* for the formation of a discourse and the (re-)production of identities therein, because it defines the ‘self’. Social actors are unable to attain positive and full identities, and therefore they need an ‘other’ which is held responsible for this ‘failure’ and represented as a (potential) threat to the identity of the ‘self’. Social antagonisms thus account for the very ambivalent nature of the emergence and constitution of identities: While the ‘other’, the antagonist, threatens the identity of the ‘self’ and blocks its full realization, the ‘self’ can define itself only in opposition to the antagonist (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 176ff.; Laclau 1990: 17-21; Stäheli 2006: 263-264).

The antagonist nature of identity formations has far-reaching implications for the study of international relations and motivated poststructuralist scholars to investigate how the identity

of states is always constituted against a series of ‘others’ which simultaneously constitute and subvert this very identity. As Richard Devetak (2005: 177) notes,

“[t]he geo-political creation of the external other is integral to the constitution of a political identity (self) which is to be made secure. But to constitute a coherent, singular political identity often demands the silencing of internal dissent. There can be internal others that endanger a certain conception of the self, and must be necessarily expelled, disciplined, or contained. Identity, it can be surmised, is an effect forged, on the one hand, by disciplinary practices which attempt to normalize a population, giving it a sense of unity and, on the other, by exclusionary practices which attempt to secure the domestic identity through processes of spatial differentiation, and various diplomatic, military and defence practices.”

In international relations, the drawing of political frontiers between the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, between those who belong to the (inter)national community and those who are excluded, is primarily a result of the states’ foreign policies. While poststructuralists have tended to represent ‘self’/‘other’ relations in rather radical and antagonistic terms by focusing on the way how the state is constituted as a space of order, peace and progress in relation to the international system as the space of difference characterized by disorder, anarchy, threats and stagnancy (see Ashley 1987, Walker 1993, Campbell 1998), the formation of identities, as Lene Hansen (2006: 33/41) rightly points out, transcends “a simple Self-Other duality”. As a result, we should conceive the ‘self’ as being placed in a web of relations with various – not necessarily radically different and antagonistic – ‘other(s)’ and thus take into account degrees of ‘otherness’.¹⁵ The ‘other’ also does not need to be a spatial/external entity, but can also be a temporal ‘other’ as in the cases of the European Union (the war-ridden Europe) and Germany (Nazi Regime) (Wæver 1996; Diez 2004, 2005).

Crucially, what the notion of an antagonism captures is that there are no universal or stable foundations underlying the meanings and identities in the social world. No single discourse is capable of imposing closure upon the world, since its formation is predicated on the construction of antagonisms and the exclusion of certain elements by drawing a political line between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ and thus determining the limits of the concrete social formation. These antagonisms and exclusions make the historically contingent formations produced by the discourse vulnerable to the excluded other(s) and competing discourses that are also inherently incomplete, unstable and contingent and attempt to provide different structures of meaning, which make the world intelligible in a different way. There are thus always overlapping discourses that attempt to fix meanings and identities, but only arrive at partial fixtures (Laclau 1990: 17-18; Mouffe 2013: 216-217).

¹⁵ What characterizes an antagonist relationship is that the ‘other’ is not necessarily an enemy or a direct threat, but different in the sense that the ‘other’ serves as a reference point to the ‘self’ and there is the underlying possibility that the ‘other’ might become an antagonist (again).

The successful drawing of political frontiers and the creation of seemingly stable, neutral and universal foundations, which are based on the exclusion of other possibilities, is always an expression of particular power relations (Laclau 1990: 103). “Power is constitutive of the social”, as Mouffe (2005: 18) notes, “because the social could not exist without the power through which it is given shape. What is at a given moment considered as the ‘natural order – jointly with the ‘common sense’ which accompanies it – is the result of sedimented practices; it is never the manifestation of a deeper objectivity exterior to the practices that bring it into being”. In other words, the emergence and constitution of particular fixations of meaning and foundations exposes the underlying power structure of social orders. This points to the productive nature of power which has been elaborated by Foucault in particular. According to Foucault (1976: 133), power constitutes and institutionalizes a particular mode of knowledge to organize the world in a particular way and tells us how it should be interpreted. Thus, power and knowledge are very closely intertwined. As Foucault (1979: 27) notes: “power produces knowledge [...], power and knowledge directly imply one another; [...] there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations”. Hence, as Foucault (1986: 70-71) goes on: “[t]ruth is a thing of this world. [...] Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements”. This also implies that causality is a product of discourse in the sense that discourses construct and reify certain cause-and-effect relations that are however delimited to the particular discourse in which they are articulated and do not signify an extra-discursive mechanism.

Though any fixation of meaning and any social order are inherently contingent, instable and changeable, a discourse is also a configuration of power which shapes and delineates the way how it can be organized and changed. The radical contingency that underpins the ontology of the poststructuralist discourse theory does thus not imply that discursive meaning systems can be easily changed or organized in all possible ways due to the underlying power relations of any discursive order (Stäheli 2006: 266). Power is here not simply understood as the command over certain ‘material’ resources, but as a relational phenomenon that imposes a particular representation or ‘order’ on the world and managed to objectify it. In short, power is the ability to hegemonize a discourse. The formation and functioning of hegemonic discourses is discussed in the following section.

2.2.4 Discursive Hegemony

Hegemony can be conceptualized as a discursive struggle for the fixation of particular meanings or a particular meaning system.¹⁶ Different discourses stand for specific representations and understandings of social reality and seek to hegemonize the discursive field. The main objective of discourse analysis is to apprehend the processes of fixing meanings and to elaborate how certain fixations of meaning could prevail as the ‘natural’ or ‘normal’ understanding of the world and thus achieve a hegemonic status (Jørgensen/Phillips 2002: 36; Torfing 2005: 15). The very condition of hegemony, as Laclau and Mouffe (1985: x) point out, “is that a particular social force assumes the representation of a totality that is radically incommensurable with it. Such a form of ‘hegemonic universality’ is the only one that a political community can reach”.

Hegemony refers, on the one hand, to a political practice of coalition-building in order to construct or challenge hegemonic projects, and, on the other hand, to the outcome of this hegemonic practice: a hegemonic formation or order. Hegemonic practices organize the discursive space by drawing political frontiers between different social forces and creating their identities on the basis of social antagonisms. This practice is characterized by an interplay of two elementary and closely intertwined logics: the logic of equivalence and the logic of difference. The logic of equivalence articulates the loose elements (demands, interests, subjects etc.) in the field of discursivity into a single chain of significance by linking them together in opposition to an antagonistic ‘other’, a common negation. In this drawing of political frontiers, the antagonistic ‘other’, simultaneously, ensures the identity of the ‘self’ (e.g. the ‘nation’ or ‘international community’) and blocks it, because this shared identity is predicated on a common political, spatial or temporal other, which prevents the self from acquiring its ‘full’, ‘pure’ or ‘true’ identity, but, at the same time, is the necessary precondition for holding the ‘self’ together. The logic of difference, by contrast, is the process, whereby political frontiers are (re-)constructed by breaking up chains of equivalence and exposing the plurality and differences between the entities/elements. Hence, the logic of difference can disrupt the creation or maintenance of a common identity by revealing the contingency and complexity of social relations. In this sense, the logic of difference can both challenge existing hegemonic orders, but also constrain the emergence of counter-hegemonic discourses (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 127ff.; Laclau 1996: 38; Howarth/Stavrakakis 2000: 11).

¹⁶ “Discursive hegemony”, as Nabers (2015: 134) explicates, “therefore resembles a battle over which signifiers are tied to which signified”.

These two political logics are of crucial importance for the emergence, institutionalization and transformation of social practices and orders (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 141). This struggle for discursive hegemony involves a political practice of coalition-building, in which different demands, interests, subjects etc. are linked together to create a common socio-historical project (e.g. the democratic-capitalist state). For forging such a socio-historical project, hegemonic articulations, first, seek to establish nodal points, i.e. privileged signifiers or reference points around which discourses are organised in the sense that they can fix the meaning of a concept and thus stabilize chains of signification. For a successful hegemonic project, these nodal points must be ‘empty’ signifiers, which allow the integration of various (conflicting) interests, demands and subjects. The purpose of the empty signifier is to symbolize the universality of a discourse qua a particular signifier that can represent and hold together a chain of signifiers, thereby concealing its particularity (Laclau 1996: 28; Nabers 2015: 131).

Second, for creating these equivalent demands and interests and thus uniting different social forces, hegemonic practices divide the socio-discursive space by drawing political frontiers. In this process, captured by Laclau and Mouffe’s logic of equivalence, a common ‘other’ (e.g. rogue states and Islamic fundamentalism in the discourse on the ‘war on terror’ after the 9/11 terror attacks) is identified as a problem or challenge which must be overcome (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 112/127ff.; Solomon 2009; Herschinger 2012).

Third, hegemonic practices create and draw on specific fictional or ideological narratives, myths and social imaginaries. Ideologies or meta-narratives are attempts to totalize and naturalize meanings and identities by obscuring the contingency, historicity and the moment of the political involved in the formation of these meanings and identities and offering a simplified story of actors and events (Torfing 2005: 15; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 117).¹⁷ Myths play a crucial role in the construction of these ideologies or meta-narratives. They are produced by political actors to conceal the inherent contradictions and ruptures of a discourse and prevent its dislocation by functioning as a “surface of inscription” for numerous social demands and interests (Norval 1996: 105). If a myth has successfully managed to neutralize the ruptures and dislocations of a discourse and incorporates a wide range of social demands, then the myth has been transformed into a social imaginary. A social imaginary is a general ‘horizon’ or

¹⁷ A meta-narrative or ideology is thus a representation that makes universal claims to truth and attempts to control the production of meaning by imposing an ultimate interpretation that is taken to be independent of any standpoint and condition, thereby excluding and discriminating other perspectives (Ashley 1989: 263). In contrast to a discourse, a narrative can thus be understood as an assemble of interrelated texts that are (re-)produced and referred to by various actors in an attempt to obscure the discursive construction of reality (Müller 2008: 328).

‘frame’ that structures and orders a field of intelligibility, thereby indicating the successful formation of a hegemonic project (Laclau 1990: 60ff.).

Fourth, a hegemonic constellation has emerged, if a certain particularity (of interests and demands) is represented as the universal in the sense that it is naturalized and the same reality is reflected in the discursive practices of all relevant agents (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 127ff.; Mouffe 2013: 216; Nabers 2015: 142-143). A hegemonic discourse has successfully institutionalized and maintains a dominant interpretative framework or “horizons of intelligibility [that] delineate what is possible, what can be said and done, what positions may legitimately be taken, what actions may be engaged in, and so forth” (Norval 1996: 4).

In contrast to the largely materialistic and deterministic concepts of hegemony prevalent in IR theory¹⁸, hegemony is here thus not equated with the dominance of a particular state or group of states, but refers to the hegemony of a discourse that elevates a particular representation of world politics and particular subjects (through generating subject positions) to a hegemonic and thus apparently universal status. Likewise, discursive hegemony does not mean ideational dominance (i.e. dominance of certain ideas or norms), but also rests on ‘material power’. This ‘material power’, however, is embedded in discursive structures in the sense that the potentials and constraints of this material capabilities are endowed with meaning through discourses and do not have pre-discursive or fixed meanings (Nabers 2015: 117-118). In this sense, power is the ability to hegemonize a discourse. Though power cannot be reduced to the possession of certain resources and has no specific location, it places actors into a hierarchical web of relations, thereby allocating them different, i.e. more and less favourable subject positions, to act in and influence discursive practices and structures. Such privileged (subject) positions account partially for what Laclau calls the “unevenness of the social” (Laclau 1996: 43). Examples for privileged subject positions in foreign policy and international relations are, for instance, the president or prime minister on the national level or great powers and industrialized countries on the international level.

This marginalization or exclusion of certain actors, their interests and demands through the drawing of political frontiers makes a hegemonic discourse vulnerable to counter-hegemonic discourses that seek to challenge the hegemonic project and transform or replace it. These counter-hegemonic discourses try to disrupt the chain of equivalence of the hegemonic discourse through the logic of difference, which exposes the particularity and contingency of the discourse, and forge a new hegemonic project that articulates different demands, interests or subject positions. The political dimension of social relations reveals, qua moments of disloca-

¹⁸ See Gilpin 1981, Mastanduno 1999, Wallerstein 2004, Lentner 2006, Ikenberry 2011, Prys/Robel 2011.

tion, the limits of any social formation or universal order (Laclau 2000: 39ff.; see also Butler/Laclau/Žižek 2000). A dislocation exposes, as we have seen, the disparities and contingencies of a discourse and intensifies the discursive struggle for hegemony, since the hegemonic discourse is no longer able to (re-)produce and partially fix meanings and identities. Dislocatory moments could thus pave the way for the transformation or overthrow of the hegemonic discourse, if the social forces of the hegemonic project do not manage to ‘fix’ or ‘cover over’ the ruptures of the discourse.

2.3 Postcoloniality: Identity and Difference in the Colonial Encounter

Postcolonial studies can provide additional insights into this hegemonic operation and are, as this study will show, of particular relevance for analysing India’s foreign policy discourse. Postcolonialism has been inspired by Derrida’s deconstructive reading of ‘Western’ thought (see Said 1978, Spivak 1985). The mode of deconstruction is, as we have seen, interested in the (logo-centric) propositions and dichotomies whereby meaning is produced in a discourse. By drawing on the discourse’s *own* language, concepts and hierarchies, the mode of deconstruction consists of unsettling the existing dichotomies. It demonstrates how the opposite, negative or marginal account of a privileged concept is in fact conditional for its very possibility. Hence, the deconstruction reverses apparently stable concepts by exposing that their meaning and mode of being is merely grounded in oppositions. In a second step, the deconstructive reading attempts to dislocate the hierarchical order by drawing attention to the excluded or marginalized. In doing so, it wants to create awareness for the co-constitution of the ‘self’ and ‘other’ and for how the ‘self’ gains its privilege only by renouncing its dependence on the subordinated ‘other’ (Derrida 1976; Devatak 2005: 168).

Postcolonial scholars have applied the mode of deconstruction to the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. In particular, postcolonialism¹⁹ studies the relationship between location, knowledge systems and knowledge production, and contests the Western- or Eurocentric nature of the social sciences and humanities, especially their parochial supposition that modern ‘Western’ thought is superior, progressive and universally applicable. The latter is achieved, as postcolonial scholars argue, by (continuing) imperialist practices that represent the ‘other’ (the non-‘West’) as inferior, backward or irrational (Chakrabarty 2000: 29; Shilliam 2011b: 13; Seth 2013b: 136/138). In this sense, postcolonialism draws attention to the way how the ‘East’/‘South’ is represented by the – ‘Western’-dominated – mainstream dis-

¹⁹ See for an overview of postcolonialism: Gandhi 1998, Chakrabarty 2000, Shilliam 2011a, Seth 2013a.

course through a logo-centric procedure that privileges ‘Western’ experiences, ideas, categories or narratives and is sustained by a still existing asymmetry of knowledge production.²⁰ In the seminal work *Orientalism*, Edward Said (1978) attempted to show how the Orient was represented and thus (re-)produced in Western novels, travel reports or art not only in a racist and stereotypical way, but also in opposition to a superior, progressive and rational Occident, thereby enabling the ‘West’ to culturally dominate the Orient.

In the process of colonial othering, the colonial ‘Western self’ was constituted as a homogenized entity, even though it consisted of different elements, whereas the colonized ‘other’ is constructed as lacking the qualities of the ‘self’ and thus not only as inferior, but also as a legitimate object for the imposition of the colonial ‘Western self’ (Inayatullah/Blaney 2004: 4ff.). By creating awareness for the co-constitution of the self (colonizer) and the other (colonized) and for the way how the self gains its privilege only by renouncing its dependence on the subordinated other, postcolonialism sheds light on the impact of the colonial encounter on both the colonizers and the colonized. This is captured by the postcolonial concepts of hybridity and mimicry (Bhabha 1994), which can help us in comprehending the way how postcolonial societies simultaneously adopted and reproduced the discourses of the former oppressors, but also misappropriated and perverted their meanings, thereby contesting and subverting colonial rule as well as generating new – hybrid – identities that transcend the confines of one socio-cultural space.

Postcolonialism captures the dilemma of post-colonial societies. The encounter with the colonial ‘other’ has not only led to subjugation and exploitation, but also created an awareness for the own backwardness compared to the colonial powers and a desire to mimic modern ‘Western’ discourses of statecraft, technology and science in order to overcome this backwardness or ‘lack’, which made the society prone to fall under foreign rule in the first place. However, given the fact that this very ‘Western’ modernity has been closely intertwined with colonialism and imperialism, the colonial subjects are confronted with a dilemma: they must adopt and use the (discursively conveyed) concepts, practices and institutions of the former oppressors and exploiters in order to become free, independent and modern (Bhabha 1994: 44; Chakrabarty 2000: 4). As Partha Chatterjee (1993: 5) described this dilemma:

“If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain ‘modular’ forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imag-

²⁰ In the discipline of international relations, for instance, key textbooks are still largely written by ‘Western’ scholars and in leading IR journals often more than 60 per cent of the articles are written by scholars based in the U.S. or Europe. The same patterns also apply to international conferences or research funding (see Wæver 1998, Smith 2000, Tickner/Wæver 2009, Tickner 2013)

ine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anti-colonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized.”

Hence, despite having different traditions of political and social organization, post-colonial societies had hardly any choice to return to these traditions or pursue a different path to ‘modernity’, but had, if they aspired independence and freedom from colonial rule, to use the institutions, rules and practices of the ‘modern’ state imposed on them by the colonizers, because the ‘modern’ state has been and continues to be the precondition for autonomy and subjecthood in world politics (Gandhi 1998: 118).

Against this backdrop, a postcolonial perspective can help us in shedding light on and being sensitive to the Western- or Eurocentric conception of international relations, thereby avoiding parochial and ethnocentric research as well as an over-determination of the identity/difference mechanism. For instance, the focus of poststructuralist IR researchers (see Ashley 1984, Walker 1984, George 1994, Campbell 1998) on ‘Western’ texts, narratives and practices such as the emergence of the ‘Westphalian’ state system or realist IR theory has often, as postcolonial scholars noted (see Krishna 1993, Chowdhry/Nair 2002: 8/25), led to the reproduction of these dominant discourses and neglects the particular conditions and characteristics of state and national identity formation in postcolonial states, where the state and other institutions were imposed by external powers, and state sovereignty is still contested, thereby blurring the distinction between ‘internal order’ (state) and ‘external disorder’ (international system).

Though poststructuralism focuses on the relationship between power, knowledge and representation, it has so far paid insufficient attention to non-‘Western’ texts and agency. Therefore, a postcolonial perspective, and its concepts of mimicry and hybridity in particular, can be an important supplement to poststructuralist discourse theory. It needs to be noted, however, that postcolonialism is no coherent school of thought or elaborated theory, but rather draws on various approaches, including poststructuralism, constructivism, feminism, and (post-) Marxism, which are grounded on different and often conflicting ontological stances (see Lomba 2005). For this reason, it is important to clarify that postcolonialism is here understood and incorporated within the ontological framework of discourse theory laid out in this chapter. By placing postcolonialism within an anti-essentialist ontological framework, we can also avoid the tendency of postcolonial scholarship (see, for instance, Said 1978) to essentialize imperialism/colonialism, which can lead to an unintentional reproduction of ‘Western’ hegemony, or to privilege contextual/local knowledge.

2.4 A Post-foundationalist and Reflexive Perspective on the Relationship between ‘Knowledge’ and ‘Reality’

The meta-theoretical framework of this study rests on an anti-essentialist, discursive ontology and thus argues that we cannot know or study the world independently of specific discourses, that language is no neutral medium with which we can describe and explain the world in an objective way, and that we cannot rely on secure foundations for making knowledge and truth claims. This entails a “critique of epistemology [...] for the very question of what we can know hints at the Cartesian dilemma of drawing a distinction between knowledge and reality” (Nabers 2015: 74). Since there is no meaningful and intelligible extra-discursive reality against which we could test our theories or empirical accounts, we can only access reality and attain knowledge through discourses. Discourses, however, do not reflect the world ‘out there’, but are particular representations that enable us to make sense of the world and constitute who we are. Yet, these linguistic and non-linguistic representations are no transparent, complete reflections of a ‘material’ reality or an ‘objective’ truth, but are the product of historically contingent systems of significant differences that define what constitutes ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ in the first place (Howarth 2002: 132-133). Thus, we cannot go beyond these representations in order to grasp the ‘real’ essence or ‘objective’ meaning of a phenomenon, but have to draw on discourses as our access to knowledge, truth and reality.

Consequently, the question of how these representational practices (or discourses) constitute the subjects and objects of social reality is of crucial importance. A constitutive theoretical approach studies how particular entities or phenomena come into being through the meanings and interpretations a discourse conveys. As a result, our theories, language, concepts and so on are not separate from the world, but actually constitute the world that they study. A constitutive theory thus acknowledges that it is intrinsically connected to its object of study, and cannot be falsified by the representation of reality it produces, because the ‘event’ and its ‘representation’ mutually constitute each other. Rather, the so produced empirical account has to be judged as a particular conceptualization and interpretation of the respective object of study it has constructed. Similarly, it follows from this that we can neither identify or generate causal relationships²¹ in the social world nor assume that our theoretical approach offers a ‘view from nowhere’ (Smith 1995: 26-28; Howarth 2002: 130; Hansen 2010: 168-169).

This proposition necessarily leads to a rejection of a positivist mode of inquiry. Positivism is characterized by the following presuppositions: first, there is a real world with regularities and

²¹ As we have seen, however, discourses regularly establish cause-and-effect relations, which however only exist in this particular discourse and do not signify a causal mechanism in an ‘objective’ reality.

causal relations that exists independently of human subjectivity; second, this independent reality can be described and explained in a value-free, ‘scientific’ way; third, objective knowledge can be gained by testing the correspondence of truth claims and external experience; fourth, the reliance on an empiricist and rationalist epistemology. While empiricism is the belief that knowledge of the world is grounded in bare experience and observation, rationalism, by contrast, asserts that reason – a universal property of the human mind – is the crucial instrument to interpret our observations and experiences and deduce the regularities and causal mechanism that generate them (Ashley 1984: 249; Smith 1996: 15-21).

By rejecting a positivist scientific philosophy, we acknowledge that our research objects are themselves engaged in a continuing process of (re-)producing the social world and that the way how they make sense of it should therefore also be part of our scientific enterprise. Likewise, it recognizes that the instruments of social science research rely on the human beings’ capacities to interpret the world. And these instruments, in turn, work in a way that is exactly similar to the processes of meaning generation that we as social scientists seek to study. Finally, it accepts that every theoretical approach observes or reasons about the world from a certain vantage point or discourse (George/Campbell 1990: 280; Fox 2008: 662). As Robert Cox (1981: 128) noted in his famous dictum: “Theory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose.”

Hence, if we cannot know or study the world independently of historically contingent systems of significant differences, if language is no neutral tool that can describe the world in an impartial and objective way, and if we cannot test our theories or concepts against an objective reality in order to verify or falsify their accuracy, we are left with no stable and secure foundations for knowledge and truth claims. In this sense, we have to reject the notion of foundational thought that believes in the possibility of grounding knowledge on a universal base, an Archimedean point that transcends contingent human subjectivity and action. Following Nietzsche’s radical perspectivism (1988), we have to accept the absence of a universal point of reference (such as God or human reason) and the existence of a plurality of perspectives, with every perspective constituting the world in a particular way. Hence, there is no ‘truth’ as a feature of an externally existing reality. Rather, ‘truth’ is conditioned by ‘discursive truth regimes’ that produce varying meanings of truth depending on the particular social, economic, cultural and historical context. As a result, we can only judge truth claims within a particular discursive context and the ‘reality’ it constitutes. This does neither entail a nihilistic relativism or the conviction that ‘anything goes’, but the acknowledgement that truth, morality and ethics are constituted by discourses and that these discourses provide us with a framework of

relatively specific standards, values and criteria for judging whether something is true or false, good or bad, right or wrong (Foucault 1986: 74; Torfing 2005: 14f./19).

Acknowledging the historicity, contingency and cultural specificity of our knowledge, does not mean, however, to embrace an anti-foundationalist position that assumes the absence of any grounds for generating knowledge, but a post-foundationalist position. Our theoretical presumptions and arguments rest on specific contingent foundations which we need in order to avoid pure relativism, but which are never ultimate or universal. In contrast to anti-foundationalism, post-foundationalism thus acknowledges the necessity of grounding thought, but treats these foundations as contingent and partial in a field of competing foundational attempts. In this sense, it weakens the ontological status of foundations by highlighting the impossibility of an ultimate ground and raising awareness not only for the historicity, contingency and cultural specificity of our knowledge, but also to the dimension of the political in – the ultimate unsuccessful and partial – grounding attempts (Marchart 2007: 2f./7).²² As a result, while we should acknowledge the historicity and cultural dimension of knowledge, for instance, it does not follow from this that we cannot produce general knowledge and should instead privilege ‘local’ or ‘contextual’ knowledge, as some postcolonial scholars seem to suggest, thereby implying that ‘local’ forms of knowledge are necessarily incompatible and knowledge production is a closed and self-referential endeavour. Such a scientific relativism would not only render scholarly dialogue and the evaluation of research results almost impossible, but would also promote nationalist and parochial accounts of world politics (Makarychev/Morozov 2013: 329/336).

Against this background, this study is not based on or searching for an ultimate, traceable foundation or origin of truth and instead adopts a reflexive mode of social inquiry that sees every theory as practice, since it cannot transcend its discursive context and thus represents ‘reality’ from a particular vantage point, thereby contributing to the reification and naturalization of particular constructions of reality. A reflexive mode of social inquiry pays attention to “the way different kinds of linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements are woven together in the process of knowledge development, during which empirical material is constructed, interpreted and written” (Alvesson/Sköldberg 2009: 9).

Reflexivity implies in this context thus two things: first, it seeks to create awareness for its own situatedness in the discursive field that contains different discourses that seek to confer meaning to the world and to problematize the way how the drawing on particular discourses

²² This understanding of post-foundationalism departs from the conceptualization by Monteiro and Ruby (2009) who call for ‘foundational prudence’ and an end of foundational debates.

and their constitution of truth, morality or ethics might impact the research process; second, given its recognition of the socio-linguistic constitution of reality, a reflexive mode of social inquiry expresses deep scepticism towards universalizing and totalizing perspectives and attempts to denaturalize these perspectives and their objectivist conception by attempting to set out their underpinning ideological and normative foundations. It thus aims to shed light on the distinctive relationship between knowledge, power and representation in conceptualizing the social world and how particular fixations of meaning could prevail as the ‘natural’ or ‘normal’ understanding of the world and thus achieve a hegemonic status. In doing so, it is not claimed, however, to provide a new foundation that transcends its discursive context or a new form of ideology critique that has access to a higher truth and can expose the false consciousness produced by the hidden workings of power and ideology. Rather, it highlights the contingency and historicity of our representations of reality, emphasizes the political involved in the various – seemingly innocent – representational practices and sets out how ideologies, by totalizing and naturalizing meanings, imaginaries and identities, attempt to obscure this contingency, historicity and the moment of the political involved in the practices of representation (Torfinn 2005: 15).

2.5 Summary

Summing up, this chapter has set out the ontological framework of this study. Drawing on poststructuralist discourse theory and insights of postcolonialism, the subsequent analysis subscribes to a discursive, anti-essentialist ontology and thus understands reality as discursively constructed, i.e. the objects and subjects in the social world have no pre-given, fixed meanings and identities, but come into being through discourses. Discourses are understood as relational and differential systems of signification that construct the social world in meaning by constituting the identities of subjects and objects. The poststructuralist discourse theory is combined with insights of postcolonialism that sheds light on the ‘Western’-centric conception of world politics in the study and practice of international relations and offers particular insights into the formation of identities in the colonial encounter. The study adopts a post-foundationalist and reflexive perspective on the relationship between ‘knowledge’ and ‘reality’ and assumes that there are no solid, final or universal foundations for generating knowledge. In contrast to anti-foundationalism, however, it acknowledges the necessity of grounding thought, but treats these foundations as contingent and partial in a field of competing foundational attempts. Committed to a reflexive mode of inquiry, the study recognizes that it

cannot transcend its discursive context and thus represents 'reality' from a particular vantage point, but seeks to create awareness for its own discursive situatedness and maintain a sceptical attitude towards universalizing and totalizing perspectives.

In the next chapter, the theoretical framework elaborated here is applied to the phenomena that are subsumed under the categories of 'global power shifts', 'world order' and Post-Western IR. It shows that world orders can be understood as the outcome of a successful struggle for discursive hegemony that managed to universalize a particular representation of world politics and how this hegemonic order has been dislocated by the discourse of 'global power shifts'

3. Global Power Shifts and World Order: The Contestation of ‘Western’ Discursive Hegemony

There is today a strong sense, among scholars and practitioners of international relations, that the 21st century witnesses profound shifts in the global configuration of power and a crisis of the ‘Western’ liberal world order. This transformation and crisis comes only two decades after the euphoria of the United States and its ‘Western’ allies about the victory over the Soviet Union and communism, when there was a wide-spread conviction in the international relations discourse that the ideological and geopolitical struggles between great powers were over and the ultimate triumph of liberal democracy and market economy would gradually lead to the worldwide diffusion of the ‘liberal’ order both on the national and international level (Fukuyama 1992). However, the emerging discourse of global power shifts has increasingly cast doubts on this forecast and the future of the ‘liberal’ order. Accordingly, there is a shift in the economic and military distribution of power from the ‘West’ to the ‘East’ provoked, in particular, by the (re-)emergence of China, India and Russia and the apparent decline of the U.S. global leadership role after the military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq and the recent economic and financial crisis. This poses a challenge to the ‘Western’-led world order and its norms, rules and institutions (see, inter alia, Sørensen 2006, Cox 2007, Mearsheimer 2010, Ikenberry 2011, Kupchan 2012, Layne 2012, Acharya 2014a).

At the same time, the discipline of international relations has increasingly come under attack for its underlying ethnocentrism and parochialism that celebrates, promotes and defends the ‘West’ as the privileged and proactive agent of and the highest normative reference point in world politics. In other words, world politics is spoken of, framed and performed predominantly on the basis of ‘Western’ experiences, conditions, values, concerns and interests and thus displays not only various cultural biases of ‘Western’ states and societies, but also tendencies to (violently) impose these on a culturally and politically still-diverse world. Therefore, the discipline of international relations is criticized for its ‘Western’ or Euro-centric conception of world politics and there are calls for ‘re-writing’ the discipline by decentering the ‘West’ and moving to a ‘post-Western’ IR (see Tickner 2003, Jones 2006a, Shanhi 2008, Acharya/Buzan 2010, Nayak/Selbin 2010, Lizée 2011, Seth 2011, Shilliam 2011a, Hobson 2012, Tickner/Blaney 2012, Acharya 2014b).

This chapter re-conceptualizes the phenomena that are subsumed under labels of ‘global power shifts’ and ‘post-Western IR’²³ as a shift of representational power that is dislocating and contesting the ‘Western’ discursive hegemony in the political and academic domain. Drawing on the theoretical model of discursive hegemony introduced in the last chapter, it provides a novel reading of ‘global power shifts’, the emergence, constitution and transformation of world orders and their inter-linkage with the IR discipline. In the dominant IR reading, ‘global power shifts’ are treated as a purely objective and brute material fact with a given meaning or essence, thereby suggesting that it is possible to understand material and social phenomena without studying the way how these phenomena are endowed with meaning (through systems of significant differences). By understanding ‘global power shifts’ and world order as discursive phenomena, this study, by contrast, contends that discourses materialize their attributes or effects by fixing particular meanings and establishing a field of intelligibility.

The chapter argues that the ‘West’ has obtained discursive hegemony in the prevalent international relations discourse in the sense that the ‘West’ as a particular historical subject with particular experiences, values, interests etc. managed to assert a particular representation of world politics as having universal significance and thus representing ‘reality’. This discourse, as is argued here, has become dislocated and thus increasingly unable to fix and stabilize meanings whereby the contingency and particularity of the discourse have been exposed. The articulation of a crisis or challenge of the ‘liberal’ world order embodies this dislocation just as the increasing awareness for the ‘Western’-centrism of IR in recent times. ‘Global power shifts’ thus symbolize and intensify a hegemonic struggle for the fixation of meanings by dislocating existing identities or subject positions, exposing tensions or contradictions in the prevalent conceptualization of world order and enabling ‘new’ agents to assert particular representations of the world as universal.

The chapter has three purposes: first, it wants to provide the context for studying India’s foreign policy discourse and the way how it articulates India’s role in the world order. This context is no extra-discursive realm, but the field of discursivity that contains various discourses within which India’s foreign policy discourse is embedded in the sense that articulations made in India’s foreign policy discourse are conscribed and informed by other discourses, but also seek to shape and alter these discourses. The discourse on global power shifts has given so-called emerging powers such as India a greater degree of agency by dislocating the hege-

²³ Post-Western IR theory is used here as an umbrella term for the literature that deplors, criticizes and seeks to overcome the Western-centric nature of IR theory.

monic international relations discourse, and the subject positions articulated therein, and thus fuelling the discursive struggle over establishing meanings and meaning systems in world politics. Second, the concept of discursive hegemony can capture the emergence, constitution and transformation of world orders. Given its anti-essentialist ontology, this study does not provide a definition or operationalization of the term world order, but examines how world order is endowed with meaning through discourses. For this endeavour, however, it is necessary to understand the mechanisms of hegemonic projects that underpin every world order and here the concept of discursive hegemony provides important insights. Therefore, the chapter develops an idealtypical framework for conceptualizing the evolution and implications of – what is framed here as – a shift in representational power. This allows us to comprehend the process of the constitution, contestation and transition of hegemonic discourses and the social orders established by them.

Third, the chapter seeks to elaborate a common theoretical framework that allows us to study the constitution of and linkage between the discourses of global power shifts and Post-Western IR. Informed by an anti-essentialist, discursive ontology, the concept of discursive hegemony transcends the binary and untenable dichotomies between ‘realism’ and ‘idealism’ or the ‘material’ and the ‘ideational’ by investigating how material and ideational elements are both embedded in discursive structures that confer meaning to them and thus (re-)produce their conditions of possibility and constraints. A materialist understanding of discourse can thus capture both the shift in the distribution of material power (by studying how this shift is discursively constructed and thus becomes meaningful in the first place) and the potential repercussions of this shift in material capabilities on the level of knowledge and theory production.

Against this backdrop, the chapter is divided into two parts: In the first part, the interrelation between discursive hegemony and world order is discussed by illustrating some of the manifestations of the ‘Western’ discursive hegemony in the prevalent international relations discourse and thus how the ‘West’ as a particular social force assumed in the world order the representation of a universality that is incommensurable with it. The second part briefly outlines the dominant reading of global power shifts in world politics before re-conceptualizing it through the concept of discursive hegemony as a shift of representational power and elaborating an idealtypical framework to grasp this.

3.1 Discursive Hegemony and World Order

As shown in chapter 2, discursive hegemony refers to the battle over the fixation of particular meanings or a particular meaning system. Different discourses, standing for different representations of social reality, seek to dominate the field of discursivity and install a widely shared frame of intelligibility that makes the actors, practices and relations in the social world knowledgeable to us. The struggle for discursive hegemony always involves the political practice of coalition-building, in which different demands, interests, subjects etc. are linked together to create a common socio-historical project by placing it into opposition to a common ‘other’ or ‘shared negativity’. This points to the underlying antagonisms and exclusions of every hegemonic project. Given the absence of a final ground and the resulting dimension of undecidability in the social fabric, a hegemonic project seeks to establish order in the context of contingency through a set of practices that divide the social space and obscure this lack of a final ground. We can speak of a hegemonic constellation, if a certain particularity (of interests and demands) is represented as the universal in the sense that it is naturalized and the same reality is reflected in the discursive practices of all relevant agents. In short, a hegemonic discourse has successfully institutionalized and maintains a dominant interpretative framework or ‘common sense’ for understanding and explaining the relevant structures, actors, issues, processes, relations and normative concerns in the social world.

Against this backdrop, a world order can be understood as the outcome of a successful struggle for discursive hegemony that has managed to universalize a particular representation of and particular subjects as (hegemonic) agents in world politics by fixing a certain meaning system and concealing the radical contingency of all social relations. In other words, a world order is the product of a hegemonic articulation through which, under the conditions of the absence of a final ground and essentialized entities, a particular social force assumes the representation of a universality that is incommensurable with it. In this hegemonic operation, a hegemonic subject with universal values, interests and norms is constructed in opposition to an antagonist ‘other’ that is excluded or marginalized in the hegemonic discourse. This hegemonic subject ‘controls’ the meaning of the signifier world order.

A hegemonic discourse is always organized around a nodal point – a privileged signifier that can bind together a chain of signification by serving as the overarching reference point. For a successful hegemonic articulation, the nodal point must be an empty signifier which embodies the absent (and unreachable) closure, fullness or universality of any discursive system by ‘emptying’ discursive difference to an extent that it can provisionally symbolize the identity of the discourse (Laclau 2000: 58). World order is such an empty signifier. It is an ‘umbrella

term' for numerous different and partially contradictory meanings, thereby providing a common nodal point for different positions or meanings, but also making its content almost indeterminate. The empty signifier world order symbolizes the universal in the sense that it embodies the ideal of closure and fullness of world politics through integrating humanity into a common overarching framework and transcending chaos, instability, irregularity, violence and difference. As Laclau (1996: 44) explicates:

“‘Order’ as such has no content, because it only exists in the various forms in which it is actually realized, but in a situation of radical disorder ‘order’ is present as that which is absent; it becomes an empty signifier, as the signifier of that absence. In this sense, various political forces can compete in their efforts to present their particular objectives as those which carry out the filling of that lack. To hegemonize something is exactly to carry out this filling function.”

The emptiness and integrative power of the signifier ‘order’ becomes apparent in the significance world order is endowed with in the international relations discourse: Though the term world order is a key concept in the study and practice of international relations, the notion of order itself is often not discussed or reflected upon in the literature.²⁴ Instead, scholars and policy-makers alike take its meaning often as self-evident and regard world order as natural, desirable or necessary. We can, idealtypically, distinguish between a ‘descriptive-empirical’ and ‘normative’ understanding of world order in the international relations discourse. ‘Descriptive-empirical’ approaches understand world order as “the arrangements through which global affairs move through time” (Rosenau 2000: 10), “the way things usually happen” in world politics (Cox 1981: 151) or “any regular or discernible pattern of relationships that are stable over time” (Clark 2006: 730). Hence, order in this sense implies that the constituents of order “are related to one another according to some pattern, that their relationship is not purely haphazard but contains some discernible principle” (Bull 2002 [1977]: 3). On the other hand, there is also a more ‘normative’ understanding of world order. Here, world order signifies “the settled rules and arrangements between states that define and guide their interaction” (Ikenberry 2011: 12), an “architecture of political authority” (Deibert 1997: 10) or “governmental arrangement” (Sørensen 2006: 344) at the global level, i.e. institutions, norms, rules and procedures, that guide the relations of states and promote certain political principles or goals seen as desirable such as peace, stability and prosperity. This political authority or arrangement can, for example, be imposed by a global hegemon or agreed upon by the relevant actors in world politics (Ikenberry 2011: 13).

²⁴ Notable exceptions are: Walker 1984, Smith 1999, Rengger 2000 and Chaturvedi/Painter 2007.

What unites these two approaches to world order is the desire for universality by imposing ‘order’ on the world in the sense that they seek to conceal the radical contingency of all social relations and try to ‘empty’ discursive difference. For instance, while the ‘descriptive-empirical’ understandings of world order belief in the existence of universal and discernible patterns in the interactions of states, the ‘normative’ approaches seek to integrate humanity into an a common set of rules and institutions that maintain peace, cooperation, stability etc. However, a world order, regardless if the term is used in a ‘descriptive-empirical’ or ‘normative’ way, cannot simply be treated as something ‘out there’, waiting to be observed and discovered, but is a discursive formation, which is endowed with meaning through systems of significant differences and thus gains its significance only through a common ‘other’ that symbolizes a threat to this order and thus embodies disorder. As Chaturvedi and Painter (2007: 381) note:

“The choice of the word ‘order’ to designate a state of affairs is thus not innocent but has a purpose; it implies a certain orientation towards the matters of concern. ‘Order’ has moral implications – most often positive. ‘Order’ involves predictability, regularity, proportionality, stability, rationality and the absence of violence (though not necessarily the absence of the threat of force). Its opposite, disorder, suggests the irrational, the disproportionate, the irregular, the chaotic and the unstable – concepts which usually have negative moral import. [...] [O]rder’ is never a neutral term. It always invokes a process of ordering.”

This reasoning in binary oppositions represents, in the terminology of Derrida (1976), a logocentric procedure of identity and hierarchization that generates meanings and understandings by distinguishing a privileged entity (‘order’) from an inferior other (‘disorder’). Thus, every world order is based on certain exclusions and can only persist as long as there is an ‘other’ that serves as the negative reference point for constructing a chain of equivalence between subjects, demands and interests.

In the prevalent international relations discourse, the ‘West’ has obtained discursive hegemony in the sense that the ‘West’ as a particular historical subject with particular interests, demands, experiences and so on managed to assert a particular representation of world politics as having universal significance and thus representing ‘reality’. The ‘West’ is here not understood as a geographical entity, but as a political community that came into being, as Laclau and Mouffe (1985: x) explain the constitution of political communities, in that a particular social force has assumed the representation of a totality that is radically incommensurable with it. The constitution and maintenance of this ‘Western’ subjectivity²⁵ is premised upon various and changing antagonistic ‘others’, serving as common negative referent objects that

²⁵ See for a broader discussion of the concept and the constitution of the ‘West’: Hobson 2004, Browning/Lethi 2010 and Delanty 2013.

help to establish a chain of equivalence between the different subjects, demands and interests comprising the so-called West by expressing and reaffirming shared values, experiences, interests etc. In doing so, an “exclusive collectivity of societies” is constructed, as Bahar Rumelili (2013: 70) argues, with a

“distinct and shared historical and cultural trajectory. This shared trajectory is loosely defined in terms of Antiquity, Renaissance, Enlightenment and Modernity, wherein the now universal values of humanism, secularism and rationalism have originated. The fact that those values have originated in the unique historical trajectory of the West sets the West apart from those societies whose experiences with them are only second-hand. [...] As a particularist discourse, the discourse on the West thrives on clear-cut binary distinctions between the West and the non-West”.

However, there exists no clear-cut distinction and geographical border between the ‘West’ and the ‘non-West’. The emergence of the ‘West’ as a subject of world history and international political community is insuperably intertwined with its colonial encounter with and imposition on non-‘Western’ communities. In this process of colonial othering, as we have seen, the identities of both colonizers and colonized were co-constituted by establishing cultural and civilizational difference (Bhabha 1994: 199ff.). The formation of a ‘Western’ identity and social, political, economic and cultural modernity is thus intertwined with colonialism and imperialism (Fanon [1963] 2004: 57ff.; Jones 2006b: 4).²⁶ The violent and unequal integration of the colonies into the ‘Western’ international political community laid the foundation for the current world order. The initially subordinated subjects, however, became agents and complice in the further development, sedimentation and universalization of this particular order by mimicking the discourses of the colonizers, thereby simultaneously reproducing these discourses but also misappropriating and perverting them. In doing so, they contested and circumvented not only colonial rule, but also became sovereign states and thus members of the world order. They assumed, however, a hybrid position in the world order in the sense that they are “‘doing’ world politics in a seemingly ‘similar’ yet unexpectedly ‘different’ way” (Bilgin 2008: 5) and are not equal members, as long as they have not fully emulated the ‘West’s’ political and economic model and practices.

While the ‘backward’ and ‘uncivilized’ peoples in Africa, Asia and Latin America served as antagonistic others in the early stages of ‘Western’ identity formation, the antagonistic others, which serve as a shared negativity for maintaining a chain of equivalents between the subjects,

²⁶ However, while postcolonial scholarship often tends to essentialize the colonial encounter, the production and evolution of identities and modernity actually precedes the era of colonialism and imperialism. They have so many sources and are characterized by various and multidirectional interconnections between different geo-cultural spaces, that it is impossible to speak of a pure and homogenous culture, identity or modernity. In this sense, the ‘West’ is not an autonomous force of progress and modernity in the world, but is the product of various (peaceful and violent) encounters with the non-‘Western’ others (see Mitchell 2003, Hobson 2004).

demands and interests that constitute the political community, are today mainly authoritarian/totalitarian regimes and Islamic fundamentalists. The ‘West’ itself is an empty signifier, whose geopolitical essence and scope is highly ambiguous, complex and contingent (see Browning/Lethi 2010). The hegemonic position of the ‘West’ in the prevalent international relations discourse means, on the one hand, that the ‘West’ is the nodal point of the discourse in the sense that the ‘West’ serves as a reference point for all actors – both in a positive and negative sense – and the privileged signifier of a chain of significance that binds together various elements, which are similarly ‘empty’ signifiers and highly contested, such as freedom, democracy, liberalism, civilization, modernity, capitalism, Europe, America, globalization, Christianity or free world. This chain makes up the fuzzy and hybrid identity of the ‘West’ and partially fixes the meaning of these elements by reference to the nodal point ‘West’. On the other hand, this hegemonic position implies that the ‘West’ hegemonically controls the empty signifier world order. Hence, the ‘West’ as a particular historical subject could endow order with a particular meaning and thus universalize its own particular institutions, practices and norms, suggesting that the ‘West’ embodies universality and a superior agency which found the only legitimate and feasible solution to political and economic order on the national and international level.

Given the ‘emptiness’ of the signifiers world order and ‘West’, the international relations discourse affirms the hegemonic position of the ‘West’, but disagrees about the exact nature of the contemporary world order. Accordingly, the discourse frames the world order as ‘liberal’, ‘American’ or ‘Western’ usually build around a system of sovereign states, an open world economy and liberal institutions and norms (see Sørensen 2006, Hurrell 2008, Ikenberry 2011, Kagan 2012, Acharya 2014a).

Realism and liberalism provide the two dominant (and complementary) readings of the evolution and functioning of the ‘Western’ world order. For realism, the military and economic power of the United States is the foundation of the ‘Western’ world order. The world order is thus the outcome of the global distribution of material capabilities, in which the U.S. has enjoyed unmatched primacy and could thus dominate the international system by creating international institutions and rules and enforcing them (see Mastanduno 1999, Wohlforth 1999, Walt 2005, Layne 2012, Kagan 2012). For liberalism, this order does not rest on the U.S. preponderance in the international system, but rather on the successful diffusion of liberal norms and institutions across the world, the growing political and economic interdependence in the international system, the process of globalization and the increasing regulation and institutionalization of world politics (see Keohane/Nye 2001, Russett/Oneal 2001, Held 2010, Doyle

2012, Cerny 2013, Dunne/Flockhart 2013). In another reading, most prominently articulated by G. John Ikenberry (2006, 2010, 2011), it is the confluence of the both dimensions described by realists and liberals that accounts for the emergence, constitution and resilience of the ‘Western’ world order.

The ‘Western’ hegemonic control over the signifier world order reflects in what scholars have coined the ‘Western’- or Eurocentrism²⁷ in the realist and liberal approaches to world order, and the international relations discourse in general: first, the endowment of the ‘West’ with a privileged and pioneering agency that represents the ‘West’ as the sole and autonomous driving force of progress and modernity in the world; second, the belief in the universal relevance, validity and applicability of ‘Western’ knowledge, practices and institutions; third, a disjuncture between the theories and concepts of IR and the conditions and experiences of the non-‘Western’ world (such as imperialism and colonialism) (see Tickner 2003, Jones 2006a, Nayak/Selbin 2010, Lizée 2011, Seth 2011, 2013a, Shilliam 2011a, Hobson 2012, Tickner/Blaney 2012, Acharya 2014b).

In the liberal world order, there exists thus a dichotomy between the liberal ‘West’ as the privileged and superior agent and the ‘non-West’ as an ensemble of inferior and backward agents. The ‘West’ is thus endowed with the civilizational status and a higher agency in world politics by equating civilization with the ‘West’ and delineating it from a ‘barbaric’ rest. Therefore, as Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry (2009: 93) summarize the policy implications of this insight: “The foreign policy of the liberal states should continue to be based on the broad assumption that there is ultimately one path to modernity – and that it is essentially liberal in character”. This assertion provides ultimately the legitimization and justification for the U.S. global leadership role in world politics or for (humanitarian) interventions into non-liberal states in order to promote and enforce human rights, democracy and market economy. Accordingly, a state’s sovereignty and right of self-determination is conditional to the compliance with the ‘Western’ standard of civilization and violations are avenged by liberal states endowed with a hyper-agency and absolute sovereignty (Hobson 2012: 194ff.; Jahn 2012).

Though the ‘Post-Western IR’ discourse often speaks of the ‘Western’ hegemony in the study and practice of international relations and questions the universality of ‘Western’ knowledge, practices and institutions, it remains often unclear on what this hegemony is actually based on, how this hegemony is constituted and operating and why there is suddenly a growing awareness for the ‘Western’-centrism in IR theory and such a proliferation of articles, books, re-

²⁷ This study uses the term ‘Western’-centrism, since Europe is only one of the ‘empty’ signifiers that constitute the ‘Western’ hegemony in the international relations discourse and the usage of the term Euro-centrism thus runs the risk of being itself Euro-centric.

search projects and conferences that seek to address and overcome it. Often it appears, as if these scholars understand hegemony in a rather conventional sense as the materialist dominance of a particular state (or group of states) in the international system. Referring to the relationship between the United States and the discipline of international relations, Steve Smith (2002) suggests, for instance, a correlation between the “Hegemonic country” and the “Hegemonic Discipline”. Likewise, Andrei P. Tsygankov (2008: 762-763) attributes the “‘West’s’ hegemony in IR theory” particularly to the United States. This implies a kind of causal relationship between the material distribution of power and knowledge production. Though there certainly exist significant and various asymmetries in knowledge production in IR (see Wæver 1998, Smith 2000, Tickner/Wæver 2009, Tickner 2013), can this asymmetry really account for the ‘Western’-centric conception of world politics? This would suggest that ‘non-Western’ scholars are simply marginalized in the international relations discourse and their stronger participation would mitigate the ethnocentrism and parochialism of IR. However, if we look into the domestic IR scholarship of countries such as China or India, we could until recently hardly find attempts to develop distinct Chinese or Indian IR theories and concepts or strong complaints about the ‘Western’-centrism of IR (see Bajpai/Mallavarapu 2005, Behera 2010, Qin 2010, Weng 2013, Noesselt 2014). In fact, ‘Western’ IR realism appears to be as powerful in the ‘periphery’ as it is in the ‘core’ (see Bilgin 2008, Chakma 2009, Moshirzadeh 2009, Acharya/Buzan 2010). While it might appear self-evident to attribute the growing interest in ‘non-Western’ IR theory directly to the shift in the material distribution of power in the international system and the aspiration of rising powers to promote their world-views or ideologies, this can hardly explain the great interest scholars located in the ‘core’ rather than in the ‘periphery’ take in this debate.

Against this backdrop, the concept of discursive hegemony can add to this debate by providing an elaborated theoretical framework for understanding and explaining the emergence, constitution, contestation and transition of hegemonic discourses. In contrast to prevalent understandings of hegemony in IR, hegemony is here not equated with the dominance of a particular state or group of states, but refers to the hegemony of a discourse that has elevated a particular representation of world politics and particular subjects to a hegemonic and thus apparently universal status. In this sense, the ‘West’ as a particular social force managed to partially fill the void of world order with a particular meaning and has thus assumed the representation of a universality that is radically incommensurable with it.

By stressing the political practice of coalition-building in this hegemonic operation, hegemony is differentiated from dominance and conceptualized as a social relationship that is politi-

cally instituted to reach the closure or fullness of an international political community. Unlike a system of domination, a hegemonic order, and the regime of social institutions and practices created therein, is partially consensus-based in the sense that it has managed to create a range of empty signifiers and a broad chain of equivalence between different demands, interests and subjects by placing them into opposition to a common ‘other’ that defies the existence and realization of this particular type of universality. This universal political community, however, can never be truly universal, because this would imply the inclusion of the social forces of disorder as well.

By incorporating the notion of hybridity into its anti-essentialist ontology, the theoretical concept of discursive hegemony could show, on the one hand, how the ‘West’ as a subject of world history and international political community, above all, emerged through its imposition on non-‘Western’ communities and thus how the ‘West’ and ‘non-West’ were mutually constituted in the process of colonial othering. On the other hand, it can shed light on how the subordinated subjects became agents and accomplice in the further development and universalization of this particular order by mimicking the discourses of the colonizers. In doing so, it does not run the risk of essentializing the ‘West’ and ‘non-West’ and treating them as two closed, homogenous and radically different entities, but as mutually co-constituted and inter-linked by various peaceful and violent encounters. There is a tendency in parts of Post-Western IR scholarship, as critics have pointed out (see Bilgin 2009, Hutchings 2011, Makarychev/Morozov 2013, Hurrell 2015), to stress the significance of geo-cultural difference in the process of knowledge production and search for culturally pure knowledge or radically different ways of approaching world politics in the ‘non-West’, thereby unwillingly reproducing existent political frontiers and ignoring the presence of the ‘non-West’ in the emergence, constitution and development of the international relations discourse.

The concept of discursive hegemony also transcends the artificial and untenable separation between the ‘material’ and ideational’ realm. Hegemony does not mean ideational dominance (i.e. the dominance of certain ideas and norms) or material dominance (i.e. the domination over military, economic and technological capabilities) but constitutes and institutionalizes a dominant “horizon of intelligibility” (Norval 1996: 4) that endows ideas or military power with a particular meaning in the first place and delineates what potentials and constraints exist in world politics, what can be said or done, what kind of positions may legitimately be taken or what actions can be engaged in. In this sense, the hegemony of the ‘West’ also rests on its material power, but the scope and relevance of this power in international relations is generated by discourse and does not *ontologically* precede this discursive formation.

Discursive hegemony as a dominant ‘horizon of intelligibility’ is in a way more pervading and powerful than existent materialist theories of hegemony suggest. At the same time, however, the Laclauian-Mouffian discourse theory underscores that no discourse, not even a hegemonic one, can reach closure and permanently stabilize meanings and identities, but is constituted in the context of radical contingency and thus always instable and vulnerable to the ‘surplus of meaning’ located in the field of discursivity. Given the absence of any stable foundations underlying these meanings and identities, and the exclusion of certain other options, every discourse is thus vulnerable to a ‘discursive exterior’ that threatens to subvert (or dislocate) its articulations. Hence, the concept of discursive hegemony allows for social change and (‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’) agency. It can thus, as we will see in the next section, shed light on the way how agents can contest and change the ‘Western’ hegemony in the international relations discourse and seek to fill the void of world order with a different meaning.

3.2 The Contestation of World Order: ‘Global Power shifts’ and Counter-Hegemonic Discourses

The ‘Western’ hegemonic control over the signifier world order has become increasingly contested. There is talk of “The End of American World Order” (Acharya 2014a), a “Post-Western World” (Stuenkel 2016), “The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order” (Jacques 2009), “A Liberal World Order in Crisis” (Sørensen 2011) or “Liberalism in Crisis: A Collapsing World Order” (Morgan 2013). Crisis seems to embody the current state of international relations. Along with this discourse of crisis, as Dirk Nabers (2015: 3) notes, “emerged one of the well accepted clichés of our times, conveyed by the media as well as academics, which claims that we are living in a world of major and rapid transformations and societal change”. In international relations, this duality of crisis and change is above all related to the global power shifts in the international system. For instance, G. John Ikenberry (2014: 1) states:

“The global system is in the midst of a great transformation. The distribution of power is shifting. Great powers are rising and declining. For almost a century, the United States dominated world politics. But today, China and other rising non-Western states, such as India and Brazil, are growing in wealth, power and influence, and ambition. The old order – led by the United States and its allies – is still a commanding presence in the global system. But the power once concentrated in the hands of the United States is diffusing outward and, as a result, new struggles are emerging over global rules and institutions.”

And the U.S. National Intelligence Council (2008: iv/vii) predicts in its report *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World*:

“The international system – as constructed following the Second World War – will be almost unrecognizable by 2025 owing to the rise of emerging powers, a globalizing economy, an historic transfer of relative wealth and economic power from West to East, and the growing influence of nonstate actors. [...] By 2025 a single ‘international community’ composed of nation-states will no longer exist. [...] Power will be more dispersed with the newer players bringing new rules of the game while risks will increase that the traditional Western alliances will weaken. A global multipolar system is emerging with the rise of China, India, and others. [...] [T]he transfer is strengthening states like Russia that want to challenge the Western order.”

The discourse of ‘global power shifts’ deals with the rise of new states in world politics and represents this rise as a profound challenge to the structure of the international system and its underlying normative order. It depicts the rise and fall of great powers as an enduring pattern of world politics. This cyclical phenomenon is attributed to shifts in relative economic growth rates, technological advances, demography and military developments in particular. Power shifts are represented as critical moments in world politics, because they are believed to have direct repercussions on the stability of the international system, the likelihood of great wars and the formation of world orders. Accordingly, the general trajectory of world politics over the last 500 years has been that one nation becomes the dominant power in the international system in terms of its share of the material distribution of power. This hegemonic power largely defines the rules and institutions of the world order. If the distribution of power begins to shift in favour of another nation or group of nations and these nations have acquired a sufficient amount of power, they will challenge the hegemonic power. This results normally in a war and a transition of power. The nation that emerged as the pre-eminent power in the post-war period decides about the fate of the world order. The last 500 years saw five world orders: Iberian order led by Portugal and Spain (16th century), Dutch order (17th century), British order (18th century till the beginning of the 20th century) and U.S.-American order (since the mid-20th century)²⁸ (see Organski 1968, Organski/Kugler 1980, Kennedy 1989, Wittkopf 1997, Knutsen 1999, Ikenberry 2000, Tammen et al. 2000, Black 2008).

This interpretative frame is applied by the discourse on what it identifies as the current major shift in the distribution of power in the international system: the rise of China and other powers such as India, Russia and Brazil. Given the global shifts in economic growth, demography, technological advancements and defence capabilities, the discourse predicts another fundamental transformation of world politics in the 21st century and the gradual shift from the uni-

²⁸ Though accompanied by two great wars, the last power transition between Britain and the U.S. is seen as remarkable in the sense that the hegemonic and the counter-hegemonic powers were not enemies but allies in these wars.

polar U.S.-dominated international system to a bi- or multipolar system. With this shift in relative power towards rising states, it is expected that the international system witnesses not only a greater probability of war, instability and uncertainty, but also potentially the propagation of new ideas, norms or even entire world order paradigms which might challenge the institutions, norms and rules underpinning the ‘Western’ world order. This amounts in the discourse to the questions: what are the implications of the global power shifts? Will it lead to another great war or another cold war? What is the future of the ‘Western’ world order? Can a liberal order prevail without ‘Western’ dominance? What kind of ideas, norms or orders do rising powers seek to promote and implement in the international system? Do they seek to be part of or overthrow the ‘Western’ world order? (see Ikenberry 2008, 2011, Ikenberry/Jisi/Feng 2015, Hurrell 2006, Layne 2006, 2012, Kagan 2008, Mahbubani 2008, Zakaria 2008, Hart/Jones 2010, Herd 2010, Kupchan 2012, Murray/Brown 2012, Acharya 2014a, Nye 2015).

In the rest of this chapter, we will re-conceptualize ‘global power shifts’ through the theoretical framework of poststructuralist discourse theory and postcolonialism as a shift of representational power that contests ‘Western’ hegemony in the political and academic discourses of international relations. The Western-liberal world order, as we have seen, embodies the discursive hegemony of the ‘West’ in the sense that the ‘West’ as a particular historical subject is upheaved to a position from where it can assert a particular representation of world politics as having universal significance and thus symbolizing ‘reality’. The ‘West’ hegemonically controls the signifier world order and could thus partially fill the void of a universality with a particularity. The ability to (partially) fix meanings and thus to hegemonize a discourse exposes the underlying configuration of power in contemporary world politics.

Accordingly, the growing contestation of world order through counter-hegemonic discourses indicates that this configuration of power is shifting, i.e. the previously dominant discourse is increasingly struggling to fix meanings and thus to reproduce a particular representation of world politics and world order. Thus, we can conceptualize ‘global power shifts’ as a shift of representational power, that is the ability to constitute and frame the entities, structures, processes and issues of world politics in a way that corresponds with the worldview, interests and demands of a particular historical subject and places this subject in a position that allows it to play a privileged or dominant role in the world order. The ‘global power shifts’ and the related contestation of world order reflect in the political as well as academic discourses. In both discourses, we thus find attempts to ‘particularize’, ‘de-centre’ or ‘provincialize’ the ‘West’ and endow world order with different meanings: While policy-makers in (re-)emerging powers

such as China, Russia or India draw on the discourse of multipolarity and seek to universalize their particular experiences, demands and interests in order to contest the ‘Western’ hegemony in the political domain, the Post-‘Western’ IR discourse has attacked the IR discipline for its parochialism and ethnocentrism and calls for introducing ‘non-Western’ or ‘post-Western’ IR theories and concepts.

We can, idealtypically, conceptualize and illustrate this shift in representational power and the related contestation of the hegemonic discourse as a process that encompasses three stages: 1) dislocation, 2) discursive struggle for interpretative dominance over the significance, scope and implications of the ‘global power shifts’, and 3) defence, transformation or overthrow of the hegemonic discourse.

1) Dislocation

In the first stage, the hegemonic discourse becomes dislocated and thus incomplete, i.e. there is an ‘event’ or ‘phenomenon’²⁹ that the discourse cannot explain, integrate or represent systematically. This rupture in a seemingly stable social order exposes not only the contingency and ultimately the particularity and deficiencies of the discourse, but also symbolizes a failed structural identity in the sense that actors cannot any longer (entirely) identify with the subject positions provided by a discourse, throwing the identities of actors into a crisis and prompting them to act in order to re-construct subject positions (Laclau 1990: 39-41, 2000: 39ff.). Given its underlying ‘Western’-centrism, the hegemonic international relations discourse increasingly struggles to integrate the rise of ‘non-Western’ states into its discursive structure and maintain the myth of its universality, mainly because it allocates these states only subordinate subject positions and thus only conditional or inferior agency in world politics. This makes it, for instance, difficult for emerging powers to fully identify with these existing subject positions anymore, since they are increasingly acquiring all the material capabilities that the discourse presupposes for power and influence in global politics.

The hegemonic international relations discourse, and the world order articulated therein, draws a hierarchical dichotomy between a privileged, superior self (‘West’) and an inferior or threatening other (‘non-West’), thereby justifying the hegemonic position towards the ‘other’ and largely negating its agency in world politics. By attributing the ‘emerging powers’ only a subordinate agency, the international relations discourse can only conceive three alternatives

²⁹ As noted in chapter 2, these events or phenomena are no extra-discursive entities with some ‘objective’ characteristics or implications, but their meaning and significance is exactly what is at stake in moments of dislocation and different discourses seek to establish.

with respect to their 'rise' in the international system: conflict/disciplining, conversion or socialization.

Realism highlights the struggle for security and power in an anarchic international system as the key feature of world politics. Hence, the 'other' is conceived as a threat and the power shift will inevitably follow 'Western' patterns, generating conflicts, tensions and clashes, thus requiring counter-balancing or containment to discipline and curtail the 'other' (see Walt 2005, Kagan 2008, Mearsheimer 2010, Friedberg 2012, Layne 2012, Schmidt/Roy 2013). Liberalism, by contrast, emphasizes the globalized character of world politics and assumes the possibility to integrate the 'rising powers' into the existing order, believing either in the ultimate evolution of a culturally homogenous global polity and in the conversion of the rising powers along the 'Western' development model or at least in their willingness to accommodate to the liberal world order due to their interest in the capitalist world economy (see Lardy 2002, Ikenberry 2008, 2010, Snyder 2013, Flockhart et al. 2014). English School and constructivism predominantly believe in the socialization of the rising powers into the existent norms and institutions of international society. Socialization means here the gradual integration into the international normative framework and transmission of the appropriate behaviour (see Buzan 2004, Hurrell 2008, Johnston 2008, Finnemore 2009). This socialization process is, however, often seen as only "running one direction: from the socializer to the socializee" (Epstein 2012: 140). In short, these different theoretical approaches all tend to equate development with the progression of the 'Western' civilization.

This conceptualization of 'global power shifts' leaves the emerging powers with no substantial agency in world politics, for instance, to (re-)frame and reappraise the notions of order, justice or security or to circumvent the 'Western' development path, including the numerous wars and conflicts associated with power shifts in the international system. At the same time, it largely fails to grasp particular phenomena and conditions of the 'non-Western' world such as the (continuing) relevance of colonialism and imperialism or divergences from the – apparent universal – development path; for example, as in the case of China, which generated very high economic growth despite authoritarian rule and stabilized its authoritarian system of government in spite of economic liberalization, which should, according to the 'Western' modernization theory, lead to a gradual political liberalization. The apparently natural link between capitalism/market economy and liberal democracy is thus less an objective condition or scientific law, but rather a product of the hegemonic 'Western' discourse that has linked these two elements and the interests and demands associated with them together in a chain of equivalence for forging a hegemonic project.

The dislocation of the hegemonic discourse is, however, not simply ‘provoked’ by the emerging powers, but rather the hegemonic subject itself, the ‘West’, has been gripped by a crisis, since the emergence of ‘non-Western’ agents and the divergence from ‘Western’ political, social or economic development patterns is casting doubts on its universality and privileged agency in the world. In short, the ‘West’ is experiencing an identity crisis resulting from its increasing difficulties to articulate its particular interests and values as universal ones, the decreasing support for its hegemonic project and the potential decline of its hegemonic leadership role in global politics.

2) Discursive struggle for interpretative dominance

In the second stage, competing political forces attempt to make sense of the phenomenon of global power shifts and hegemonize the political space by offering the dominant interpretation in the moment of dislocation. In other words, alternative discourses evolve and compete for establishing an interpretative framework through which the transformation can be understood. In particular, the subject positions are gradually dissolving and the appropriate actions to deal with the transformation are delineated. For the actual evolution of the global power shifts it is of particular importance how the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ are framed in the discourse and thus what kind of practices are conceived as appropriate to deal with the ‘other’.

The hegemonic subject will attempt to defend and, if necessary, modify its hegemonic project through the (partial) integration of the rising powers into this project and prevent the emergence of a counter-hegemonic coalition. An example for such a potential counter-hegemonic coalition is the BRICS group (Brazil-Russia-India-South Africa) formed in 2009 (see Kornegay/Bohler-Muller 2013, Panda 2013, de Coning/Mandrup/Odgaard 2015a). A potential discursive strategy for the hegemonic subject is to extend the chain of equivalence by redrawing political frontiers and disrupting the ‘unity’ of the emerging powers. For instance, the Indo-US nuclear deal, which *de facto* acknowledges India’s status as nuclear weapons power, can be interpreted as an attempt to co-opt India into the existing hegemonic order and undermine attempts to forge a counter-hegemonic coalition between the emerging powers (see Burns 2007, Feigenbaum 2010, Pant 2011b, Zakaria 2012, Mistry 2014, Rauch 2014). Likewise, the proposal for a ‘concert of democracies’, put forward by U.S. policy-makers and scholars (see McCain 2007, Kagan 2008), seeks to disrupt the bond between the emerging powers and enlarge the chain of equivalence. By drawing a distinction between democratic (e.g. India and Brazil) and non-democratic (e.g. China and Russia) emerging powers, the phenomenon of global power shifts is framed primarily as a struggle between democratic and

authoritarian regimes rather than a re-distribution of power between ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ actors. Accordingly, India and Brazil are represented and promoted as successful examples for the superiority and universality of the ‘Western’ development path, while China and Russia are represented as antagonistic ‘others’. Another, more defensive strategy of the hegemonic subject would be to reformulate the universality of the hegemonic project by downgrading it to areas of convergence between the ‘established’ and the ‘emerging powers’ such as the functioning and maintenance of the capitalist world economy and integration of the emerging powers into the global economic governance system (see Kupchan 2012, Brzezinski. 2013). Examples for such an attempt are the forming of the G-20 after the global financial and economic crisis in 2007/08 or proposals for a condominium of the U.S. and China (G-2).

The emerging powers, by contrast, will seek to create new subject positions in the discourse, which provide them with a higher degree of agency in world politics. A discursive struggle is emerging over the inscription of the empty signifier of world order and related concepts such as peace or justice. For instance, the emerging powers might attempt to fix different meanings to the signifier world order by universalizing their own experiences, demands and interests. In particular, the emerging powers will emphasize the shortcomings of the existent order and represent the global power shifts as a chance and necessity to ‘correct’ these deficiencies, for instance, by reforming international institutions such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and creating a new power equilibrium in the international system: a multipolar order. In addition, the emerging powers might also attempt to challenge the realist account which represents global power shifts as a threat to peace and order in world politics and replace it with an interpretative framework that stresses a peaceful transition of power and peaceful co-existence between the major powers. Prominent examples are the notion of ‘China’s peaceful rise’, which has also informed the attempts to develop Chinese IR theories (see Xinning 2001, Zhang 2012, Wang 2013, Zhang/Chang 2016), or, as we will see later, India’s reformulation of its policy of non-alignment as multi-alignment, which presumes that India is in the position to forge close relations with established *and* emerging major powers in the Global ‘North’ and ‘South’ (see Khilnani et al. 2012, Tharoor 2012a). In short, the ongoing global power shifts and the emergence of a multipolar order are represented in the discourses of the emerging powers as the correction of a historical anomaly and as an opportunity to build a more peaceful, stable and just global order.

The counter-hegemonic discourses can vary in their degree of contestation, ranging from demands to modify/transform the existent order to its overthrow. The degree of contestation

will, above all, depend on the way how the hegemonic subject responds to the global power shifts and to what extent the emerging powers can manage to create a counter-hegemonic project by linking together their demands and interests. In general, counter-hegemonic discourses, drawing on the logic of difference, seek to disrupt the chain of equivalence the hegemonic project is based on by exposing its particularity and weaken its antagonistic frontier. For a modification or transformation of the hegemonic order, emerging powers would follow a mixed strategy consisting of attempts to break off the hegemonic chain of equivalence and integrating themselves into a reformed hegemonic order, whereas the overthrow of the existing world order would require the forging of an inclusive counter-hegemonic project that links together various demands and interests and the representation of the 'West' as antagonist 'other'.

While the BRICS group certainly displays elements of a counter-hegemonic coalition, it rather seeks to constrain and modify than overthrow the 'Western' hegemonic order. The BRICS members are united in their opposition to the 'hegemonistic' attitudes of the United States and its allies and in their striving for a multipolar world order that rests on the principles of stable and peaceful co-existence: mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference into the domestic affairs of other states, non-aggression and the acknowledgement of different political systems and development paths. These principles re-affirm to a great extent key elements of the existent global order (de Coning/Mandrup/Odgaard 2015b: 4ff./18). It points to the hybrid position that the BRICS countries as former colonial 'others' or other semi-peripheral countries have in the world order. They mimic discourses of the 'West', whereby they simultaneously reproduce these discourses and their meaning fixations but also misappropriate and pervert them. For instance, Russia and China simultaneously oppose the 'West', but nevertheless frame their own interests and demands often in the 'Western' language of democracy. They acknowledge, in other words, the universal significance of these values but seek to detach them from their particularistic origin and endow them with a somewhat different meaning (Morozov 2015: 25). For example, when Russia invaded the Ukraine in 2014 and annexed Crimea, it invoked – like the United States and its allies in their various military interventions – the language of self-determination, democracy and humanitarian intervention. In doing so, Russia is not radically contesting the 'Western' world order, but rather seeks to shape the world order in a way that is more in line with its interests. Moreover, given rivalries, tensions and differences between the BRICS members, in particular between India and China, as we will see in the course of this study, the emerging powers also face several challenges in

forging a counter-hegemonic project and agreeing on much more than the lowest common denominator: a multipolar world order.

Generally, the trajectory of the global power shifts will to a great extent depend on the degree of antagonism inherent in the emerging discourses. Discourses that obscure the mutual constitution of and various interlinkages between the 'West' and the 'non-West' rather impede the possibility of a peaceful contention of antagonisms between the various actors in world politics, not to mention the possibility of intercultural dialogue and learning, since the 'self' and its cultural values are defined in an absolutist and exclusive way and thus the 'other' is not only viewed as different, but also as morally inferior. The liberal (or cosmopolitan) world order concept, for instance, tends to adopt a post-political position that refuses to take this antagonistic dimension of politics seriously and overstates the potential of dialogue, cooperation and deliberation in world politics. In doing so, liberalism ignores that all political identities and political orders are constituted through difference and certain exclusions. Instead of acknowledging the constitutive role of the 'other' for the 'self's' identity and regarding its positions, though ultimately incompatible with one's own perspectives, as *politically* legitimate, the political antagonism is shifted to the moral sphere that cannot offer a rule-based framework for political contestation, but rather reinforces the antagonist potential by transforming political opponents into enemies (Mouffe 2005: 11/23).

3) Defence, transformation or overthrow of the hegemonic discourse

In the third stage, the (new) inscriptions and subject positions generated in the course of dislocation become more stable and routinized. Eventually, this could lead to the institutionalization of a discourse that generates particular political subjects and practices along the lines of a horizon of intelligibility. Whether the previously hegemonic discourse is defended, modified or replaced by a new hegemonic discourse or whether no discourse is able to achieve hegemony, which would imply an ongoing antagonistic struggle, will thus ultimately depend, on the one hand, on the degree of contestation inherent in the counter-hegemonic discourses and their ability to link together various contingent subjects, interests and demands into a chain of equivalence in order to produce a collective identity and a common understanding or, in other words, an alternative hegemonic project.

On the other hand, it depends on the hegemonic subject's response to the shift of representational power, particularly on its ability to defend the universality of its representation of 'reality', for instance, by integrating the 'new' agents into the hegemonic discourse and thus containing the dislocation of identities (e.g. through representing and promoting India and Brazil

as successful examples for the universality of the ‘Western’ development path) or on its ability to show greater awareness for the particularity of its own experiences, interests and demands and to adopt a more pluralist understanding of world order.

3.3 Summary

This chapter re-conceptualized the phenomena that are subsumed under labels of ‘global power shifts’ and ‘post-Western IR’ as a shift of representational power that is dislocating and contesting the ‘Western’ discursive hegemony in the political and academic domain. Understanding global power shifts and world order as discursive phenomena, it was argued that discourses materialize their attributes or effects by fixing particular meanings and establishing a field of intelligibility. In this sense, the global power shifts constitute an intensified hegemonic struggle for the fixation of meanings. This hegemonic battle finds expression in the dislocation of existing identities, disclosure of the inherent tensions and contradictions in the prevalent concepts of world order and the empowerment of ‘new’ agents to assert particular representations of the world as universal. The dislocation of the hegemonic discourse has thus loosened the ‘West’s control over the signifier world order and enables other actors to fill the void of a universal political community with meaning. The discourse on global power shifts also offers the discursive context for studying India’s foreign policy discourse and the way how it articulates world order and India’s role in this order. The discourse on global power shifts constitutes India as an emerging power and upheaves it to subject position from where it can claim to have a legitimate voice in the debate and struggle over world order, i.e. what meaning is tied to the (empty) signifier world order.

4. Studying India's Foreign Policy Discourse: Analytical Strategy and Data Corpus

This chapter explicates the analytical strategy and data corpus for examining India's foreign policy discourse. It elaborates the research procedure and techniques of the discourse analysis and the textual data employed in this study. The main objective of the chapter is to demonstrate how this study identified, described, interpreted, explained and evaluated world order articulations – that is, how competing Indian discourses seek to endow the empty signifier of world order with meaning – in India's foreign policy discourse. The discourse analysis is guided by the anti-essentialist, post-foundationalist discourse theoretical approach outlined in chapter 2. For putting discourse theory into practice, this study applies the logics-approach devised by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007). Informed by the anti-essentialist, discursive ontology of the Essex School of Discourse Theory, Glynos and Howarth introduced the logics-approach to guide and structure the process of a discourse analysis. The authors distinguish between three different sets of logics: social, political and fantasmatic logics that point to the different dimensions in the formation, institutionalization, contestation and transformation of discourses. This study argues that the logics-approach can help us in comprehending and explaining foreign policy practices and entire world orders as an interplay of different logics that work on three different levels.

The chapter is structured into three parts: The first part of the chapter clarifies the need of a clear and transparent analytical strategy for carrying out a discourse analysis. The second part discusses the logics-approach and its different dimensions in greater detail. In the third part of the chapter, the generation, scope and handling of the empirical data used in the discourse analysis is explained by outlining how the body of textual material was processed, structured and interpreted.

4.1 Analytical Strategy

The main objective of discourse analysis is to identify and analyse the different mechanisms by which meaning is generated, stabilized, contested and subverted within a particular body of texts. Studying 'talk and text in context', discourse analysis treats this body of texts or writings as the horizon in which subjects experience the world of objects, words and practices. In particular, discourse analysis seeks to problematize and de-naturalize how certain fixations of meaning could prevail as 'natural' or 'normal' understandings of the world. While discourse

analysis refers to the range of techniques to study signifying practices as discursive forms, discourse *theory* refers to the ontological level that specifies the underlying presuppositions for inquiring into the nature of social objects and relations. For discourse theory, this ontological level is constituted by the discursive as the horizon of meaningful practices (Howarth 2002: 10, 2005: 336/341).

Discourse theory, however, does not provide a clear and ready-made guideline for carrying out a discourse analysis. Partially, this can be attributed to the sceptical attitude of poststructuralist scholarship towards methodology in the social sciences. Methods and methodology are associated with a positivist mode of inquiry which is based on the belief that there is a free-standing, universal and objective set of rules and techniques that can be mechanically applied to all objects of study and produce true knowledge. In doing so, methods and methodology can serve as instruments of normalization, exclusion and domination in academia that draw scientific borders by demarcating valid and invalid forms of knowledge production (see Foucault 1972, Ashley/Walker 1990, George 1994, Campbell 1996). Though this study shares this opposition to the ontological and epistemological postulates of positivism, it also acknowledges, along with a number of other poststructuralist scholars, the need to reflect upon and make transparent research strategies and techniques with respect to the collection and processing of data (see, for instance, Diez 2001, Wæver 2003, Torfing 2005, Hansen 2006, Glynos/Howarth 2007).

Against this backdrop, this study uses the term analytical strategy (see Malmvig 2006) to underscore, on the one hand, its opposition to the positivist demand of developing a general set of methodological rules or criteria that could guarantee the generation of ‘true’ knowledge, and, on the other hand, its belief in the necessity to address and specify the analytical choices taken in a study. The term analytical strategy draws attention to the fact that the way how the objects of study are investigated is first and foremost an analytical choice made by the analyst. In other words, the objects of study are constructed by the analyst on the basis of analytical choices and definitions made in the research process. These choices and definitions are, in turn, formulated within a particular scientific paradigm, which specifies the ontological presuppositions of the study, and are influenced by the way how a research problem or ‘puzzle’ is framed.

Further specifying the different stages of social science research from the perspective of poststructuralist discourse theory and the way how the proponents of this theory explain, interpret, criticize and evaluate, Glynos and Howarth (2007) have put forward the model of *Logics of Critical Explanation*. Their approach is set out against the three prevalent onto-

epistemological traditions in the social sciences: hermeneutics, positivism and critical realism. Congruent with hermeneutics, the authors agree that social science research should start with the actors' contextualized self-interpretations, presuming that institutions and practices are partially constituted by the beliefs and desires of social actors. A traditional hermeneutical approach, however, is problematic, because, for comprehensive understandings of social practices, we often cannot rely solely on the actors' self-interpretations, but need to incorporate concepts or logics not available to the actors themselves. Though they share this criticism with positivism and critical realism and thus seek to move beyond these contextualized self-interpretations and to provide explanations with a higher degree of generality, Glynos and Howarth take issue with the principles of empiricism and subsumption. While empiricism suggests an unmediated access to the 'real-concrete' in the sense that the researcher can draw general conclusions by 'empirically' overserving 'raw material', subsumption derives explanations of particular phenomena only from abstract concepts and theories or subsumes concrete events under empirically verified laws (Howarth 2005: 319ff.; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 78ff.). Instead, Glynos and Howarth conceptualize the research process in poststructuralist discourse theory as comprising the following stages: problematization of empirical phenomena, retroductive explanation of these phenomena, articulation as a means of linking together analytical concepts and empirical contexts, and, finally, the persuasion of and intervention into the relevant community and practices of scholars (ibid.: 11/19; Glynos et al. 2009: 10). Problematization conceptualizes discourse theory as a 'problem-driven' rather than 'method'- or 'theory-driven' approach in the sense that discourse theory is neither guided by the techniques of data-gathering nor by the desire to confirm a particular theory through testing it against an 'empirical reality'. Likewise, a problem-driven approach may not be confused with a 'problem-solving theory' that generally treats both the existing social structures and the assumptions about this reality by dominant theories as given, and then addresses certain inconsistencies between theory and 'reality'. A problem-driven approach, by contrast, acknowledges that the subjects of investigation are constructed as a problem in a particular socio-historical context (Howarth 2005: 318). It relates to Foucault's technique of problematization, in which he synthesizes his archaeological and genealogical modes of inquiry and seeks to shed light on "how the different solutions to a problem have been constructed; but also how these different solutions result from a specific form of problematization" (Foucault 1997: 118-9).³⁰ This implies that discourse theory as a 'problem-driven approach' does not take social or

³⁰ While archaeology thus describes the rules that make objects to objects of a particular discourse, genealogy illuminates their constitution by narrating the different historical practices through which they were constructed.

political phenomena as pre-given, but interrogates the way how the objects of study are constituted. This problematization is, however, not taking place in a theoretical vacuum, but informed by the ontological presuppositions and categories of discourse theory (Howarth 2005: 319). In this sense, the investigation of the world order articulations in India's foreign policy discourse, for instance, encompasses an interrogation of the discourse of global power shifts that articulates India as an 'emerging power' and thus as an agent which has a legitimate voice in the struggle and debate over world order as well as a critique of realist accounts of India's contemporary foreign policy.

Retroduction refers to a mode of explanation that is distinct from both induction and deduction. It involves "a to-and-fro movement between the phenomena investigated and the various explanations that are proffered. In this way, an initially chaotic set of concepts, logics, empirical data, self-interpretations, and so on, at varying levels of abstraction, are welded together, so as to produce an account which, if it removes our initial confusion, can constitute a legitimate candidate for truth or falsity" (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 34). The justification of the offered explanation encompasses criteria that are not separate but internal to the process of constructing an explanatory narrative. For assessing the validity of an explanation, it can be asked, for instance, if a particular explanation matches the problem under investigation in the sense that it renders it ineligible, and if this explanation is more informative and revealing than competing interpretations (*ibid.*: 34/39).

Articulation sheds light on the relation between theoretical categories and 'empirical' – or more precisely discursive – phenomena. Following Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of discourse as a "structured totality" of articulatory practices, which put together discursive elements such that the meaning/identity of these elements is modified as a result of this articulatory practice (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 105), Glynos and Howarth also conceptualize social science research as an articulatory practice. After all, how the objects of investigation are studied is an analytical choice made by the analyst and not predetermined by the objects of observation themselves. Accordingly, the research process consists of a series of articulations that link together the various elements that make up an explanation. It is a process of linking together analytical concepts and 'empirical contexts' so that each explanatory narrative is modified as a result of this articulation process, without reducing one to the other (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 180). Drawing on the ontological presuppositions and categories of post-structuralist discourse theory combined with insights of postcolonialism, this study thus articulates various elements together to describe, understand and explain the construction of world order in India's foreign policy discourse.

Critique, as the final dimension of the social scientific practice, refers to the aspiration of the researcher to make a critical intervention into ongoing debates and persuade the community of scholars that the own explanation or narrative is more convincing and illuminating than others. It also relates to exposing the contingency of all social formations and relations studied by the researcher and the exclusions they produce by highlighting their non-necessary character and the way how actors conceal the contingency through certain myths and narratives. In doing so, however, it is not claimed to provide a new foundation that transcends its discursive context or a new form of ideology critique that has access to a higher truth and can expose the false consciousness produced by the hidden workings of power and ideology (Torring 2005: 15; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 191ff.).

Against this backdrop, Glynos and Howarth develop their logics approach to address the actual content of explanations. The logics-approach and their three-fold typology of logic is discussed in the following section

4.2 Logics-Approach

Based on the ontological assumptions of discourse theory – the discursive character and radical contingency of all social relations, the incompleteness of symbolic orders resulting in a constitutive lack at the heart of every subject, and the moments of dislocation that reveal the contingency of social relations (see chapter 2) – Glynos and Howarth (2007) distinguish between four different ontological dimensions of social reality, which also delineate the different ways of dealing with the radical contingency of social relations and moments of dislocation:

The social dimension captures situations in which identities, relations and practices are sedimented in the sense that they are naturalized and not subject to public contestation. In other words, the radical contingency of social relations is obscured. The political dimension, by contrast, refers to moments where subjects respond to dislocatory events, which reveal the contingency of social relations and formations, and either contest or defend the existing social order, i.e. a set of discursively constructed institutions, practices and identities. Hence, the political dimension refers to the institution and contestation of the social. Accordingly, the social and the political dimension are about the degree of public contestations of the institutions, practices and identities of a given social order. The ideological and ethical dimensions of social reality, on the other hand, address the way subjects are consciously or unconsciously complicit in obscuring the radical contingency of social relations (ideological), or attentive to

the non-necessary nature of social relations and the plurality of discourses (ethical) (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 14).

Informed by these ontological commitments, Glynos and Howarth elaborate the concept of logics. Drawing on Laclau's later work, a logic is understood, at the most general and abstract level, as the rules or grammar governing practices, institutions or systems of relations between subjects and objects, and the conditions that make these different entities and their relations possible, intelligible and vulnerable (Laclau 2000: 282-283; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 136). In other words, looking into the "logic of a practice aims not just to characterize it, but to capture the various conditions which make that practice 'work' or 'tick'" (Glynos et al. 2009: 11). Glynos and Howarth clarify the concept of logics with the example of the market:

"Clearly, the way we conceptualize the market depends on whether it is a supermarket, a market in energy supply, a market in educational goods, and so on. In other words, the meaning of expressions such as the 'efficient allocation of resources', 'fair price' or 'supply and demand' depends on the way we understand the key actors and terms associated with the specific market paradigm we have adopted. There is a clear relational network at stake here which the concept of a logic must try to capture and name. Crucial in this respect is the way actors themselves interpret their roles and activities. In abstract terms, we can say that a particular market comprises a particular set of rules or grammar that govern the arrangements and meanings that bring together the buyers and sellers of goods and services. Hence the logic of the market comprises a particular set of subject positions (buyers and sellers), objects (commodities and means of exchange) and a system of relations and meanings connecting subjects and objects, as well as certain sorts of institutional parameters (such as a well functioning legal system). However, our concept of a logic also aims to capture the conditions that make possible the continued operation of a particular market practice, as well as its potential vulnerabilities" (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 136).

As said before, based on the different ontological dimensions of social reality, we can distinguish between three sets of logics: social, political and fantasmatic logics. These different logics help us to capture not only the general patterns or rules that govern practices such as the constitution of and relationship between subjects and objects, but also the conditions that made these practices or regimes of practices possible and the political struggles that maintain or challenge their existence. At this point, it is important to note that all practices or regimes of practices are discursive practices. Discourses, as structured totality of articulatory practices, are predicated on practices that link together, and thereby modifying, contingent elements (e.g. subjects, demands or interests) into a common system of signification, and, at the same time, constitute and organize these very practices (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 105; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 15). Social logics capture the general content, purpose and rules governing a particular practice or a whole discourse. Political logics enable us to understand and explain the emergence, institutionalization and defence of particular practices or social orders by exploring the conditions of their possibility and vulnerability. Fantasmatic logics, finally, are closely intertwined with the ideological dimension and enable us to understand why specific practices or

discourses ‘grip’ subjects, i.e. why subjects desire to identify with the subject positions provided by a discourse and how the subject thus contributes to the concealing of the radical contingency of all social relations (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 106f.).

We will now examine the individual logics in greater detail and how they help us to comprehend and explain foreign policy practices and entire world orders as an interplay of different logics. Social logics encompass the general grammar or rules governing a particular practice or an entire social order. They enable us to reconstruct the meaning, form and function of practices (Laclau 2005: 117; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 106/137): What are their main characteristics, what is their purpose, who participates in them and what is the context. An example for a social logic is ‘sovereignty’ which is based on various discursive practices such as ceremonies, border control, citizenship, speeches or the use of force and creates a particular system of spatial-political relations between subjects and objects, involving, inter alia, a separation of different ‘nations’ or ‘peoples’ into distinctive, formally equal entities, the right of autonomy and limitations on the legitimate use of force, and an overarching institutional framework (e.g. United Nations and various international law treaties) to uphold this spatial-political order. Against this backdrop, when we study the social logics of a world order, we carve out and describe a particular, interrelated set of subject positions (e.g. ‘sovereign states’, ‘civilizations’ or ‘great powers’), objects (e.g. ‘power’, ‘security’, ‘wealth’, ‘war’, ‘territories’ or ‘peace’), the system of relations and meanings that connects subjects and objects (e.g. ‘hierarchy’, ‘equality’, ‘rivalry’ or ‘amity’), and the institutional parameters (e.g. ‘international law’, ‘balance-of-power’, ‘great power management’ or ‘international organizations’). In short, social logics revolve around a ‘what’-question and seek to capture or re-construct what a discourse takes to be the ‘reality’ of global politics.

Political logics capture the emergence, institutionalization and transformation of practices and social orders. “Political logics”, as Glynos and Howarth (2007: 141) note, “aim to capture those processes of collective mobilization precipitated by the emergence of the political dimension of social relations, such as the construction, defence and naturalization of new frontiers. But they also include processes which seek to interrupt or break up this process of drawing frontiers”. In other words, political logics help us to comprehend the process of the division of socio-political spaces through antagonisms and frontiers and thus how practices and social orders are discursively constituted, challenged, sustained or changed. Consider, for instance, the imperialist/colonialist practices of European powers which divided the world into a ‘modern’, civilized’ and ‘superior’ Europe and a ‘traditional’, ‘backward’ and ‘inferior’ rest that can be exploited and oppressed.

The processes of institution and contestation are closely intertwined, because the very institution of a new social practice or order presupposes the possibility that previous social practices or orders are removed from their hegemonic position. The political dimension of social relations thus reveals, qua moments of dislocation, the limits of a social formation. As explicated in Chapter 2, dislocatory moments signify, in Lacanian terms, the presence of ‘the real’ in a symbolic order, thereby indicating certain disparities and ultimately the contingency of all social relations (Laclau 1990: 39-41; Glynos and Howarth 2007: 142-143). At the same time, dislocations point to the moment of the political in social relations, i.e. the antagonist nature of politics that manifests itself in the way how the social is ordered and unified in the context of contingency through processes of hierarchical identity formation that demarcate ‘us’ from ‘them’ and thus always exclude certain possibilities (e.g. demands, interests etc.) (see Laclau 1990, Mouffe 2005). As we have seen, Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 127ff.) distinguish between two fundamental political logics that constitute and structure social formations: the logic of equivalence and the logic of difference.

Fantasmatic logics address the affective and ideological dimension of social relations, thereby enabling us to comprehend why specific practices and regimes of practices ‘grip’ or ‘interpellate’ subjects in the sense that subjects desire or enjoy to identify with the subject positions of a discourse and how subjects are rendered complicit in concealing the radical contingency of social relations (Glynos/Howarth 2007: 15). In Laclauian terms, fantasmatic logics capture the “force” or motive behind the “signifying operations” of political logics (Laclau 2005: 101). “The role of fantasy in this context”, as Glynos and Howarth (2007: 145-146) point out, “is not to set up an illusion that provides a subject with a false picture of the world, but to ensure that the radical contingency of social reality – and the political dimension of a practice more specifically – remains in the background. [...] In this context, we can say that the role of fantasy is to actively contain or suppress the political dimension of a practice. Thus, aspects of a social practice may seek to maintain existing social structures by pre-emptively absorbing dislocations, preventing them from becoming the source of a political practice. [...] The operation of fantasmatic logics can thus reinforce the social dimension of practices by covering over the fundamental lack in reality and keeping at bay what we have labelled ‘the real’”.

Fantasmatic logics can be analysed as (meta-)narratives. Narratives are simplified and mythical stories of particular social phenomena based on a plot and a cast of characters. They create narrative frameworks that order experiences by placing actors, events, developments or incidents into a seemingly linear story and thus reduce the complexity of everyday life. These stories usually begin with an idealized and fictional moment of purity, glory or affluence that

must be re-created. Meta-narratives are broader and more complex narrative frameworks and can be understood as ideologies. As set out in Chapter 2, actors draw consciously or unconsciously on ideologies in order to totalize and naturalize meanings, imaginaries and identities by asserting an ultimate interpretation that is taken to be independent of any standpoint and condition. In doing so, they obscure the radical contingency of social relations and the exclusions of certain subjects, interests and demands. In other words, we can say that ideologies constitute the subject positions within a discourse by providing the actors with a simplified narrative or interpretative framework that reduces the complexity of everyday life and the anxieties resulting from the incomplete nature of these subject positions, which never fully capture the 'true' identity of individuals. The interpretative framework provides actors with an account of the existing order, advance a template of a desired future and the obstacles to its realization, and suggests how political change can or should be brought about. By highlighting the radical contingency of social relations and the subjects' role in concealing the non-necessary character of social practices and orders, fantasmatic logics also gives us means to formulate a normative critique of existing social formations and present potential alternatives (Laclau 1990: 61; Glynos/Howarth 2007: 117ff.).

Accordingly, world orders consist of various articulatory practices that link together subjects and objects, thereby placing them in a common, differential system of relations and meanings. The different logics enable us not only to distil and describe the general characteristics or grammar of these sets of practices and institutions, but also to explore how and why they are brought into being, maintained, challenged and transformed. While the social logics allow us to characterize the general pillars, i.e. established practices and institutions, of the world order, the political logics capture how these have emerged and are contested. The fantasmatic logics, in turn, explain why subjects are gripped by these practices and institutions and thus desire to identify with the subject positions provided by a discourse.

4.3 Data Corpus and Textual Analysis

Having discussed the different stages and dimensions of the social science research process on a more abstract level, the chapter now elaborates how the actual discourse analysis was carried out in the present study by explicating the selection, processing and interpretation of the empirical data. In discourse analysis, data is treated as a body of texts. In this sense, as Derrida (1976: 158) noted in his famous dictum, "[t]here is nothing outside the text". However, it is important to clarify at this point that this *does not* imply a linguistic reductionism.

Rather, it means that subjects and social practices and institutions can be seen as the product of historical systems of significant differences (or discourses), in which language plays a key role. Though discourse can ontologically not be reduced to language patterns, language is the point of departure for studying the construction of meaning. A discourse as the sum of articulatory practices includes all kinds of verbal and non-verbal practices that are common to a particular society, but it is only through the interplay of words and actions and thus language in the broadest sense that objects are socially constructed and become meaningful for us. Unlike (neo-)positivist accounts, discourse analysis treats its objects of investigation as self-referential in the sense that meanings are generated through reference to previous, contrastive or subsequent meanings and not to an extra-discursive reality (Nabers 2015: 144-145). This points to the importance of intertextuality. According to the concept of intertextuality, devised by Julia Kristeva (1980), every text is part of a wider universe of other texts on which it implicitly or explicitly draws upon, thereby providing a particular interpretation of the previous texts while, at the same time, being the product of these earlier texts. By referring to former texts, a text produces and naturalizes particular meanings and contexts.

The starting point of every discourse analysis is the selection of the sources to be investigated and thus the collection of the data-set. This selection process is a delicate issue, given the magnitude of potentially relevant sources and the impact of this selection process on the outcome of the analysis. As the selection of sources is a decision by the analyst, the choices taken in this process must be made transparent and be explained. This study analyses the world order concepts in India's official or political discourse. Instead of studying the academic discourse and investigate or assess Indian theories of international relations, the present study thus focuses on how Indian policy-makers in the broadest sense, i.e. politicians, government, military and intelligence officials, and government advisors, draw on and shape particular discourses that endow the signifier world order with a particular meaning. The data corpus of the present study thus consists of government and party documents, speeches, statements and publications by Indian politicians, (former) diplomats, intelligence and military officials, and parliamentary debates. In addition, speeches and publications of past or present holders of public policy positions, e.g. membership in the National Security Advisory Board, were also incorporated into the discourse analysis.

The period of investigation covers India's entire post-cold war foreign policy till May 2014, when the tenure of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government ended and the Hindu nationalist *Bharatiya Janata Party* came to power. This time period has been chosen, because this study seeks to analyse how discourses in India, which is constituted by

the contemporary global power shifts discourse as an emerging power with a legitimate voice in the current debate and struggle about world order, endow world order with meaning. In addition, the end of the cold war is often conceptualized as a turning point and a fundamental shift in India's foreign policy from 'idealism' to 'realism' or 'pragmatism'. This study seeks to problematize this narrative and provide a more nuanced reading of India's contemporary foreign policy. Finally, by choosing this time period, the study could take into consideration the tenures of different Indian governments that represent different social forces, interests and demands.

In total, the data corpus of the study comprises roughly 11,000 documents. The main criterion for the selection of texts was that they refer to foreign, international, global or world affairs rather than national affairs, thereby demarcating what is 'inside' and what is 'outside' the Indian nation-state. The study attempted to read very broadly and a wide range of different texts instead of delimiting the composition of the data corpus beforehand to a certain body of texts, theme or fixed referent such as security or trade. The reading and analysing of texts was terminated in the moment when the investigator was confronted with a continuous repetition of themes, issues and relations, i.e. new texts did not add upon anything new to the texts already read. Given the almost endless number of applicable texts, the study addressed this challenge by searching for particular 'events' in the textual material that have provoked a substantial amount of debate in the sense that they have generated many texts. These events – or, to be more precise, the texts that they have created – were given a particular emphasis in the analysis. These events include, inter alia, India's nuclear tests in 1998, the strategic partnership and nuclear agreement with the United States, the crises and peace negotiations with Pakistan and international trade negotiations. Though discourse analysis gives priority to the study of primary sources, this does not imply that secondary literature has no place in the analysis. Secondary sources offered important background information for this study and also influenced the way how the research problem was framed in the sense that standard works are taken as a point of departure for articulating a slightly different reading of India's foreign policy practices and to contest the seemingly objectivity or naturalness of these representations.

By studying the foreign policy discourse of a country, we are implicitly or explicitly treating the state as a corporate agent and privilege certain actors within a state. Actors always speak or act from specific subject positions, which are discursively constructed and enable as well as constrain the subject's sovereignty. The field of foreign policy is still largely dominated by the state and thus by the agents who represent the state, i.e. mainly governmental actors such as the prime minister, the foreign minister, the defence minister or the national security advi-

sor. In other words, subject positions are closely intertwined with power and place subjects in a hierarchical web of relations that gives them more or less favourable positions, legitimacy and authority in the struggle for discursive hegemony. Like discourses in general, foreign policy discourses are never closed. Meanings are never ultimately fixed and can always be contested by other discourses, even though particular meanings can be temporarily fixed and become sedimented. There is thus a continuous struggle between various actors from within and outside the government for discursive hegemony. As explicated in chapter 2, the concept of discursive hegemony, devised by Laclau and Mouffe, refers to the discursive struggle for the fixation of particular meanings or a particular meaning system. In other words, policy-making can be understood as “an arena of struggle over meaning” (Taylor 2004: 435), in which different discourses representing divergent interests, values, demands etc. seek to provide the dominant interpretative framework for foreign policy making. Against this backdrop, this study investigates the hegemonic and the main counter-hegemonic foreign policy discourse in India, which are framed as Post-Nehruvian and Hyper-nationalist discourse. It does not take into account other counter-hegemonic discourses such as the communist discourse, given the limited impact of these discourses, their inability to contest the hegemonic discourse significantly and the rather low number of social forces, demands and interests they represent. In addition, the privileging of particular discourses is due to the limited scope of this study and the necessity to delimit the textual analysis.

In contrast to traditional foreign policy analysis, a discourse analytical approach does not primarily investigate why a particular foreign policy option was chosen, but how particular discursive constructions of reality make possible particular foreign policy options in the sense that it appears rational, self-evident or appropriate to pursue this policy, while others seem to be irrational, absurd or illegitimate. Foreign policy plays a crucial role in the constitution and reproduction of a state’s identity by demarcating an ‘inside’ from an ‘outside’. In doing so, foreign policies (re-)produce the state’s identity but also depend on specific representations of identity. In this sense, foreign policy and identity are mutually constitutive. Identity is both a product and a precondition of foreign policy. In other words, the objective of discourse analysis is to study the conditions that enable the construction of particular subjectivities and the pursuit of particular foreign policies. Thus, discourse analysis does not seek to explain the causes of particular policies or to carve out the ‘real’ or ‘hidden’ intentions of policy-makers. Instead, a discourse analytical approach draws primarily on public texts. Based on the insight that discourses generate meaning structures that condition what can be meaningfully said and done, it discards the idea of autonomous agents that can act independently of these structures.

Agents must engage with and act upon the subject positions and categorizations made available by a discourse. In other words, policy-makers must use the ‘grammar’ of a discourse to craft, design and implement certain policy options. As discourses define fields of meaning and possibilities and structure them in light of implementation scenarios for preparing decisions, we can also formulate well-grounded predictions on future developments (Campbell 1998: 11-12; Wæver 2005: 35-36; Hansen 2006: 1-2; Nonhoff/Stengel 2014: 50).

As noted in the beginning of this chapter, the main aim of textual analysis in discourse theory is to identify and analyse the way how meaning is produced, stabilized, contested and disrupted within particular texts. This raises the question how discourse analysis grasps the meaning of a word? At the most general level, discourse analysis searches for patterns in language use. It thus locates the contexts in which a signifier is used and situates the signifier in the complex system of differences of a language. Words or signifiers acquire their meanings never out of themselves or by their composition, but only in relation to other signifiers in the field of discursivity. Context refers here thus not an extra-discursive reality, but the textual surroundings, i.e. the sentences or paragraphs in which a word is used, the overarching topic of the texts, the other themes and issues that the texts cover, the references to other signifiers and texts etc. Accordingly, for investigating and carving out what meaning is conferred to the signifier ‘order’ in India’s foreign policy discourse, this study initially searched in the textual material for appearances of the term ‘order’ and analysed the context in which the term appeared. In doing so, the analysis could identify those words that are normally directly linked or tied to the signifier ‘order’, namely ‘world order’, ‘international order’, ‘global order’, ‘multipolar order’ and ‘polycentric order’. In addition, it could carve out those words, phrases or themes that were regularly used in this corpus of texts. This allowed us, on the one hand, to find signifiers that were frequently used in concordance with the term ‘order’ such as ‘international scenario’, ‘international equation’, ‘international equilibrium’ or ‘global governance’ and thus to extend our analysis to those texts in which these terms appeared and look again into the context of their usage. On the other hand, this enabled us to identify the issues, aspects or sub-themes that are subsumed under or associated with the label of ‘order’ in the body of texts (e.g. state sovereignty, non-discrimination or non-violence). This sheds light on the actual content or embodiment of ‘order’. The signifiers that form or embody this content were then further investigated by searching for them in the textual material and situating them in the respective contexts to ascertain their meaning or ‘grammar’.³¹

³¹ Given the very large number of not-digitalized texts in the body of texts, the discourse analysis did not make use of software programmes for the textual analysis, but carried out the analysis manually.

For grasping and exploring the discursive struggle over the meaning of world order in India's foreign policy discourse, the subsequent discourse analysis thus employs the concept of discursive hegemony elaborated in chapter 2 and combines it with the logics-approach and the postcolonial concepts of hybridity and mimicry. The study thus articulated together various elements such as hegemony, antagonism, nodal point, empty signifier or hybridity to understand and explain this hegemonic struggle over the fixation of meaning in India's foreign policy discourse. The concept of discursive hegemony enables us to comprehend this process as a political practice of coalition-building, in which different demands, interests, subjects etc. are linked together to create and institutionalize a common socio-historical project that provides a shared horizon of intelligibility of world order. There are thus competing discourses that seek to hegemonize the field of discursivity and represent a particular interpretative framework as common sense through the stabilization and sedimentation of meanings and identities. Against this backdrop, the discourse analysis proceeded as follows:

- (1) A first step is to identify the nodal points of a discourse. All hegemonic articulations seek to establish nodal points. As privileged and ideally empty signifiers nodal points provide a common reference point under which different demands and interests can be potentially subsumed and thus articulated as equivalent demands and interests in the sense that a shared understanding of the problem/challenge and of the ways to overcome it is formed. Nodal points thus form the basis for constructing a hegemonic project. For identifying the form, purpose and main characteristics of a particular hegemonic project, and its articulation of world order, we analyse the social logics operating within the discourse. Social logics encompass the general grammar or rules governing a particular practice or an entire world order. They enable us to reconstruct and describe the interrelated set of subject positions constituted by a discourse, the objects, system of relations and meanings that connects subjects and objects, and the overall institutional parameters of the hegemonic project.
- (2) For forging equivalent demands and interests, hegemonic practices divide the discursive space by drawing political frontiers. In this process, captured by Laclau and Mouffe's logic of equivalence, a common 'other' or shared 'negativity' is identified as the cause for the problem/challenge. While this common 'other' is believed to be responsible for the blocking or incompleteness of the self's identity

and this is why it is antagonized and must be overcome, the 'other' is, at the same time, the precondition for the constitution of the self's very identity. This interplay of difference and equivalence is constitutive for all social relations and formations. These operations are captured by the political logics which enable us to understand and explain the emergence, institutionalization and defence of particular practices or social orders by exploring the conditions of their possibility and vulnerability. While the political logic of equivalence helps us to comprehend how different political forces, demands and interests are linked together into a common hegemonic project/discourse and thus the emergence, institutionalization, universalization and defence of a hegemonic project/discourse, the logic of difference grasps the contestation and transformation of hegemonic projects/discourses through counter-hegemonic discourses which seek to (re)construct political frontiers by breaking up chains of equivalence and exposing the plurality and differences between the entities/elements. By revealing the contingency, complexity of and the moment of the political in social relations, the logic of difference can disrupt the forging or maintenance of a common identity. Counter-hegemonic discourses are likely to emerge and succeed in moments of dislocations, when there is an event or phenomenon that cannot be fully captured by the discourse and that disrupts existing identities/meanings. The postcolonial categories of hybridity and mimicry can provide additional insights into this hegemonic operation by helping us to comprehend, for instance, the way how post-colonial societies simultaneously adopted and reproduced the discourses of the former oppressors, but also misappropriated and perverted their meanings, thereby contesting and subverting colonial rule as well as generating new – hybrid – identities that transcend the confines of one socio-cultural space.

- (3) Hegemonic articulations must thus provide a broad vision or project capable of representing a high number of demands and interests as equivalent, integrating various political forces and offering a desirable alternative to the existing situation, which promises to fulfil all these demands and interests by overcoming the 'other'. For comprehending this part of the hegemonic formation, we can draw on the fantasmatic logics, which enable us to understand why specific discourses 'grip' subjects, i.e. why subjects desire to identify with the subject positions provided by a discourse and how the subject thus contributes to the concealing of the radical con-

tingency of all social relations. Fantasmatic logics can be conceptualized as (meta-) narratives. As fictional and mythical narrative frameworks they order experiences by placing actors, events, developments or incidents into a linear, idealized story, thereby reducing the complexity of everyday life.

- (4) A discourse can be classified as hegemonic, if it is successfully institutionalized in all relevant social and political institutions and could successfully conceal its particularity in the sense that the interpretative framework provided by the discourse is universalized and thus reflects in the discursive practices of all relevant social actors.

4.4 Summary

This chapter elaborated the analytical strategy and data corpus for studying India's foreign policy discourse. It explicated the analytical steps taken and the textual data employed by this study. A central aim of this chapter was to shed light on the way how this study identified, described, interpreted, explained and evaluated world order articulations in India's foreign policy discourse. For putting discourse theory into practice, the logics-approach by Glynos and Howarth was introduced and their three-fold typology of logics – social, political and fantasmatic – was discussed. A world order can thus be conceptualized as a set of sedimented practices and institutions (social logics), that have been established and can be contested through the logics of equivalence and difference (political logics) and contain certain fictional and mythical (meta-)narratives that cover over the particularity of the discourse and the radical contingency of all social relations, thereby stabilizing and normalizing these practices and institutions. Finally, the chapter spelled out the procedure of the discourse analysis and the way how hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses were located and analysed.

5. The Evolution and Disruption of the Nehruvian Foreign Policy Discourse

This chapter illuminates India's post-independence foreign policy discourse that is typically closely associated with the state founder Jawaharlal Nehru. There is a broad consensus among scholars and policy-makers that Nehruvianism constituted the guiding foreign policy framework, or in the terminology of this study the hegemonic foreign policy discourse, in India between independence and the end of the cold war. This period is normally divided into two distinctive phases: The initial phase is said to have lasted from independence till 1962 and is characterized as the more 'idealist' variant of Nehruvianism. The second phase is said to have extended from 1962 till the end of the cold war and is viewed as the more 'realist' version of Nehruvianism characterized by a greater emphasis on defence policy and the strategic tilt towards the Soviet Union. With the end of the cold war and India's economic crisis in 1991, the Nehruvian consensus is usually said to have partially eroded and India has given up at least some of the dogmas that have shaped Indian foreign policy in the four decades of its independence (see, inter alia, Dixit 2001, Cohen 2002, Bajpai 2003a, Mohan 2004, Mehta 2009, Sagar 2009, Chellaney 2010a, Ganguly 2010, Malone 2012, Narang/Staniland 2012).

The purpose of discussing this narrative of Indian foreign policy in this chapter is to shed light on the evolution and main tenets of Nehruvianism and India's post-independence foreign policy that allows us to investigate the apparent ruptures, changes and continuities in India's foreign policy discourse after the end of the cold war and the world order models it articulates. The chapter argues that the end of the cold war symbolized, what Laclau calls, a dislocatory moment that disrupted the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse and constituted an Indian identity crisis, i.e. actors could not any longer (fully) identify with the discourse and engaged in a discursive struggle to make sense of the 'new structural context'³². The evolution and disruption of the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse is of particular relevance, because this study argues that the contemporary hegemonic foreign policy discourse in India constitutes a modified version of the Nehruvian discourse.

The first part of this chapter identifies non-alignment as the cornerstone, or nodal point, of the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse and explicates its meaning and relevance in India's foreign policy. The second part gives a brief historical overview of India's post-independence foreign policy. In the final part of the chapter, the disruption, or dislocation, of the Nehruvian discourse is elaborated.

³² As has been pointed out before, this 'new context, however, does not represent an objective, extra-discursive reality, but is made meaningful through discourses that actors invoke to recreate the disrupted discursive structures and establish subject positions with which they can identify.

5.1 Non-alignment: An Independent Foreign Policy for an Independent India

The concept and policy of non-alignment was devised and adopted by India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru after Indian independence in order "to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on even vaster scale" (Nehru 1961: 2). On the one hand, the Nehruvian discourse framed non-alignment as an assertion of India's right after attaining independence to pursue a foreign policy that is not prescribed by any great power or power bloc, but reflects India's national interests and its right to self-determination. On the other hand, it was also seen as response to the severe threat to world peace emanating from the ideological and military conflict between the Soviet and the Western power blocs in the nuclear age (Nanda 1998).

A main objective of non-alignment has thus been to maintain an independent foreign policy and India's strategic autonomy. As the later prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1979: 38/73) noted during his tenure as External Affairs Minister: "after freeing itself of the clutches of imperialism, a great country like India could not possibly become a camp follower of some great power" and instead attempts to pursue "alignment with all". And his successor Manmohan Singh (2006a) adds: "'non-alignment' was based on the principle that we were aligned only with our values and our enlightened national interests; we were not aligned with anyone, or against anyone. The underlying philosophy was that issues would be judged on merits rather than in a mechanical or deterministic manner. Non-alignment was therefore always an expression of our enlightened national interest and I dare say, will remain so".

Non-alignment constituted the nodal point around which the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse was organized. A nodal point is a privileged and typically 'empty' signifier, which is based on a broad, socially shared and appreciated concept whose meaning can never be ultimately fixed, thereby enabling the integration of various interests, preferences and demands (Laclau 2000: 58). This is a crucial precondition for the formation and maintenance of a hegemonic project. A nodal point is thus a privileged signifier around which a particular chain of signification or system of meaning can be bound together. For the institutionalization of a hegemonic project, a discourse must forge a long and stable chain of equivalence by linking together different demands and interests and presenting them as equivalent. This requires, in turn, the identification of a common 'other' – a problem, challenge or enemy – that blocks the full constitution and completeness of the 'self', i.e. the Indian nation-state, and must thus be overcome. In the Nehruvian discourse, this common 'other' were, above all, colonialism and the cold war. By constructing the nodal point and empty signifier non-alignment, the Nehru-

vian discourse articulated a demand that managed to represent all equivalent demands and hold out the promise to overcome the ‘other’, provided that the representative demand is fulfilled.

Embodying freedom, independence and autonomy, an appreciation of India’s anti-colonial struggle and its (regained) ‘greatness’, and a balance between nationalism and internationalism, non-alignment allowed to articulate various societal demands and interests as equivalent and to forge a national consensus and identity for a post-colonial state. On the one hand, the negation of this hegemonic project would imply an affirmation of the colonial subjugation and a betrayal of the independence movement. On the other hand, the vagueness and openness of concepts such as autonomy, freedom or independence, both with respect to their actual meaning and how to achieve them, means that different political forces could and can identify with non-alignment. For example, for the Indian communist parties, non-alignment means primarily anti-imperialism and third world solidarity, while the Hindu nationalist *Bharatiya Jana Sangh*, and its successor the BJP, largely equate non-alignment with defending and maximizing India’s strategic autonomy and national interests. Accordingly, while various social forces can identify with the hegemonic project in general, there is a continuous struggle for the fixation of its exact meaning and how it can or should be put into practice.

Unsurprisingly, there is no agreement in the literature on the actual status, characteristics, significance or purpose of non-alignment in Indian foreign policy. For some scholars, non-alignment was “a modernized version of the classical balance of power in a bipolar world locked in hostility but unable to go to war because of the existence of nuclear weapons” (Subrahmanyam 1999: ix). Accordingly, non-alignment is conceived of in a ‘realist’ fashion as a ‘rational’ foreign policy strategy driven by considerations of *realpolitik* to defend and maximize India’s national interests and autonomy (Rana 1976; Mohan 1999: 83; Pant 2011a: 16; Narang/Staniland 2012: 80; Subrahmanyam 2012a). As Amitabh Mattoo (2005) noted:

“India's primary quest seems to be to acquire the strength and strategic autonomy that will allow it to stabilise an ‘unfriendly neighbourhood’, give it the capability to make independent, even unpopular, choices in the international system, and be able to influence the future course of international relations. These objectives have defined India's foreign policy since Independence and were the basis for non-alignment. [...] It is the aggressive pursuit of these goals – clinically, amorally and non-ideologically – which is remarkable and unprecedented.”

Likewise, it has been argued that non-alignment was (and continues to be) India’s “route to great power status – a strategy that is independent of external forces by prioritizing national interest and ensuring strategic manoeuvrability” (Bhattacharya 2014; see also Nayar/Paul 2003; Ogden 2011). In a similar vein, the political analyst and spokesperson of prime minister

Manmohan Singh, Sanjaya Baru, pointed out that non-alignment reflected India's mixed domestic economic policy and aimed at getting the most from both superpowers, while accommodating different domestic political forces. In other words, it is a calculated and instrumentalist foreign policy approach primarily driven by India's national self-interest and not a commitment to particular 'universal' values (Baru 2006: 60-62).

On the other hand, non-alignment has been represented as a foreign policy approach that, rooted in India's non-violent independence struggle, is driven more by *moralpolitik* and the promotion of certain values in global politics than by pure national self-interests. Non-alignment, as the retired Indian diplomat Rajiv Sikri (2009: 259) notes, is "the right to follow an independent foreign policy and to decide foreign issues on merit; moral, diplomatic and economic support for the struggle against colonialism, racialism, apartheid and other forms of discrimination; non-violence and the quest for nuclear disarmament, and India's role as an international peacemaker". Hence, non-alignment is understood as an attempt to promote a more equitable world order based on justice, peace, tolerance, pluralism and the equal treatment of all countries through the peaceful means that India successfully exercised in its independence struggle (Misra/Narayan 1981: 16ff.; Mitra 2009: 20; Dubey 2013: 2; Ogden 2014a: 96).

While these different accounts of non-alignment do not necessarily conflict with each other and there is a certain degree of convergence,³³ it shows that non-alignment is understood in quite different ways ranging from hard-nosed 'realism' to moralistic 'idealism'. Likewise, there is no agreement in the literature on the actual role of non-alignment in India's foreign policy, i.e. to what extent India has lived up to the principles of non-alignment and whether non-alignment still guides Indian foreign policy. There are several events in Indian foreign policy that are said to have shattered or at least seriously questioned India's non-alignment stance: the India-China war, India's military intervention in East-Pakistan, the friendship treaty with the Soviet Union in 1971, the end of the cold war, India's economic liberalization, India's nuclear tests in 1998 or the nuclear deal with the United States (see Harshe 1990, Thakur 1992, Cohen 2002, Nayar/Paul 2003, Mohan 2004, Kapur 2006, Ganguly/Pardesi 2009, Sikri 2009, Mukherjee/Malone 2011, Srinivasan 2012, Tharoor 2012a, Singh [Jasw.] 2013).

³³ For Rajiv Sikri and others, India's support of decolonization, anti-imperialism and Third Worldism was and is not only morally right, but has also served India's national interest, because India's interests and values converge with those of other developing and post-colonial countries and would help India in realizing its global aspirations (Sikri 2009: 209).

5.2 Nehruvianism and India's Post-Independence Foreign Policy Discourse

Though there exist different readings of the Nehruvian foreign policy in general and the concept of non-alignment in particular, a short discussion of Nehruvianism and India's post-Independence foreign policy is essential for understanding the evolution and characteristics of the foreign policy discourse in the post-cold war era. However, it needs to be pointed out that this historical sketch does not provide an objective, extra-discursive account of Indian foreign policy, but is rather, as stated above, a short summary of the standard narrative of India's post-independence foreign policy.

Jawaharlal Nehru is widely regarded as the founding architect of India's foreign policy (Dixit 2004: 77ff.; Ganguly 2010: 1). As India's first prime minister and Minister of External Affairs, he devised the main contours of India's post-independence foreign policy stressing that independence must encompass full autonomy in domestic *and* foreign affairs. Drawing inspiration from India's civilizational heritage, non-violent freedom struggle, size, geography and resources, Nehru was convinced that India, despite its relative economic and military weakness after almost two centuries of colonial rule, would play a special role in Asian and global affairs (Nehru [1946] 1985: 535; Nehru [1949] 1961: 49). Confronted with the cold war dynamics, he wanted India to keep distance from both power blocs and shape international relations as an independent force:

“India is too big a country herself to be bound down to any country, however big it may be. India is going to be and is bound to be a country that counts in world affairs, not I hope in the military sense, but in many other senses which are more important and effective in the end [...] While remaining quite apart from power blocs, we are in far better position to cast our weight at the right moment in favour of peace, and meanwhile our relations can become as close as possible in the economic or other domain with such countries with whom we can easily develop them. So it is not a question of our remaining isolated or cut off from the rest of the world” (Nehru [1949] 1961: 47).

This policy of non-alignment meant detachment from the two power blocs and “not becoming entangled in any alliances, military or other, that might drag us into any possible conflict” (Nehru [1949] 1961: 37). By declaring that India would be non-aligned between the cold war blocs, Nehruvianism asserted India's right to pursue an independent foreign policy and judge international issues on their merits in accordance with India's national interests instead of following the dictates of one bloc. Unlike neutrality, non-alignment was intended to be an activist policy designed to shape the outcomes of world politics, in particular to mediate, if possible, between the two power blocs, to advocate global disarmament and to promote a more just and peaceful world order. Similarly, while the policy of non-alignment ruled out permanent alignments with one power bloc, it acknowledged the need of international coop-

eration and even, in certain circumstances, short-term alignments with a particular power (Krishna 1984: 272; Bajpai 2003a: 241).

An important component of non-alignment was the idea of pan-Asianism and ‘third world solidarity’ (see Mishra/Narayan 1981, Abraham 2008, Singh [S.] 2011). By seeking close ties with Asian and other developing countries, India wanted to create an “area of peace” (Nehru [1955] 1961: 67) between the two rival camps in an attempt to preserve the newly independent countries in Asia and beyond from cold war entanglements and allow them to focus on their socio-economic development and nation-building. This association of countries from the Global South, which later culminated in the Non-Alignment Movement³⁴, should also help in overcoming imperialism, colonialism and racism, which were not only unjust, but also seen as main causes for conflicts and rivalries and thus as main obstacles for a peaceful, just and co-operative world order (Kalyanaraman 2014: 153-154). For Nehru, the Non-Alignment Movement was not a rival bloc in the cold war equation but “an experiment in co-existence, for the countries of Asia and Africa” (Nehru [1957] 1961: 70) that promoted their interests in world politics and allowed them to pursue an independent foreign policy. The idea of peaceful co-existence (*Panchsheel*) also found expression in the 1954 India-China agreement that stipulates the mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in domestic affairs, equality and mutual benefit in bilateral relations and the resolve to co-exist peacefully (MEA 2004a). This “policy of friendship toward all nations, uncompromised by adherence to any military pacts” (Nehru 1963) was based on the conviction that the politics of fear, hostility, competition and alliances, which characterized the cold war, could and, due to the existence of nuclear weapons, must be overcome. In other words, Nehru was convinced that the current ‘reality’ of international politics could be replaced by a new mind-set and that India through its policies of non-alignment and *Panchsheel* could play a leading role in bringing this new reality about.

While the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse had a ‘moralist’ or ‘idealist’ foundation in the sense that it believed in the possibility of change and saw India “as a messenger of peace, as a

³⁴ The NAM was not established as a formal organization, but refers to a loose grouping of states that gathered for the first time for the *Conference of Heads of State or Governments of Non-Aligned Countries* in 1961. An important milestone in the development of the NAM was the 1965 Bandung conference, where the participating countries agreed on a set of principles that should later become the requirements that states must fulfil in order to join the movement. These include: respect for human rights and the principles of the United Nations; respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states; recognition of national independence movements; recognition of the equality of all races and nations; abstention from intervening or interfering in the internal affairs of other states; peaceful conflict resolution and the promotion of international cooperation, justice and interests. The political agenda of the NAM has traditionally centred on decolonization, opposition of military interventions in post-colonial states and the promotion of an international architecture that better reflects the interests and positions of developing and post-colonial states. See for a more detailed account of the origins, evolution and themes of the NAM: Mišković 2014.

catalyst for creating a just and moral world order” (Dixit 2003: 62) which could be achieved through a commitment to reason, non-violence and moral influence, it was also driven by more ‘pragmatic’ considerations. As a democracy and a developing country that opted for a largely socialist, state-directed economic policy, characterized by an emphasis on economic planning, self-reliance, import-substitution, heavy capital intensive industrialization and a large public sector (see Patnaik 2003, Nayar 2007a, Mukherji 2007a), India stood politically and economically between the two power blocs and had thus no incentive to align either with the ‘West’ or the Soviet Bloc in order to gain economic and technological assistance from both camps and focus on its socio-economic development in an environment free from conflict (Mohan 2004: 37; Baru 2006: 60ff.). As Nehru proclaimed after Indian independence, “even in getting economic help, or in getting political help, it is not a wise policy to put all our eggs into one basket. [...] Therefore, purely from the point of opportunism, if you like, a straightforward, honest policy, an independent policy, is the best” (Nehru 1949 [1948]: 219). India’s policy of non-alignment was initially relatively successful. In spite of its rather limited material capabilities, India was recognized as an emerging Asian power and an important member of the international community during this period. India played a leading role in creating collectivity and solidarity among the Asian and African states, which later led to the formation of the NAM, successfully promoted the process of decolonization and anti-imperialism, became a key proponent of global disarmament and mediated in the Korean crisis and thus eased the tensions between the two cold war blocs. From the mid-1950s, however, India’s foreign policy was deprived from some of its momentum and effectiveness. India was increasingly dragged into the cold war dynamics and lost its standing in Asian and global affairs. In 1954 and 1955, Pakistan, which emerged from the violent partition of the Indian sub-continent and became India’s main politico-military rival, joined the Western alliance system and formed a defence partnership with the United States, which from now on indirectly supported Pakistan’s stance on the Kashmir issue in the United Nations (UN). Realizing that the UN is driven by the logics of power politics, the Nehruvian belief in the organization and multilateralism in general partially eroded. As a result, India sought closer ties with the Soviet Union, which had redefined its position towards the non-aligned countries after Stalin’s death and prevented anti-Indian resolutions in the UN Security Council. In addition, the Indo-China relations deteriorated after China’s invasion and reoccupation of Tibet in 1950 and, above all, the border dispute between the two countries. The tensions in the Sino-Indian relations led eventually to a war in 1962 and a devastating defeat for India (Dixit 2001: 25ff.; Dubey 2013: 4-5; Mohan 2013: 26-28).

The Indio-China border war is widely seen as a turning point in India's post-independence foreign policy, leading to a greater acknowledgement of the compulsions of 'realpolitik' in international relations (see Cohen 2002, Dixit 2003, Nayar/Paul 2003, Sinha 2007 [2002], Ganguly 2010, Malone 2012, Ogden 2014a). On the one hand, the war marked the failure of Nehru's accommodative policy towards China, which was based on the conviction that the two Asian civilizations could and must be partners in Asian and global affairs. On the other hand, the war brought to light the negligence of defence policy³⁵ and the dangers of staying non-aligned despite limited defence capabilities. After the war debacle, India increased its defence expenditure, upgraded its weapon systems and improved its defence preparedness (Pant 2009b: 257f.; Cohen/Dasgupta 2010: 7-8).

However, despite the Sino-Indian war and Nehru's demise in 1964, the Nehruvian foreign policy was not abandoned, but a more pessimistic view on India's security environment took hold and a greater focus was laid on safeguarding the country's national security. Consequently, while India continued to oppose formal military alliances or security arrangements, it sought military assistance from the U.S. and the United Kingdom during and after the China war and continued its strategic rapprochement towards the Soviet Union, which culminated in the 'Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation' in 1971. Given the strategic rapprochement between China, Pakistan and the U.S., the treaty, which provided, inter alia, for defence cooperation and mutual defence assistance in case of either party being subjected to threats to their territorial integrity and security,³⁶ gave India a strategic reassurance and room for manoeuvre which was of particular importance for dealing with the East Pakistan crisis. Confronted with several million refugees from East Pakistan as a result of the outbreak of civil war in Pakistan in the late 1960s, India supported the Bengali liberation movement and militarily intervened in East Pakistan in 1971. India's military intervention led to the break-up of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh (Nayar/Paul 2003: 201; Ganguly/Pardesi 2009: 8-9; Ogden 2014a: 13).

Apart from humanitarian concerns, India's response to the East Pakistan crises was also driven by clear political and strategic considerations: On the one hand, the separation of

³⁵ See for a more nuanced view on the alleged neglect of defence policy under Nehru: Subrahmanyam 2003 and Raghavan 2010.

³⁶ The Indio-Soviet Treaty, however, did not include any provisions that provided for automatic military assistance and was thus no formal military alliance. In addition, India continued to highlight its strategic autonomy and the paramount importance of its national interests. For example, India refused to participate in the Asian collective security system proposed by the Soviet Union and criticized the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. At the same time, the treaty also reflected a higher degree of commonalities between India and the Soviet Union, resulting, on the one hand, from Indira Gandhi's more nationalist and anti-Western foreign and economic policies and, on the other hand, the Soviet Union's more positive attitude towards non-alignment (Harshe 1990: 420; Pardesi/Ganguly 2012: 136).

Bangladesh undermined the two-nation theory on the basis of which Pakistan was originally created, namely that religion constitutes national identity, a theory that was firmly opposed by India. On the other hand, by breaking Pakistan up, India had no longer to confront and possible fight Pakistan on two fronts in a crisis (Dixit 1998a: 103/109). Though the military intervention demonstrated a tougher stance on the use of force in dealing with *external* threats, which has led scholars to coin Indira Gandhi's foreign policy as "Militant Nehruvianism" (Cohen 2002), India continued to exercise strategic restraint: In spite of its swift and clear victory in East Pakistan, which marked the greatest military success of independent India, New Delhi did not assert its military advantage to West Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute. In addition, India adopted a relatively conciliatory stance in the post-war negotiations and did not use the more than 90,000 Pakistani war prisoners to coerce Pakistan to abandon its claims on Kashmir, believing that the dispute can only be solved peacefully through a negotiated agreement (Dixit 1998a: 108ff; Cohen/Dasgupta 2010: 9).

Nevertheless, through the break-up of Pakistan, India emerged as the pre-eminent power in South Asia and demonstrated its willingness to use force to settle conflicts and defend its national interests (Ogden 2014a: 7-8). As early as 1967, after having sought security guarantees from the great powers in vain, prime minister Indira Gandhi authorized India's Subterranean Nuclear Explosions Project mainly as a reaction to China's nuclear weapons programme, leading to India's first nuclear test in May 1974. The nuclear test, known as Peaceful Nuclear Explosion, demonstrated India's ability to develop a nuclear weapons programme, but India refrained from deploying nuclear weapons and its nuclear weapons programme slowed down until the mid-1980s when there were clear indications that Pakistan is close to have nuclear weapons capability (Perkovich 1999: 3; Basrur 2006: 61-62).³⁷

The nuclear test further substantiated India's aspiration for regional pre-eminence. Driven by colonial anxieties about the 'foreign hand' and a particular conception of national security that India inherited from the British Raj, post-Independence India has sought to establish its regional pre-eminence by excluding external powers and establishing an Indo-centric regional security system that draws India's smaller neighbours into its security orbit. Accordingly, India signed unequal treaties with Bhutan and Nepal in 1949 and 1950, which made India largely responsible for their foreign and defence policies, used military action to end Portu-

³⁷ This "nuclear option strategy" (Perkovich 1999) was in a way a continuation of Nehru's very ambivalent attitude towards nuclear weapons characterized by a moral aversion to nuclear weapons and a desire for global nuclear disarmament, but also a fascination for nuclear technology and an acknowledgement of the potential compulsion to develop nuclear weapons to safeguard India's national security (Bajpai 2003b: 372; Basrur 2006: 60-61).

guese colonial rule over Goa in 1961 and peacefully annexed Sikkim in 1975 (Pardesi/Ganguly 2012: 137-138).

Against this backdrop, it is often argued that the Nehruvian foreign policy combined global *moralpolitik* with regional *realpolitik*, even though India had neither the political will nor the material capabilities to play the role of an imperial power and normative considerations were also not entirely absent in its regional policy. Under the tenures of Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi, India is said to have taken this striving for regional pre-eminence further and proclaimed its version of the U.S. Monroe Doctrine. According to this so-called 'Indira Doctrine', India demanded, first, that no neighbouring country undertakes any action in its foreign or defence policy that is averse to India's interests; second, that no external power establishes a presence or influence in a neighbouring country; and third, that all disputes on the subcontinent are resolved bilaterally, with India as key mediator or provider of military assistance. Against this background, India intervened in the Sri Lankan civil war initially through lending support to the Tamil Tigers and rupturing the Sri Lankan air blockade and later through an imposed peace settlement and the deployment of Indian armed forces in Sri Lanka in 1987. Likewise, India intervened in Fiji (1987) and the Maldives (1988). India's regional activism in the 1980s was accompanied by a military modernization programme and large-scale military exercises as well as a cautious rapprochement towards the United States and China (Burgess 2009: 236-237; Mitra 2009: 21; Muni 2009: 34ff.).

5.3 A Moment of Dislocation: India's Identity Crisis after the End of the Cold War

The end of the cold war that coincided with a severe economic and financial crisis in India, which brought the country to near bankruptcy, is usually represented as a turning point that challenged the post-independence Nehruvian consensus and provoked a gradual shift in India's foreign policy. Normally, this crisis and the subsequent shift in India's foreign policy are said to have been caused mainly by the changes in the global balance-of-power as well as domestic and international demands to liberalize India's economy (Kapur 2006: 5; Ganguly 2010: 3-5; Malone 2012: 257). This study, by contrast, re-conceptualizes this apparent turning point in India's foreign policy through the analytical prism of poststructuralist discourse theory as a dislocatory moment that disrupted India's hegemonic foreign policy discourse and prompted political actors to 'fix' this rupture in the discursive order. In doing so, we can show that India's political situation cannot simply be attributed to some (objective) systemic or do-

mestic changes, but that India was affected by a deep identity crisis that raised questions about India's self-understanding and role in the world.

As discussed in chapter 2, a discourse becomes dislocated, as Laclau (1990: 39-41, 1996: 19/73f.) explicates, if there is an event or phenomenon that cannot be fully symbolized by the discourse. Dislocatory moments thus signify, in the terminology of Lacanian psychoanalysis, the presence of 'the real' in any symbolic or discursive order, thereby indicating certain disparities and ultimately the contingency of the discourse, i.e. what actors have taken for granted and identified with suddenly appears questionable and uncertain. The disruption of the existent discursive order reflects in a failed structural identity in the sense that actors cannot any longer (entirely) identify with the subject positions provided by the discourse, throwing the identities of actors into a crisis and prompting them to act in order to re-construct subject positions and thus the interpretative framework through which the transformation and the 'new context' can be understood. In other words, Indian policy-makers did not simply respond to some structural developments and demands on the international and national level, but rather the hegemonic discourse that was invoked by political actors to make sense of India's role in the world and endowed them with a source of identification was partially eroded and provoked an identity crisis.

To argue that Nehruvianism has been the hegemonic foreign policy discourse that was disrupted with the end of the cold war is not to suggest that the discourse has never been contested before and provided the only source of identification for political actors in India. Discourses can fix meanings and identities only partially and are thus inherently unstable and vulnerable to the 'surplus of meaning' located in the discursive field. Given the lack of any stable foundations underlying these meanings and identities, and the exclusion of certain other options, every discourse is dependent on and vulnerable to a 'discursive exterior' that threatens to subvert (or dislocate) the articulation of meaning, but is also the precondition for discursive articulations in the first place (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 110-112; Howarth 2002: 103). As every hegemonic project, the Nehruvian discourse created particular meanings and identities by linking together contingent demands and interests and thus placing them into a chain of equivalence. This required the identification of a common 'other' against which these different demands and interests can be articulated as equivalent. In the Nehruvian discourse, this common 'other' were, as we have seen, India's colonial subjugation and the cold war as permanent threats to the country's new won freedom and independence. Non-alignment, the nodal point of the discourse, managed to symbolize all equivalent demands and the adequate response to overcome this threat. Domestically, this implied economic self-reliance. Interna-

tionally, this implied foreign policy autonomy and the attempt to place India into a chain of equivalence with other post-colonial states. This chain of equivalence sought to overcome the dissimilarities and differences among these states by identifying anti-racism, anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism as shared aspiration and non-alignment as the right strategy to overcome them. The Nehruvian discourse thus merely articulated contingent elements into chains of equivalence by placing them into opposition to a common 'other' and was, as every discourse, vulnerable to the surplus of meaning located in the field of discursivity and thus to political contestation.

In other words, chains of equivalence can always be broken up through the logic of difference that exposes the plurality and differences between elements and thus shows that the discursive space can also be organized differently. For instance, instead of representing India primarily as a post-colonial state that must defend its economic self-reliance and political independence against bullying great powers and whose natural partners are the fellow victims of European imperialism, it is also possible to highlight India's democratic credentials and articulate India rather as a natural partner of the United States and other Western democracies. Likewise, the notion of India as symbol of non-violence and peaceful co-existence was contested. These and other demands and interests have always been present in the discursive field and have partially also been articulated by counter-hegemonic discourses already before India's independence and throughout the cold war. For instance, one prominent oppositional voice, who drew on these counter-hegemonic discourses, was the independence fighter and first Indian deputy prime minister, Sardar Patel, who criticized, inter alia, Nehru's 'idealist' policies towards Pakistan and China (Guhu 2007: 168ff./175). However, these oppositional discourses did not manage to seriously challenge the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse by creating a broad and inclusive alternative hegemonic project with which many social forces could identify. This is precisely what the Nehruvian hegemonic project achieved with its articulation of non-alignment, which promised an independent and pre-eminent role for India in international relations, and a development model that struck a subtle balance between different social demands and interests by choosing a middle path between capitalism, economic nationalism and socialism.

With the end of the cold war and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, however, the main parameters of this hegemonic project were shaken to the core and the Nehruvian discourse struggled to fix meanings and thus to uphold its system of intelligibility: First, the end of the cold war deprived India's stance of non-alignment of its main rationale. In a world no longer divided between the capitalist 'Western' bloc and their socialist opponents, as the later prime

minister I.K. Gujral asked, “who are you going to be non-aligned against?” (quoted in Ganguly 1994: 154). Second, India lost its main strategic partner on which India relied in the UN Security Council, for its armaments and for its trade and was now gripped by the discourse of unipolarity and the United States as the main power centre in world politics (Dixit 2001: 45; Mansingh 2005: 43). Prime minister Atal Vajpayee (2003a: 196) described “the evolution of the post-Cold War world” and the impact of the downfall of the USSR on India’s “political, diplomatic, strategic and security equations” as follows:

“The end of the Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet Union gave a strong jolt to many of India’s strategic and security assumptions of nearly five decades. The changed circumstances of the Indo-Soviet strategic alliance greatly affected India’s room for diplomatic manoeuvre in the world. The quality of many of our other relationships and alliances also suffered from the realignment of world forces. All of you know how badly the collapse of the USSR disrupted our defence cooperation with that country. Simultaneously, our security environment also deteriorated rapidly.”

Likewise, the prominent political analyst and member of the National Security Advisory Board during 1998-2000 and 2004-06, C. Raja Mohan (2004: 11) pointed out:

“The end of the cold war did not bring the expected peace dividend for India; instead it accentuated the Indian security problems. India was confirming a radically transformed world order. With few reliable friends, the importance of self-help in managing its national security was coming to the fore with greater clarity [...] The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, however, left India without a reliable ally in the new world order dominated by one superpower.”

Third, the end of the cold war casted doubts on India’s largely socialist, state-directed economic policy. “With the disintegration of the Soviet Union”, as the former foreign secretary Muchkund Dubey (2013: 172) noted, “an entire epoch of contemporary history came to an end, as did the Indo-Soviet relationship, as it was shaped and had evolved during the Soviet era. The Soviet experiment in socialism had profoundly influenced the course of events in the rest of the world. The Soviet system provided the much sought after alternative to the capitalist system prevailing in major countries and was widely seen as the harbinger of social justice and equality”. The feeling that the Soviet experiment, which has also influenced the direction of India’s own economic policy after independence, might not be a successful alternative to the capitalist system was further exacerbated by India’s severe balance of payment crisis in 1991. “[T]he crisis in the economy”, as the then-Finance Minister Manmohan Singh (1991) noted, “is both acute and deep. We have not experienced anything similar in the history of independent India”. In addition, the poor performance of the Indian economy in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction compared to the East Asian countries, which have opted for a more open economy with an emphasis on exports, the private sector and foreign investments, questioned the utility of India’s economic approach and underscored, in the dominant

reading of India's economic crisis, the need for a policy shift (Singh [M.] 1991; Mohan 2004: xviii; Ahluwalia 2007a: 87; Baru 2008).³⁸

Fourth and finally, many themes that have dominated the cold war era and conveyed identity to India such as decolonization or anti-apartheid lost their relevance in the post-cold war world order and gave way to new 'global' issues such as human rights, democracy promotion, globalization and environmental degradation that reflect predominantly 'Western' concerns and interests (Chandra 2011a; Sibal 2012a). As the External Affairs Minister in the BJP-led NDA Government, Yashwant Sinha (2002a) noted:

“The dominant themes of the last century were issues such as colonialism, apartheid, and the Cold War. Countries pursued international relations through the prism of the East-West divide. This divide was aggravated by an ever widening North-South gap, with attendant political and economic tensions. The Cold War has now been consigned to the dustbin of history, colonialism has been eradicated, apartheid has been banished and the supremacy of democracy established in much of the world.”

With the end of the cold war and the economic crisis questioning the utility of non-alignment (as a policy and a movement) and India's socio-economic development model, India was plunged into an identity crisis. As the Congress politician Mani Shankar Aiyar (2012: 20) noted, “[t]he collapse of the Soviet Union changed the world for India [...]”, confronting India with the essential question “[w]hat was to be the future of non-alignment in an unaligned world?”. It questioned India's self-imagination as a 'third force' in world politics that stays away from the two power blocs, pursues an independent foreign policy, combines democracy with socialism and is a leader of the non-aligned and developing countries by depriving the discourse of its main 'other', the cold war, that served as a negative reference point for the articulation of India's identity.

While India's non-aligned policy gave the country some global influence and importance during the cold war, Indian policy-makers saw their country's status and leverage declining in the post-cold war era and found India increasingly isolated. Deploring that “[...] in the post-Cold War period India does not enjoy the same prestige and status and exercise the same influence in the comity of nations as it used to do before”, Muchkund Dubey (1998) argued that this declining prestige and influence “has come about primarily because we did not redeem the promise we held out after our independence, of becoming a strong, powerful and prosperous nation. We have remained mired in poverty and underdevelopment, whereas numerous others which were much lower down the ladder than us, have since forged ahead and left us far behind. These countries naturally regard themselves as equal, if not superior, to India, and want

³⁸ See Patnaik/Chandraksekhar 2007, for a different perspective on the need for this policy shift towards liberalization.

to play their rightful role in international affairs. Why should we then expect them automatically to fall behind us?" For Dubey, this development also results from the triumph of the 'West' and its political and economic values in the international system:

"[B]ecause of the recent changes in the world – the ongoing process of globalisation, the triumph of the western world view and the extreme vulnerability of the economies of the vast majority of developing countries – these countries are not looking at the world the same way as we are doing. On many issues, their views coincide with those of the western countries. On several others, they are pressurised into echoing the western point of view. We are too large and too proud and self-respecting to succumb to other's pressure. At the same time, we are not strong enough to be able to stand alone and impose our will on others. This drives us frequently into isolation" (Dubey 1998).

The global sedimentation of the 'Western' hegemonic project, that provided the discursive context in which India's foreign policy discourse was articulated around the end of the cold war, made it increasingly difficult for the Nehruvian discourse to reproduce India's identity, because the Western hegemonic discourse allocated India a low subject position in international relations and pushed India to the margins of the world order. It tended to represent India as a poor, socially and economically backward and crisis-ridden developing country stuck by a low 'Hindu rate' of economic growth and numerous internal cleavages that threaten its survival as a united nation-state. For instance, hardly any 'Western' scholar or policy-maker in the early and mid-1990s spoke of India as a great power, emerging power or important actor in the world order, but mainly looked upon India through the prism of nuclear non-proliferation and the conflict with Pakistan. With the fundamental tenets and presuppositions of Indian foreign policy in doubt, the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse thus increasingly failed to confer identity to India in the sense that political actors could not fully identify with the political project it has articulated anymore, thereby creating an identity crisis and forcing Indian policy-makers to act in order to recreate these structures.

5.4 Summary

This chapter discussed India's post-independence foreign policy and Nehruvianism as the hegemonic foreign policy discourse in that era. It showed how the discourse managed to forge a successful hegemonic project around the nodal point of non-alignment that could serve as a source of identification for various social forces in India. Non-alignment invoked broad, open and widely shared concepts such as freedom, independence and autonomy and promised a special role for India in world politics in recognition of India's unique anti-colonial struggle and civilizational greatness. It struck a subtle balance between various societal demands and

interests and presented them as equivalent, thereby creating a relatively broad national consensus and identity for a post-colonial state.

Having discussed the evolution and main tenets of the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse, the chapter then framed the end of the cold war and India's financial crisis, which is typically seen a turning point in India's foreign policy, as a dislocatory moment that disrupted the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse and symbolized an Indian identity crisis. In the following chapters, we will examine the way how India's political actors responded to this dislocation and thus how they attempted to re-structure the discursive order by engaging in a discursive struggle over the meaning and implications of this crisis and the new 'structural context' as well as seeking to (re-)hegemonize the political space through the defence, modification, contestation or replacement of the hegemonic project. The subsequent analysis will show that the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse was not overthrown and replaced by a counter-hegemonic discourse, but reinterpreted, modified and adapted to the seemingly new structural circumstances. The outcome of this gradual transformation process is the Post-Nehruvian discourse which will be discussed in the next chapter.

6. Post-Nehruvianism: India's Hegemonic Foreign Policy Discourse in the Post-Cold War Era

Having discussed the dislocation of the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse, which has informed India's post-independence foreign policy, in chapter 5, we will now investigate how India's political actors responded to this dislocatory moment in India's foreign policy discourse and sought to re-construct the discursive structure by engaging in a discursive struggle over the meaning and implications of the crisis and the new 'structural circumstances' and attempting to (re-)hegemonize the discursive space. In short, the meaning of the empty signifier world order had to be re-established. This chapter will show that the dislocated Nehruvian foreign policy discourse was not overthrown and replaced by a counter-hegemonic discourse, but defended and reinterpreted, modified and adapted. This modified hegemonic foreign policy discourse is called 'Post-Nehruvianism' in this study. It embodies a particular understanding of world order and India's role in it that is still inspired by the Nehruvian vision for India in world affairs. Post-Nehruvianism, as the prefix 'post' already suggests, draws on and re-affirms but also goes beyond and partially contests the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse. The exact balance between this simultaneity of continuity and change is partially contentious in the discourse and thus the discourse encompasses both more 'traditional' and more 'remote' Nehruvian articulations, which it seeks to harmonize. As a hegemonic discourse, Post-Nehruvianism has forged a broad socio-historical project which integrates various social forces and their (conflicting) demands and interests. This means that there are occasionally tensions and contradictions within the discourse. No discourse can produce closure and fully fix meanings, but is always incomplete and vulnerable to the 'surplus of meaning' in the discursive field. However, the discourse has a core that holds it together: India is a great and exceptional agent in the world that pursues an independent, multi-aligned foreign policy, is guided by its enlightened self-interest, exercises strategic restraint, defends its sovereignty and struggles for a more equitable, just and peaceful world order.

Given the end of the cold war and India's growing economic, political and military power, a common assertion in contemporary studies on Indian foreign policy is that India has shifted from Nehruvian 'idealism' to a foreign policy driven by 'realism' or 'pragmatism' (see Cohen 2002, Mohan 2004, Kapur 2006, Ganguly/Pardesi 2009, Ganguly 2010, Ogden 2011, Malone 2012). Accordingly, India is "placing considerations of realpolitik and national security above its until recently dominant focus on liberal internationalism, morality and normative approaches to international politics", thereby shaking off the "prism of the Third World and

anti-imperialism” (Mohan 2004: xix/7) through which Indian policy-makers used to look at global politics during the cold war era and instead started pursuing a foreign policy based on “practical geopolitical considerations” (Kapur 2006: 5) and economic self-interests (Malone 2012: 257). “Having shed most of its ideological burden”, as Sumit Ganguly (2003/04) pointed out, “and adopted more pragmatic policies at home and abroad, India is in a position to move into the ranks of the major powers”. In doing so, India is said to increasingly behave like “a normal nation” (Mohan 2004: xix) and typical “rising power” (Pant 2009c), i.e. like a state that follows the imperatives of realist IR theory.

While acknowledging changes in India’s post-cold war foreign policy, this study argues that this standard narrative, which claims that India has moved from Nehruvian ‘idealism’ to a foreign policy driven by ‘realism’ or ‘pragmatism’, tends to offer a rather simplistic account of Indian foreign policy. On the one hand, it largely fails to grasp and theoretically explicate the complexity, ruptures, tensions and continuities in India’s post-cold war foreign policy discourse. For instance, why a ‘realist’ and ‘pragmatic’ India tested nuclear weapons in 1998, but did not make its nuclear deterrent operational, or why Indian policy-makers are still very concerned – or even obsessed – about maintaining India’s independence and autonomy in world affairs and why India is regularly seen as a ‘spoiler’ or ‘obstructionist’ in international negotiations. On the other hand, this narrative often fails to provide a theoretically informed discussion of what ‘idealism’, ‘realism’ or ‘pragmatism’ actually signify in the Indian context, and seems to suggest that it is possible to formulate and follow a foreign policy ‘freed’ from any ideological burden. The present study, by contrast, seeks to show that the changes, continuities and apparent tensions in India’s contemporary foreign policy can better understood against the background of a (intensified) struggle for discursive hegemony provoked by the ultimate disruption of the erstwhile hegemonic Nehruvian discourse after the end of the cold war. This disruption symbolized, as we have seen, an Indian identity crisis and forced India’s political actors to re-construct the discursive order. The simultaneity of change and continuity, including the apparent tensions and contradictions, in India’s post-cold war foreign policy can, as this study argues, better be understood and explained as the outcome of the successful transformation and modification of the hegemonic Nehruvian foreign policy discourse.

The first part of this chapter will show that the transformation process of India’s foreign policy has largely taken place within the framework of the Nehruvian discourse, i.e. the major political actors did not renounce and abandon Nehruvianism and its core element non-alignment, but rather sought to re-interpret, re-fashion and adapt it to the – discursively conveyed – conditions and requirements of the post-cold war world. In the second part, the chap-

ter will discuss the social logics that inform the Post-Nehruvian discourse and thus what the discourse takes to be the ‘reality’ of world order. It will show that the discourse articulates the social logics of state sovereignty, enlightened self-interest, non-violence, non-discrimination and international unity in diversity as the building blocks of world order. The third section of the chapter is devoted to the political logics invoked by the Post-Nehruvian discourse and thus sheds light on the temporal and spatial-political ‘others’ that serve as reference points for the articulations of meanings and identities in the discourse. In the fourth and final section, the chapter will deal with the fantasmatic logics of the Post-Nehruvian discourse by exposing and elaborating the ideological fantasies and myths underpinning the discourse, namely the narratives of ‘Indian Greatness’ and ‘Indian Exceptionalism’. In doing so, the chapter will show that India’s foreign policy practices and its understanding of world order can be comprehended and explained as an interplay of these different logics which can thus serve as interpretative framework for making sense of India’s post-cold war foreign policy.

6.1 From Non-Alignment to Multi-Alignment: The Transformation of the Nehruvian Foreign Policy Discourse

Responding to the dislocatory moment in India’s foreign policy discourse, India’s policy-makers and leading government advisers did not turn away from the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse and non-alignment, but searched within the discourse for solutions to ‘repair’ the disrupted discursive order. This required, in particular, to fix the nodal point, around which the discourse was organized, and thus to find a new meaning or purpose for non-alignment in an ‘un-aligned’ world. Instead of contesting and replacing the Nehruvian discourse, the political actors rather sought to re-interpret, supplement and refashion the discourse and its hallmark non-alignment for a globalist and unipolar world. As PM Manmohan Singh (2005a) noted:

“while we remain faithful to the abiding principles of foreign policy laid down by Jawaharlal Nehru and followed consistently by our country since then during the past half a century and more, we are, nevertheless, alert to the compulsions imposed upon us by a rapidly transforming world order and we have the capacity, capability as a nation to respond successfully to the newly emerging challenges that confront us.”

Talking about India’s response to “the emergence of the so-called unipolar world” and the changes in its foreign policy after the end of the cold war, the BJP politician and Minister of External Affairs, Yashwant Sinha (2002b), pointed out:

“India's foreign policy has deep roots. It's a policy which was enunciated even before we became an independent country. [...] From time to time, the nuances of foreign policy have been undergoing a change but the basic thrust has remained more or less the same. [...] We have had to adjust our policies to suit the requirement of these changes. [...] At the same time, we have not diluted our commitment to the infrastructure of non-alignment. I personally believe that non-alignment is still a very relevant philosophy in international relations because the basic thesis of non-alignment is that we should be able to follow an independent foreign policy.”

Likewise, the senior Congress politician, Pranab Mukherjee (2008a), who served as Defence, External and Finance Minister in the UPA Government, underscored the continuing relevance of the Nehruvian foreign policy and non-alignment:

“We have an independent foreign policy based on the principles of non-alignment laid down by our first Prime Minister. All successive governments of all political shades have adhered to these principles. We guard our strategic autonomy and stand by the principles of independence and freedom of action in external relations. This has, however, not prevented us from developing friendships and good relations with all the major countries. We believe this is the strength of our foreign policy. Friendship between India and any one strategic partner is not at the expense of relations with any third country or another strategic partner.”

The role of non-alignment for dealing with the challenges of the post-cold war era is also highlighted by the Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran (2006):

“The end of the Cold War, the accelerating process of globalization and the emergence of transnational challenges have become the defining features of contemporary international relations. India's foreign policy has had to adapt to this rapidly changing international environment. [...] While meeting these challenges, India has maintained a remarkable continuity in the fundamental tenets of its policy. The core of this continuity is to ensure autonomy in our decision making. It is to ensure independence of thought and action. This was and remains the essence of our adherence to the principle of Non-Alignment. It is also the basis of our commitment to the Panchsheel, or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence [...].”

Summarizing the task in front of Indian policy-makers and strategic thinkers after the end of the cold war, the policy analyst and civil servant K. Subrahmanyam, who is often seen as the doyen of India's strategic community and national security debates (see Menon 2012a, Ogden 2014a), noted:

“While there is worldwide recognition that with the end of the Cold War and emergence of a unipolar system which is under pressure to be transformed into a polycentric one there is an imperative need to evolve a new flexible framework for foreign and security policies for major powers like India, large sections of this country's political, bureaucratic, academic and media elite still find it difficult to free themselves from the shibboleths of the last three decades. Jawaharlal Nehru formulated nonalignment as the optimum security and foreign policy strategy for a country like India in a nuclear bipolar world. [...] The essence of nonalignment was the freedom of exercising options on the basis of perceived national interests. [...] A true Nehruvian should try to advance India's national security and interest by adapting Nehru's strategy for a bipolar world to one most appropriate for a polycentric world. This must necessarily begin with a critical analysis of pluses and minuses of Nehruvian policy and more so of its deep frozen version in the decades that followed after his death” (Subrahmanyam 1999: viii/x)

In addition to K. Subrahmanyam, several proponents of a more ‘realist’ and ‘pragmatic’ foreign policy such as C. Raja Mohan (1999, 2004), Jaswant Singh (1999), Brajesh Mishra ([2000] 2005), Jasjit Singh (2001a), Bharat Karnad (2002a), Sanjaya Baru (2006), G. Parthasarathy (2007a) or Shashi Tharoor (2012a) explicitly refer to Nehru and do not really question the utility of non-alignment but rather the way how it was put into practice and, in the post-Nehru period, reduced to an ‘ideology’ or ‘mantra’ characterized by Third Worldism, anti-Westernism and moralism, thereby neglecting its (alleged) underlying rationality.³⁹ This ‘rationality’ was, as we have seen in chapter 5, to insulate India from the negative effects of the cold war and enable it to get the most from both superpowers. Likewise, the BJP, as the main political opponent of the Congress Party, has not directly contested Nehruvianism and non-alignment, when it has been in power from 1998-2004, but rather sought to present its foreign policy as a continuation of India’s post-independence foreign policy, coupled with some necessary adjustments to the ‘imperatives’ of a post-cold war world. As the BJP politician and Minister of State in the MEA, Vasundhara Raje, pointed out: “Independence of mind and autonomy of action as manifested in our abiding faith in the principle of Non-alignment has been the hallmark of our foreign policy as much with the first Indian Government headed by Late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru as with the present Government and no deviation is contemplated from these well articulated principles” (Lok Sabha Debates 1998a). Likewise, Yashwant Sinha (2002a) noted:

“India's foreign policy has shown elements of both constancy and change over the last five decades. While we have preserved the basic principles that were enunciated by the founding fathers of the Republic, we have also crafted creative responses to the challenges of the post Cold War and the post globalisation world. This has been made possible, in large part, because on foreign policy and national security matters, our country has had a broad national consensus, cutting across all political divides, ever since independence.”

Though the BJP also attempted to present itself as a political alternative to the Congress Party and occasionally invoked the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse⁴⁰, it has not, as will become clear in the course of this study, transcended the Nehruvian discourse and replaced it by a new hegemonic project, but rather tried to achieve a change from within and has thus contributed to the successful transformation of the dislocated hegemonic Nehruvian discourse. This transformation was a very gradual process that came to a tentative ‘end’ in the course of the first tenure of the UPA Government (2004-2009), which re-affirmed and took

³⁹ While some might dismiss such references as mere rhetorical devices or strategies, the very fact that policy-makers or analysts feel the need to develop their arguments against the background of Nehruvianism or non-alignment and underscore their support for their ‘original’ rationale shows to what extent the discourse has become sedimented in India and shapes the discursive practices of almost all relevant actors.

⁴⁰ The Hyper-nationalist discourse will be discussed in detail in chapter 7.

further the political, economic and strategic changes initiated by previous governments, thereby contributing to the sedimentation of the (new) policy practices.

Nehruvianism and non-alignment have predominantly, and even for oppositional political forces, served as the common reference point for making sense of the new structural circumstances and requirements of the post-cold war era. In other words, for recreating the dislocated discursive structure, political actors largely drew on and re-fashioned the existent Nehruvian discourse. The processes of dislocation and transformation of the discourse have, however, not taken place within a discursive vacuum, but have been shaped by the global sedimentation of the 'Western' discursive hegemony which articulates market economy and liberal democracy as the universal and superior form of political and economic order and places the West at the centre of global politics. Thus, in the moment of dislocation, India's political actors had no unlimited agency to re-structure the Nehruvian discourse and to re-define India's role in the world order, but were also restricted by global discourses such as the discourses of globalization and unipolarity and the subject positions they articulated for India and other countries.

Post-Nehruvianism, as the outcome of the transformation of the hegemonic foreign policy discourse, has shifted away from the 'traditional' Nehruvian discourse in two respects: first, it accommodated to the discourse of globalization (cf. Dixit 2001: 45; Vajpayee 2003b; Singh [M.] 2004a; Mukherjee 2005; Ahluwalia 2007b; Saran 2006) and largely abandoned the socialist, state-directed economic policy. Hence, India initiated a *gradual* process of economic liberalization, including reducing restrictions of imports, a major liberalization of foreign direct investments (FDI) and the introduction of greater competition in various sectors of the Indian economy (see Mukherji 2007b; Nayar 2007b). Though the Post-Nehruvian discourse endorses globalization and the economic reform agenda, the discourse still displays elements of the 'traditional' Nehruvian discourse such as self-reliance (*swadeshi*) and thus a certain ambivalence with regard to India's response to the so-called 'imperatives' of globalization and the exact direction of India's economic policy. Therefore, in justifying the economic reforms, Indian leaders and parties are drawing on core elements of the Nehruvian discourse such as *swadeshi* in an attempt to re-fashion them and link together different social demands and interests (see Government of India 1996, Congress Party 1999, BJP 2004).

By affirming and incorporating the discourse of globalization, the political actors developed an increased awareness for economic interdependence and the need of a economic and political re-engagement with the world, in particular with the U.S. and other emerging economies such as China, ASEAN, Brazil or South Africa. The necessity of a rapprochement towards the

United States was also imparted by the discourse of unipolarity that emerged after the end of the cold war and represented the U.S. as the sole, uncontested superpower in the international system (Dixit 1998a: 223; Sinha 2003a; Vajpayee 2003a; Mohan 2004: 56; Subrahmanyam 2012b: 22-23). The global re-engagement, which has also affected the way how Indian policy-makers define India's national interests and security, was also motivated by the desire to overcome India's relative isolation after the end of the cold war and India's 'reduction' to Pakistan's South Asian rival. "South Asia had always been an inadequate framework", as Brajesh Mishra ([2000] 2005: 19) noted, "for situating the Indian security paradigm. As India re-discovers its extended neighbourhood – Central Asia, the Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia – through greater economic, commercial and defence engagement, the role of a secular and democratic India as a factor of stability on the Asian continent becomes increasingly apart". In a way, this re-engagement with Asia and the world can be, as S.D. Muni and C. Raja Mohan note (2004: 313), represented as a return to Nehru's activist and globalist foreign policy and his vision for India's critical role for a resurgent and united Asia.

Second, the Non-Aligned Movement has lost its central role in India's foreign policy and is today rather seen as one political grouping among many (see Sibal 2003a, Singh [M.] 2009a, Krishna 2010, Tharoor 2012b). As Shyam Saran (2012a) notes, "non-alignment was a strategy and not a dogma. Its relevance as a principle of our foreign policy must also be distinguished from the fate of the Non-Aligned Movement, which was specific to a binary Cold-War construct that no longer exists". And the foreign secretary, J.N. Dixit (1998b) adds:

"Remaining nonaligned would always be a valid frame of reference for India's foreign policy because it implies a clear intention of retaining our freedom of options to take policy decisions according to our perceived interests. Remaining a NAM member or participant will only be relevant if the movement has a basic cohesion and a commonality of purpose and capability to work together for the collective interests of the developing countries. And that too within the basic framework of India's own interests. If this prospect is not there, the NAM need not be a sine quo non of our foreign policy."

Against this backdrop, non-alignment, the original nodal point of the Nehruvian discourse, was re-interpreted and re-fashioned as multi-alignment in the Post-Nehruvian discourse. Affirming that the prime objective of India's foreign policy and non-alignment has always been to maintain India's strategic autonomy, the discourse argues that this objective can today best be achieved if India aligns with all key actors (see Mohan 1999, Baru 2006, Mukherjee 2008b, Chellaney 2010b, Rao 2011a, Singh [M.] 2011, Menon 2012a, Saran 2012a; Tharoor 2012a). "By strategic autonomy", as the former Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal (2012b) notes, "India means friendly ties and mutually beneficial relations with all countries, with its own legitimate – not purely selfish – interests primarily in mind". As the BJP leader L.K. Advani

(2008a) notes affirmatively, this “omnidirectional foreign policy seeks to engage with all the major centres of power”. By forming various kinds of partnerships and issue-based networks, India, as the discourse maintains, can forge close political, economic and strategic relations with a wide range of partners to promote India’s national interests in a globalized world, while maintaining its strategic autonomy (Parthasarathy 2007a; Tharoor 2012a: 426-427). It allows preserving core, and widely shared principles of the traditional Nehruvian foreign policy, namely independence and freedom in decision-making, while giving the Indian political establishment greater room for manoeuvre to protect and promote India’s national interests. As the Minister of External Affairs Salman Khurshid explained:

“We don’t like putting ourselves in a box anywhere. Frankly, the language that we used during the heyday of the NAM movement is today translated into a modern-day phrase that we use, which is strategic autonomy. We remain strategically autonomous. Remaining strategically autonomous is, we believe, the right moral thing to do. It may have specific advantages and disadvantages, given the situation in the world, but we do believe that our foreign policy has a huge element of moral principles built into it, and it is consistent with those moral principles that we don’t place ourselves in any group or any alliance that would be inimical to anybody else” (quoted in Suryanarayana 2013: 3-4).

Likewise, the authors of the proposal for a new Indian grand strategy, ‘Non-Alignment 2.0’, note (Khilnani et al. 2012: iv/8):

“Strategic autonomy has been the defining value and continuous goal of India’s international policy ever since the inception of the Republic. Defined initially in the terminology of NonAlignment, that value we believe continues to remain at the core of India’s global engagements even today, in a world that has changed drastically since the mid-twentieth century. The challenge is to renovate that value and goal for the twenty-first century – thereby enabling the continuous and cumulative pursuit of India’s interests in a world at once full of uncertainty and of great opportunity. [...] The core objective of a strategic approach should be to give India maximum options in its relations with the outside world – that is, to enhance India’s strategic space and capacity for independent agency – which in turn will give it maximum options for its own internal development.”

By shifting the nodal point from non-alignment to multi-alignment, the Post-Nehruvian discourse thus paved the way for India’s re-engagement of the world, while avoiding strategic entanglements and one-sided dependencies which could impede and thus threaten the deep-seated desire and demand for the autonomy and independence of India’s decision making. Hence, while seeking closer ties with the United States and other major powers, India, however, may neither jeopardize its strategic autonomy and join an alliance-like relationship that threatens friendly and stable relations other states nor ignore the continuing importance of partnerships with other post-colonial and developing countries (Sinha 2003b; Baru 2006; Mukherjee 2008a; Sikri 2009: 277f.).

As we will see in this chapter, India’s post-cold war foreign policy discourse has been organized around strategic autonomy and multi-alignment. Almost all major controversies and de-

bates in Indian foreign policy (e.g. India's nuclear tests, the nuclear agreement with the United States or India's response to international crises such as Iran's nuclear programme or the Iraq war) ultimately came down to the question whether India's behaviour was in line with strategic autonomy and multi-alignment. The persistent importance of strategic autonomy in India's foreign policy does not merely reflect some strategic calculations, but is a deep-seated orientation that derives from the way how the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse has articulated India's national identity and is thus likely to remain a core element that circumscribes and conditions India's foreign policy. It would thus be incorrect to represent the recurrent references to non-alignment or autonomy merely as popular sentiments or rhetoric, while India's 'real' foreign policy has been moved away from these commitments. Rather, India's foreign policy discourse has re-defined the purpose of non-alignment in a post-cold war world. What Indian policy-makers 'really' mean or want to achieve when referring to non-alignment or strategic autonomy does not need to concern us here; the very fact that policy-makers regularly do so, regardless of which party they belong to, demonstrates that non-alignment, autonomy and independence still serve as main sources of identification and crucial elements for forging a political consensus in India – and are thus at the centre of the hegemonic Post-Nehruvian discourse and the chain of equivalence it (re-)produced.

To signify the transformation of the Nehruvian discourse, the Post-Nehruvian discourse indeed recurrently articulates a greater 'realism' or 'pragmatism' as cornerstones of India's 'new' outlook to the world in order to underscore that India is not circumscribed by a narrow understanding of non-alignment (any longer) but seeks to align with all to further its national interests. As PM Singh (2005b) noted, "international relations are ultimately power relations, based on realpolitik, not on sentiment. And howsoever, we may regret it, international relations are not a morality play". And his national security adviser Shivshankar Menon (2012a) adds that India must "use realpolitik to influence the behaviour of your friends and enemies. That is precisely what successive Indian governments under Atal Behari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh have done." This, however, does not mean, as will become clear in the course of this study, that India has simply shifted from Nehruvian 'idealism' to 'realism' and 'pragmatism' or that India's contemporary foreign policy can be adequately understood or explained with realist IR theory.

The Post-Nehruvian discourse transcends such simplistic categorizations and consists of elements that can be subsumed under all these three labels. This also means that India has not simply given up its 'moral' or 'ideological' concerns such as non-violence or third world solidarity, but still seeks to strike a balance between its – discursively conveyed – values, inter-

ests and the imperatives of world politics.⁴¹ In this respect, India's contemporary foreign policy is not very different from the Nehruvian foreign policy, as even C. Raja Mohan and others who claim that India has shifted to 'realism' and 'pragmatism' concede, thereby partially undermining their own argument. Exemplifying the problems linked to these categories, the retired diplomat Chinmaya R. Gharekhan (2009: xvi-xvii) noted for instance: "By and large, the governments in New Delhi since the end of the Cold War have followed realistic and pragmatic foreign policies. This is not to suggest that Mr Nehru was simply an idealist and followed a strictly 'principled' foreign policy. [...] Mrs Indira Gandhi was, if anything, even more pragmatic". 'Realism' and 'pragmatism' are empty signifiers in the discourse, because they suggest a 'rational', 'balanced' and 'practical' foreign policy, but whose exact meaning remains rather nebulous whereby they can unite different social forces in a hegemonic project. What is considered 'realistic', 'pragmatic' or 'common sense' at a given point of time is always the product of a successful hegemonic articulation. In other words, in the course of the transformation of the hegemonic discourse, it was re-defined what it means to pursue a 'pragmatic' or 'realistic' foreign policy. In this sense, the framing of neo-liberal economic reforms, for instance, as a 'pragmatic' policy reflects not only the discursive hegemony of the Post-Nehruvian discourse in India, but also the discursive hegemony of the 'West' and its liberal socio-historic project in world politics.

Instead of framing India's foreign policy through the simplistic categories of 'realism', 'pragmatism' and 'idealism', which can ultimately describe the foreign policy of every country in the world, the subsequent analysis of the social, political and fantasmatic logics underpinning India's hegemonic foreign policy discourse seeks to provide a more sophisticated and multi-dimensional explanatory narrative of the changes, continuities and apparent contradictions in India's contemporary foreign policy.

6.2 The Social Logics of the Post-Nehruvian Discourse: The Pillars of World Order

Having discussed the transformation and nodal point of the hegemonic discourse, the chapter will now look at the different social logics that inform Post-Nehruvianism and their embodiment in India's foreign policy practices. This allows us not only to illuminate what the discourse takes to be the 'reality' of world order, but also major events in India's post-cold war

⁴¹ In other words, there is no national interest, for instance, that exists independently of certain moral and ideological considerations and can be identified or assessed in a purely 'rational' or 'objective' way. In fact, the very notion of a national interest is already ideological, because it implies that states are ultimately relatively homogenous entities in which a common 'national' bond allows to transcend the different societal demands and interests and promote the interests of all.

foreign policy. The Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates five different social logics: state sovereignty, enlightened self-interest, non-violence, non-discrimination and international unity in diversity. These different logics are interrelated and overlapping, but there exist also tensions between them.

6.2.1 State Sovereignty

The social logic of state sovereignty regards states as the main entities in world politics and draws a rather rigid line between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, thereby maintaining a particular organization of socio-political space. Given the absence of a higher authority which has the legitimate monopoly on the use of force in the international system, states are ultimately themselves responsible for maintaining their security and interests (Sinha ([2002] 2007: 311; Singh [M.] 2009b). As the national security adviser Shivshankar Menon (2010a) noted: “The nation-state is still the basic unit of international security. Sovereignty and territorial integrity remain the foundation of the international system, as do traditional security concerns and zero-sum competition between nation states”.

On the other hand, states are also endowed with particular rights and privileges such as the principles of non-interference into internal affairs or self-determination. Accordingly, a foreign policy informed by this logic highlights and defends the independence of decision-making and is reproduced through numerous ritualized practices such as diplomacy, border controls or the formally equal status of states in international organizations. State sovereignty is the most direct manifestation of strategic autonomy and has thus a special status in Indian foreign policy. As a result, major foreign policy events and debates always boil down to questions of national sovereignty. Responding to the opposition’s allegations that the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement “would be mortgaging our independence of Foreign Policy”, as the BJP leader L.K. Advani claimed, and negatively “affect the country’s independent nuclear programme”, thereby making India “a client State of the United States” and “dictating what India’s foreign policy should be” (Lok Sabha Debates 18 Dec 2006: 534/542-545),⁴² PM Singh (2008a) underscored: “There is nothing in this Agreement which will affect our strategic autonomy or our ability to pursue an independent foreign policy. I state categorically that our foreign policy will at all times be determined by our own assessment of our national interest. This has been true in the past and will be true in future regarding our relations with big powers as well as with our neighbours in West Asia, notably Iran, Iraq, Palestine and the Gulf

⁴² In a similar way, the communist parties reproached the UPA Government for making India a “subordinate ally” (Karat 2008) of the United States and subjugating India’s foreign policy under U.S. imperialist interests (see Communist Party of India (M) et al. 2008).

countries.” The Congress and other oppositional parties launched similar attacks against the BJP-led NDA Government after it formed a strategic partnership with the United States in 2000, claiming that the BJP, in the words of the Congress politician and later foreign minister K. Natwar Singh, “was taking the country straight into the US camp” (quoted in Times of India 2001a).⁴³

The social logic of state sovereignty suggests that India should be very cautious when entering into binding agreements and avoid, as far as possible, one-sided political, economic and strategic dependencies and entanglements. As PM Singh (2010a) notes, “India is too large a country to be boxed into any alliance or regional or sub-regional arrangements, whether trade, economic or political”. In a similar vein, Yashwant Singh defended and clarified the rapprochement of the BJP-led NDA Government towards the U.S. by saying that “we are too big, too great and too large a nation to be cowed down by anyone. We will not be cowed down. We will continue to follow our policies independently and according to our best judgement of our national interest” (Sinha 2003b: 132).

For preserving the autonomy of India’s decision-making process, the logic asserts that India must seek to forge “well-rounded strategic relationships and partnerships with all the major powers” (Rao 2011a) and “never to define relations with any one country through the prism of any other country or regional equations or alliance systems” (Sibal 2003b: 79). Accordingly, India has formed simultaneously strategic partnerships with the United States, Russia, China, Japan and the European Union (Subrahmanyam 2005: 551-552). By “creating mutually beneficial relationships of interdependence” (Baru 2013a: 37) with all these countries, India is maximizing its room for manoeuvre towards them and thus maintaining its foreign policy independence (Saran 2006; Mukherjee 2008b; Mohan 2009: 54). “It is important to have multiple choices”, as the former NSA Brajesh Mishra (2007) pointed out, “to be not dependent on one source. Partnership with as many countries as possible must be India’s aim. Promiscuity in international relations is not only permissible but is most desirable. To have only one partner shows weakness not loyalty”. Similarly, the retired Indian diplomat Rajiv Sikri (2009: 277-278) notes with respect to India’s relations with the major powers: “In today’s complicated and fast changing geo-political situation, India has wisely diversified its foreign policy options, but must retain flexibility in order to be able to pursue an independent foreign policy, on which there is an overwhelming national consensus”.

⁴³ Again, whether the opposition parties are really serious about this critique or only want to score points against the government is not our prime concern here, but the fact that all Indian opposition parties, unlike the political opposition in European states for instance, regularly attack the government on the grounds that it has compromised the country’s independence and is not following India’s national interests but the dictates of an ‘external actor’.

Sovereignty and defence

The strong adherence to the social logic of sovereignty has also implications for a state's defence policy. As the former Air Commodore and director of the government-funded Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), Jasjit Singh (2013: 19) explains, "a sovereign nation-state can only remain sovereign if it has the ability to defend its territorial integrity and its vital interests with all means at its disposal. This is what sovereignty is all about – in terms of both its domestic dimensions and its external dimensions in dealing with other states". This, in turn, rules out military alliances: "India is not a member of any military alliance or strategic grouping", as the Ministry of Defence (2003/04: 14) notes in its Annual Report, "nor is this consistent with our policies. India thus requires a certain independent deterrent capability". As a result, India ultimately needs to rely on its own defence resources to safeguard its sovereignty and national interests. The social logic of state sovereignty was also activated in the context of India's nuclear weapons tests in 1998.⁴⁴ Nuclear weapons were represented as the ultimate source of state sovereignty preserving the autonomy of India's decision-making and its territorial integrity. As PM Vajpayee (2003c) noted, "India cannot be dependent on others for her security. Therefore, the first act of my Government five years ago was to make India, for her self-defence, a nuclear weapons state".

These concerns about potential infringements of Indian sovereignty further increased after the end of the cold war, given the discontinuation of the close strategic partnership with the Soviet Union and the sedimentation of the 'Western' hegemony in the international system. As the BJP (2000 [1992]: 34) pointed out:

"The post-cold war international relations are characterized by fluidity and turbulence. The international situation is yet to evolve into a settled pattern. But one fact is crystal clear. It is that the post-cold war world lacks a balanced power structure. This is inherently bad for the world because untrammelled power in the hands of one country or a group of countries with ideological similarity would inevitably lead to resurgence of hegemonic attitudes. Even today hegemonistic tendencies abound. The treatment meted out to the countries of the Third World by a group of powerful countries clearly violates a fundamental principle of international relations viz. the principle of sovereign equality of nations. They exert pressure openly on the countries of the third world to follow their philosophy and their political and economic models."

With the Western countries, particularly the United States, and a 'co-opted' Russia dominating the international political and economic agenda and institutions such as the UNSC, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, India and other developing countries were pressurized and forced into the 'new world order' through military interventions, sanc-

⁴⁴ The development of India's nuclear weapons programme and the decision to conduct nuclear tests in 1998 can, as will become clear in the course of this study, not be explained by a single social logic but must be conceptualized as a complex of interplay of various logics.

tions against human rights violations or structural adjustment policies (Dixit 1998a: 223; Sreenivasan 2003; Dubey 2013: 13/15-16). In particular, the new willingness of the major powers to interfere either through the UN or NATO into internal conflicts such as in the former Yugoslavia or Iraq was worrisome for India, “setting a dangerous precedent that cannot but cause concern to all nations who cherish their political sovereignty” and “representing a form of “unilateral action” that undermines international norms and institutions (BJP 2000: 75).

Against this backdrop, nuclear weapons were represented as the last instrument to safeguard India’s autonomy and independence, as argued by K. Subrahmanyam (2002: 63f./83):

“The ability of the three nuclear weapons states, the United States, Britain, and France to devastate a nonnuclear-weapons state, Yugoslavia, while the other two nuclear-weapons states, Russia and China, could do nothing to stop it, reinforces the Indian case for pursuing a credible minimum nuclear deterrent. [...] Accompanying this high-technology campaign against a defenseless state in the name of some hypocritical universal morality, was the shrill international propaganda war conducted through the international media to project a world of good versus evil. [...] The issue before India is whether it wants to preserve its sovereignty won after a long freedom struggle, and whether it should try to develop one sixth of mankind economically, socially, politically, and technologically according to the democratic wishes of the Indian people without the threat of foreign intervention of the type we saw in Yugoslavia. [...] It was not accidental that the only countries that voiced strong protests against the bombing of Yugoslavia happened to be Russia, China, and India, all nuclear-weapons powers.”

Non-interference into internal affairs

In particular, Indian policy-makers were concerned about an internationalization of the Kashmir dispute which was, also due to alleged human rights violations, back on the international agenda after the end of the cold war. Given a strong assertion of its sovereignty and a firm stand that there can be “no compromise on India’s unity and integrity” (MEA 2004b: 8), the Post-Nehruvian discourse still objects to interferences into the internal affairs of other states, even though it has endorsed the globalization discourse and the need of trans-border trade and commerce, regional economic integration and a peaceful environment for India’s own socio-economic development (Vajpayee 2002a: 499, Sinha 2003c; Baru 2006). Nevertheless, the logics firm stance on state sovereignty recurs repeatedly and the process of globalization is simultaneously represented as a challenge for Indian sovereignty ranging from transnational terrorist groups, which make use of new communication technologies and recognize no state boundaries (Anthony 2008) to foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in India and the presence of foreign capital jeopardizing India’s economic independence (Aiyar 2009: 189ff.; Dubey 2013: 15). Rejecting the notion that we are in a “post-Westphalian world in which globalisation has reduced classical identity of States as autonomous entities”, the foreign secretary Ranjan Mathai (2011) points out that “the nation

state remains the primary unit of international politics, and regional architecture cannot end competition among nation states”. The logic of state sovereignty also shapes the attitude of Indian governments towards ‘democracy promotion’ and the principle of the ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P).

In spite of being the largest democracy in the world, the promotion of democracy has never been a priority in Indian foreign policy. As the secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Anil Wadhwa (2014) notes, “though India is a robust practitioner of democratic pluralism and religious moderation, we don’t believe in intrusive prescriptive diktats. On the contrary, we have always maintained and said that it is up to the people of the region to decide the pace and the means to achieve those goals, keeping in mind their traditions and history. This is why we oppose armed conflict or external intervention as a way of resolving political issues in the region or elsewhere in the world”. However, India joined in 1999, under the BJP-led NDA Government, the Community of Democracies (CD), a multilateral platform that is committed to “work together to promote and strengthen democracy” across the world (Community of Democracies 2000). “This was a significant shift in India’s foreign policy”, as the retired Indian diplomat S.D. Muni (2009: v) pointed out, “as hitherto, India had not joined any international effort aimed at promoting and strengthening democracy as the desirable political system in any country”.

While Indian governments recognized the shared commitment to democracy as an important source of leverage in forging closer relations with the United States and other ‘Western’ liberal democracies, there were, at the same time, clear limits to India’s multilateral engagement in democracy promotion. According to C. Raja Mohan (2008: 29-30), “[t]o be sure, India recognized the value of sharing experiences and best practices but was not willing to inject more into the notion of democracy promotion. [...] Thus, India went along with the United States on the Community of Democracy initiative, but it was not prepared to invest significant political or diplomatic energies into it”. As a result, India was neither willing to support the Centre for Asian democracy, proposed by the U.S. with clearly anti-China undertones, nor to assume the leadership role in the CD offered by the Clinton Administration (ibid.: 29). In particular, the NDA Government underscored that India would never participate in a “crusade for the universalisation of democracy” (Sibal 2003a: 254) and forcibly export democracy to reluctant states.

The succeeding UPA Government under Manmohan Singh followed a similarly nuanced approach. While openly endorsing democracy as “the natural order of political organization in today’s world” (Singh [M.] 2005c) and supporting the creation of the United Nations Democ-

racy Fund (UNDEF) in 2005, whose stated objective is the provision of financial resources for building and strengthening democratic institutions and processes (UNDEF 2005), PM Singh (2005g) pointed out that India would only “help those countries which want that help. There is no imposition, there is no question of our, for example, being forced to be a partner in any act of aggression against any other country and there is no question that we will ever entertain even that sort of thought. [...] If some countries want our help in managing their elections, in voter registration, in setting up an audit office in which we have great expertise, we would be providing that”. In line with this policy stance, Indian governments have largely refrained from supporting UN resolutions condemning the human rights situations in countries like Iran, North Korea or Myanmar and the imposition of sanctions (Sullivan 2013: 154-155).

Accordingly, Indian governments have also not fully endorsed the principle of the ‘responsibility to protect’ and did not support military interventions in Syria or Libya. As Muchkund Dubey (2007: 175-176) asserts:

“This extension of the mandate of the Security Council relating to the authorisation of military intervention by it is not tenable in international law. The so-called norm of collective international ‘responsibility to protect’ is still under dispute. This norm is also susceptible to being used selectively and discriminatory, depending upon the political convenience and national interest of the dominant nation or nations. [...] Moreover, judgements with regard to what constitutes a failed state or sovereign governments which have proved powerless or unwilling to protect, are bound to be subjective and under the influence of a variety of extraneous factors”.

While Indian policy-makers were initially very sceptical of the principle of R2P, stressing that the United Nations, in the words of the Indian UN permanent representative, Nirupam Sen, “had not yet produced a common understanding of the concept in question, particularly in the context of national sovereignty” and is thus “lacking a legitimate mandate” (UNGA 2011: 9), the Indian government has, influenced by the developments in the Arab world and the civil war in Sri Lanka, cautiously shifted its position from 2009 onwards and acknowledged that the “responsibility to protect its population is one of the foremost responsibilities of every state” (Singh Puri 2009).

Responding to the killings of thousand of Tamilian civilians by the Sri Lankan army in the final stages of the civil war, the Indian government deplored the “humanitarian situation” and reminded the Sri Lankan Government of its “responsibility to protect its own citizens”, but, at the same time, underscored that a solution of the conflict must “be achieved within the political framework” of Sri Lanka and cannot be imposed from the outside. This indicates that the Post-Nehruvian discourse recognizes the first two pillars of R2P, namely that sovereignty

entails certain responsibilities and that there is a need for a “collective response by the international community to ensure that mass atrocities like genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity do not take place” (Singh Puri 2012). However, the discourse has not endorsed the third pillar of R2P that encompasses coercive measures. This also reflects in India’s selective voting behaviour in the United Nations with respect to the crises in Libya and Syria, oscillating between the condemnation of human rights atrocities and its principal opposition against external interventions (Mohan 2011, Sibal 2013a; Singh Puri 2013).

The way how the ‘responsibility to protect’ as well as ‘democracy promotion’ are framed by the Post-Nehruvian discourse cannot be entirely understood through the social logic of state sovereignty, but must also be seen in connection with the social logics of non-violence and the enlightened self-interest, which will be further discussed in the following sections of this chapter. While the social logic of non-violence includes a deep-seated scepticism of the possibility of military conflict resolutions, the logic of the enlightened self-interest suggests, inter alia, that all states are primarily driven by their national interests. Consequently, there is always the danger that states invoking R2P are influenced by narrow self-interests rather than humanitarian concerns and exploit the principle to undermine a state’s sovereignty. At the same time, a military intervention, regime change or democratic transition is also not necessary in India’s interest. For example, given India’s dependency on oil and gas from the Middle East, the various interventions of ‘Western’ states and the turmoil in the Arab world had negative effects on India’s energy security (Menon 2011, 2013, Parthasarathy 2014).

The balancing of the social logics of the enlightened self-interest and state sovereignty also shapes India’s policies towards its neighbours in South Asia. Outlining India’s regional policy, the former diplomat Achal Malhotra (2014) notes,

“India adheres to its benign and noble policy of non-interference into internal affairs of other countries in the region. However, if an act – innocent or deliberate – by any country has the potential of impinging upon India’s national interests, India does not hesitate in quick and timely intervention. Mind it: intervention is qualitatively different from interference, particularly when the request for intervention is made by the country concerned [...] India has endeavoured to deal with the government-of-the-day, be it a democracy, monarchy or military dictatorship, insisting that the choice of the form of government is best left to the people of the country concerned. India does not believe in exporting democracy but does not hesitate in promoting democracy wherever potential exists.”

While the Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates a sovereignty-oriented foreign policy on the global level, which largely rules out interventions into the internal affairs of other states, its commitment to the sovereign equality of states is less persistent in India’s direct neighbourhood, where Indian governments are more inclined to interfere when India’s interests suggest so. Given the conviction that India is the pre-eminent power in South Asia and that other

states must acknowledge India's special status in the region, the Post-Nehruvian discourse enunciates the expectation that the smaller states respect India's national interests and security concerns and, for instance, do not allow a military presence of an external power such as China in South Asia (cf. Kumar 2007, Sikri 2009, Swaraj 2010). This also affects India's engagement in democracy promotion in the region. As the Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran (2005) notes:

“As a flourishing democracy, India would certainly welcome more democracy in our neighbourhood, but that too is something that we may encourage and promote; it is not something that we can impose upon others. While democracy remains India's abiding conviction, the importance of our neighbourhood requires that we remain engaged with whichever government is exercising authority in any country in our neighbourhood.”

Accordingly, Indian governments have largely supported the development or maintenance of democratic practices in Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives by providing financial resources and assistance in capacity building or mediating between conflict parties as during the civil war in Nepal as long as it had no adverse effect on India's national interests and security concerns. In Myanmar, by contrast, these national interests and security concerns, namely energy security, the North-eastern separatist movements using Myanmar as a safe heaven and China's growing influence in Myanmar, meant that India abandoned the open endorsement of the democratic forces in the 1990s and began to cooperate with the military junta. Consequently, Indian governments largely refrained from openly criticizing the regime – for instance, after the junta's brutal crackdown of the protests by Buddhist monks in 2007 – and opposed sanctions or external pressure (Tharoor 2012a: 111, The Hindu 2007; Mohan 2008: 36ff.).

6.2.2 Enlightened Self-Interest

The social logic of the enlightened self-interest acknowledges that world politics is ultimately competitive and driven by the self-interests of states. All states attempt to maximize their own interests and thus India too, as PM Singh (2006d) points out, must be guided by its “enlightened national interest”. What makes this social logic to talk of the *enlightened* self-interest is the conviction that the pursuit of national self-interest can and must be combined with a commitment to fundamental values and the broader concerns of humanity. This “realism-plus” recognizes the need for normative concerns and principles to find cooperative solutions to common challenges such as war and peace (Menon 2012a).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse represents India as a developing country which has limited power resources and is still marginalized in several international decision-making bodies such as the UNSC, the IMF or the World Bank. Therefore, India cannot necessarily rely on a sup-

portive international environment that shares its interests or concerns, but is ultimately self-responsible for safeguarding and, if necessary, defending its national interest in interactions with other countries, international organizations or in international negotiations. As Muchkund Dubey (2013: 1) notes, “[t]he fundamental purpose of India’s foreign policy – and for that matter of any other nation’s – is to promote its national interest. [...] In the hierarchy of national interests, security occupies the preeminent position”. According to External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee (2007a), “concern for the security of a nation is inherent in the very concept of a nation-state. National security implies the creation of national and international political conditions favourable to the protection and furtherance of vital national interests. The core strength of a nation lies in its ability to defend itself and maintain its freedom to employ elements of its national power to further its vital interests”. This poses a particular challenge for India, because, as the Ministry of Defence (2009/10: 9) highlights in its annual report: “Few countries of the world face the range of security concerns that India faces today”.

National security

After the end of the cold war in particular, India’s foreign policy discourse did not share the ‘Western’ euphoria of a ‘new world order’, but spoke of a phase of uncertainty in which India’s “security environment also deteriorated” (Vajpayee 2003a: 196) in a world “dominated by the industrially and technologically advanced countries led by the United States”, whose first objective “would be to create an international political system in which states and civil societies would be structured on the basis of political and economic terms of reference acceptable to the US and those world powers which would be responsive to their interests unipolar world” (Dixit 1998c). In addition, the discourse articulated concerns “about the nuclear environment in India’s neighbourhood” (Government of India 1998).

Invoking the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse, the BJP-led NDA government sought to represent “national security considerations” (Vajpayee 1998a), in particular the “collaborated threat” posed by Pakistan and China (Fernandes 1998), as the prime rationale for India’s 1998 nuclear tests. Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse shortly surfaced in 1998, as will be shown in chapter 7 in greater detail, it did not hold sway and manage to replace the dislocated Nehruvian discourse. While the political opposition unanimously rejected the articulation of the collaborative Sino-Pakistani threat as the prime motivation for the nuclear tests (see Lok Sabha Debates 1998a, Lok Sabha Debates 1998b), the NDA Government soon moved away from its confrontational rhetoric and sought to re-engage China and Pakistan. It also framed the nuclear tests, in a more traditional Nehruvian sense, as a response to

the “nuclear apartheid” (Singh [Jasw.] 1998) of a discriminatory global nuclear order and a demonstration of India’s technological and political prowess. As a result, the NDA Government did not show any urgency to make India’s nuclear deterrent operational, but adopted a memorandum on no further nuclear tests and declared that it would continue to push for the global elimination of nuclear weapons (Vajpayee 1998b).

Against the backdrop of India’s economic liberalization, which led to high economic growth rates and an opening to the world and the gradual improvement of the relations with the United States and other major powers in the subsequent years, the Post-Nehruvian discourse has articulated a more optimistic outlook on the global security environment (Singh [M.] 2004b; Mohan 2005: 32ff.; Mukherjee 2007). Highlighting the opportunities and challenges of the post-cold war era for India, the foreign secretary Shivshankar Menon (2009) noted:

“The true realization of our foreign policy potential had to wait for the end of the bipolar world in 1989 and our economic reform policies, opening up the Indian economy to the world. [...] The post Cold War external environment of a globalizing world, without rival political alliances, gave India the opportunity to improve relations with all the major powers. The risk of a direct conflict between two or more major powers had also diminished due to the interdependence created by globalization. [...] Paradoxically, some of the same forces of globalization – the evolution of technology, the mobility of capital and so on – which have led to the decline or collapse of the Westphalian state order are also the source of our greatest dangers.[...] Looking ahead, the real factors of risk that threaten systemic stability come from larger, global issues like terrorism, energy security and environmental and climate change. With globalization and the spread of technology, threats have also globalised and now span borders.”

While the Post-Nehruvian discourse views the global security environment in more favourable way, it represents India’s regional security environment still in more pessimistic terms. Elaborating on India’s “dangerous neighbourhood” and “peculiar security challenges” in the 21st century, Pranab Mukherjee (2005) pointed out that “India is located at the centre of an arc of fundamentalist activism, terrorism and political instability” and “has, since independence, faced aggression and conflicts with its two largest neighbours”, Pakistan and China.

For the Post-Nehruvian discourse, Pakistan is India’s prime and most immediate external security challenge. Given Pakistan’s Indian-centric foreign and defence policies, the unresolved Kashmir dispute and a history of aggressions, the relationship between the two South Asian neighbours is fraught with mutual mistrust and hostility (Dixit 2001: 44; MOD 2008/09: 5; Dahiya 2012: 75). As Muchkund Dubey (2013: 39) notes:

“India faces a direct and immediate threat to its security from Pakistan. Pakistan has sought, and to a large measure, achieved parity with India in its military build-up. Its armed forces are built, mobilized, trained and oriented to fight a war against India. Successive Pakistani governments have systematically depicted India as the enemy country and carried out a vicious propaganda against it. Pakistan has fought three wars against India and has, for several years, been waging a proxy war against it in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has consistently reiterated its claim over Kashmir and has never given up the option of going to war against India in order to take possession of this territory. Pakistan has estab-

lished near parity with India even in the acquisition of nuclear weapons and missiles to deliver them. The latest reports indicate that it has, in fact, an edge over India in building a nuclear arsenal. [...] Pakistan has been harbouring, training, arming and otherwise assisting terrorist groups in its territory for carrying out terrorist activities not only in Jammu and Kashmir, but also in other parts of India.”

The threat Pakistan poses to India today derives not primarily from its conventional and nuclear capabilities, but from the army’s tolerating and support of Islamic fundamentalist groups such as *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, the proxy war it wages against India and the increasing fragility of its state institutions. The Pakistani Army and the use of terrorism as an instrument of state policy are framed as the main obstacles for a normalization of the bilateral relations in the discourse (Singh [M.] 2009b; Subrahmanyam 2012b: 19; Tharoor 2012a: 27ff.).

China is represented by the Post-Nehruvian discourse less as a direct security threat, but rather as a long-term security challenge for India. This strategic challenge emanates mainly from the still unresolved border dispute, China’s growing military capabilities and the overlapping ‘strategic space’ of both countries (Kapoor 2008; Mehta [S.] 2009; Swaraj 2011). Though recognizing competitive elements and a degree of uncertainty in the Sino-Indian relations, the Post-Nehruvian discourse believes that China is, unlike Pakistan, more willing to normalize and stabilize the bilateral relationship with India and thus no immediate danger (Raghunath 2007; Saran 2009; Rao 2011b; Khurshid 2012; Menon 2012b). As External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna (2010) pointed out, “[the] Government of India does not view China or China’s development as a threat. That said, however, we recognize that cooperation and competition can overlap, as it is not possible to have a perfect congruence of interests between two nations as vast and diverse as India and China. Such competition or lack of cooperation must not be misunderstood as antagonism”.

Like the traditional Nehruvian discourse, the Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates a hybrid understanding of security that both incorporates and transcends mere physical security by making nation-building in the broadest sense the prime national security objective. As a relatively poor, post-colonial state with unsettled borders and a tremendous ethnic, religious, linguist and social diversity, India’s main security concerns have thus been and continue to be socio-economic development, internal cohesion and integrity, food security and energy security. The open or weak borders with its smaller neighbours, resulting in (legal and illegal) migration as well as spill-over effects of political turmoil, and the more recent incorporation of non-traditional security issues such as environmental or human security into the academic and

political discourse of security in the West⁴⁵ have further substantiated India's hybrid understanding of security (Mishra 2003a; Mukherjee 2005; Kak 2010).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse also moved away from an understanding of national security that is centred on territorial defence and confined to South Asia to an understanding of national security that underscores the defence of India's economic, political and strategic interests in its wider neighbourhood. "India's parameters of security concerns", as External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh (2000) noted, "clearly extend beyond confines of the convenient albeit questionable geographical definition of South Asia [...] given its size, geographic allocation, trade links and the EEZ, India's security environment and therefore potential concerns range from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca in the West". In a way, this re-engagement of Asia can be, as S.D. Muni and C. Raja Mohan note (2004: 313), seen as a return to and realization of "Nehru's vision of a resurgent Asia and India's critical engagement in reshaping its destiny". It found expression in the 'Look East' Policy that was initiated by the Rao Government in the early 1990s and taken up by subsequent governments to deepen India's economic, political and strategic ties with Southeast Asia, East Asia and Oceania, and the extended neighbourhood concept, which was launched by the BJP-led NDA Government and led to numerous bilateral and plurilateral initiatives in the respective regions.

Outlining India's "enlightened self-interest", the MEA (2008/09: 1) states:

"The primary objective of India's foreign policy is to promote and maintain a peaceful and stable external environment in which the domestic tasks of inclusive economic development and poverty alleviation can progress rapidly and without obstacles. Given the high priority attached by the Government of India to socio-economic development, India has a vital stake in a supportive external environment both in our region and globally. India, therefore, seeks a peaceful periphery and works for good neighbourly relations in its extended neighbourhood. India's foreign policy also recognizes that the issues that are crucial to India's transformation are global and require global cooperative solutions – issues such as climate change and energy and food security".

On the basis of this discursive construction of 'national security' and the 'national interest', India's foreign policy must give priority to the goal of comprehensive national development that, in turn, requires a peaceful environment, high and inclusive economic growth and cooperative relations with all major economies, access to technologies as well as energy and to promote trade. In addition, India must maintain and strengthen its pluralist-secular democracy and its strategic autonomy allowing India to pursue its national interests (see Baru 2006, Mohan 2004, Mukherjee 2008b, Kumar/Kumar 2010, Rao 2011a, Khilnani et al. 2012, Singh

⁴⁵ Elaborating on India's conception of security and the recent broadening and deepening of security in the West, Kapil Kak (2010: 385) points out: "Jawaharlal Nehru enunciated the concept of comprehensive security nearly six decades before Barry Buzan and others of the Copenhagen School in 1983 and argued for the inclusion of non-military, societal, economic and environmental issues".

[Jasj.] 2013). Endorsing Nehru's conviction, made after India's independence, that "[u]ltimately, foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy" (Nehru [1947] 1961: 24), PM Singh, in particular, has stressed the crucial link between India's development and foreign policy: "ever since India became independent the foremost task before our country has been to accelerate the pace of social and economic development" (Singh [M.] 2008b). As a result, there is an "intrinsic link between our foreign policy and the economic aspirations of our people" (Singh [M.] 2013a).

Economic liberalization

Though the discourse views economic development as India's major national challenge, it remains ambiguous about India's exact economic policy. While the globalization discourse was incorporated into Post-Nehruvianism and there was a shift away from the socialist, state-directed economic policy pursued by Nehru and his successors, elements of traditional Nehruvianism such as *swadeshi*, economic planning and the preference for small businesses still figure in the discourse. For the Congress politician and more traditional Nehruvian, Mani Shankar Aiyar, for instance, globalization is less an opportunity for India, but a challenge undermining India's economic self-reliance and putting pressure on India's small businesses and Indian farmers (Aiyar 2009: 14ff.). Likewise, the benefits of the liberal economic reforms are contested, with critics such as Aiyar questioning the alleged 'trickle down' effect of the economic liberalization, claimed by the supporters of the reforms (see Mohan 2004, Rasgotra 2005, Baru 2006, Ahluwalia 2007b) by highlighting growing internal social disparities and India's continued poor performance in the UN Development Report (Aiyar 2009: 5/247f.).

Against this backdrop, the Post-Nehruvian discourse is characterized by a tension between the endorsement and promotion of economic liberalization and a plea for human development, protecting Indian farmers and (small) businesses and avoiding a further increase of social inequality. This division can be found across the party spectrum and also within both the Congress Party and the BJP, resulting in the respective opposition party often refusing further economic reforms that it has itself propagated and implemented when in power. Indian governments try to reconcile both positions by pursuing a policy of gradual but restrictive liberalization and subsidized development programmes. The Congress Party (2004), for instance, promised in its election manifesto that it will be "combining sustainable economic growth with social justice, and marrying economic liberalization to social liberalism".

Enlightening the national interest

While the social logic of the enlightened self-interest requires that “India's national interest must be protected to the fullest possible extent” (Singh [M.] 2008b), it takes into account the broader interests of humanity and core national values that stem from India’s civilizational history and independence struggle such as anti-imperialism, anti-racism, pluralism or non-violence (Ahamed 2013, Menon 2012a, Singh [M.] 2013), since the pursuit of narrow self-interests and power politics would have devastating consequences for international peace, cooperation and progress. As EAM Salman Khurshid (2012a) noted in this respect:

“It is true that international relations are ultimately about your own welfare and it is about your own interest. But that same interest can be an enlightened self interest or it can be a narrow self interest. And I do believe that in spite of the changing balance between principles and pragmatism, India’s approach of enlightened self interest survives. Not only does it survive but I believe that [...] a reaffirmation of an enlightened self interest for India, something that was given to us or articulated for us for the first time by our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru who in fact very categorically said that if these principles were organised in the mutual relations of all countries, then indeed there would hardly be any conflict and certainly no war”.

In a similar vein, K. Subrahmanyam (1999: 20) argues: “So long as nation-states are units in the international community, national interest will be the driving force of national policies. But unbridled pursuit of national interest at the expense of the interest of other nations in today’s world is bound to lead to very adverse, counter-productive results”. The notion of the *enlightened* national interest thus suggests that every country is compelled to safeguard its own interests, but, in doing so, it should try not to affect the core national interests of other states or global peace, justice and security adversely. In a globalized and interdependent world, it is believed that countries are no longer able to dismiss the interests of other states or the international community entirely, but must share – according to their respective capabilities – their burden in addressing common challenges (Rasgotra 2007: 17; Sibal 2012b). Highlighting the relationship between the national interest and international responsibility, foreign secretary Nirupama Rao (2010a) explains:

“Responses to the challenges we face are shaped and calibrated by the imperatives of the nation’s interest, first and last. At the same time, with power comes ever increasing responsibility – responsibility in weighing every move we make and positions we take with the realization that India is one of the key players on the global stage today and will be called upon increasingly to deploy its manifest strengths in the interest of global peace and development. [...] For instance, there is growing realization of the importance of preserving the ‘Global Commons’ – Space, Ocean, Air, and Cyber Space. With its size, technological capabilities, and standing as a responsible country, India is recognized as an important stakeholder and partner in these processes”.

In addition, as Rajiv Sikri (2009: 259/298) notes, “India can and must play its role as conscience-keeper of the world” acknowledging that “morality has a role in world affairs” and

assuming the responsibility to promote a more just and peaceful world order. For the Post-Nehruvian discourse, military might or the use of force are not the key determinants for promoting national interests or increasing India's influence in the world. This requires rather that India has a well-run, prospering economy, realizes its development aspirations and stands for something more than its pure self-interests, whereby India is endowed with legitimacy and authority in the world order (Sinha 2004; Singh Mehta 2007: 73; Mukherjee 2007b; Krishna 2009: 349; Khilnani et al. 2012: iv).

For instance, India should assume the responsibility for safeguarding the interests of fellow developing countries in international organizations and negotiations and further South-South cooperation (see Sinha 2003d: 86-87; Krishna 2011; Menon 2011; Dubey 2013: 2-3). This belief in shared interests, experiences and values with other developing countries also entails that India, despite its democratic system of government, does not necessarily side with other (Western) democracies and opposes prescriptive policies. Though the importance of 'Third World Solidarity' has declined in the Post-Nehruvian discourse (Bajpai 2007: 83/88; Mohan 2013: 35), it still figures in India's foreign policy (Sinha 2004; Khurshid 2013). While India should regard the Global South as its "natural constituency" (Baru 2006; Sikri 2009) to increase its global leverage and opt for multilateral policies, it should neither treat 'Third World Solidarity' nor multilateralism as an end in itself and neglect its own interests (Rao 2010a; Tharoor 2012a: 14-15). Thus, the notion of the enlightened self-interest implies that India needs to strike a balance between its values and interests. Accordingly, India must, if core national interests are involved, deal with authoritarian regimes such as Myanmar or reconcile its close defence ties with Israel and the Indo-U.S. strategic partnership with its membership in the NAM and its close relationship with Iran. For example, when the United States and other countries saw clear evidence that Iran is developing nuclear weapons and pressed in the IAEA for referring Iran's file to the UNSC in 2005, India voted after some hesitation against Iran in the IAEA, accommodating India's quest to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and regional instability in West Asia, its traditionally close ties with Iran and the importance of the strategic partnership with the U.S., with which India negotiated the nuclear agreement at that time (Subrahmanyam 2005; Singh [M.] 2009b; Tewari 2010; Indian Express 2013).

In terms of the means to promote India's enlightened self-interests, Shivshankar Menon (2013b) noted: "We seem to use multilateralism for our values and bilateralism for our interests". This rather sceptical view on multilateralism derives from the insight that all states primarily promote their self-interests and is underscored by India's past experiences with multilateralism:

“India is still paying a price for having gone to the U.N. on the Kashmir question after the Partition and Independence. India rushed again to the U.N. seeking a disarmament treaty following China's first nuclear test in 1964; it got, instead, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that targeted New Delhi. As it tried to end one of the world's biggest genocides in East Pakistan in 1971, India got little support at the U.N. When it rejected the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) at the U.N. in 1996, India found itself in virtual isolation. After testing nuclear weapons in 1998 and declaring itself a nuclear weapons power, India became the subject of the unanimous UNSC Resolution 1172 (June 1998) that calls on New Delhi to give up its nuclear and missile programmes. The contradiction between India's eager support to multilateralism and its immediate security requirements can no longer be hidden” (Mohan 2002).

Against this backdrop, Indian governments are not willing, for instance, to accept ‘third party’ interference or an internationalization of the Kashmir dispute, but assert that “bilateral dialogue, in accordance with the Simla Agreement, reiterated in the Lahore Declaration, is the only way to address all bilateral issues between India and Pakistan, including the issue of J&K” (MEA 2004: 4). “The essence of bilateralism”, as the Congress politician Kapil Sibal (1999) explicates, “is the freedom of sovereign nations to decide when to negotiate and the parameters in relation thereto. Under what conditions India and Pakistan agree to resume bilateral talks will entirely depend on the capacity of Pakistan to create an atmosphere in which India will be convinced of Pakistan's sincerity to make bona fide attempts to resolve outstanding bilateral issues”. Though Indian governments have, in the course of the rapprochement with the U.S., welcomed Washington’s pressure on Pakistan to end its Kargil misadventure and end its sponsorship of terrorist groups, they continue to rule out the United States as a mediator in the conflict or any external pressure to resume dialogue with Pakistan (The Hindu 1999). As Yashwant Sinha (2002b) noted: “The role of the outsiders today is confined only to a discussion on cross-border terrorism. We are not discussing any other issue with them. Our firm stand that all the issues between India and Pakistan should be settled through bilateral discussion remains totally undiluted”.

While Indian governments were less willing to form close bilateral ties with major powers during the cold war and often sought to promote India’s values and interests through the NAM, G77 or the UN, the Post-Nehruvian discourse has reversed this trend and discovered the utility of close bilateral relations with major powers such as the U.S. or Japan if it suits India’s interests. At the same time, the discourse acknowledges the compulsions of globalization and interdependence and thus the need for international cooperation to tackle common challenges (Mukherjee 2007b, Subrahmanyam 2010, Mohan 2013). In particular, in a way of bridging bilateralism and multilateralism, the discourse recognizes the utility of plurilateralism and formed or joined issue-specific networks with like-minded countries such as BRICS, IBSA or BASIC to strengthen India’s bargaining power and promote its interests (Saran 2013: 154), not the least because the discourse assumes that “[t]he importance of formal global gov-

ernance structures [...] is likely to diminish whereas that of informal structures [...] will grow” (Kumar/Kumar 2010: 14).

The logic of the enlightened national interest also implies that India is inclined to act unilaterally and is very reluctant to enter into international commitments if its core national interests are affected, e.g. socio-economic development or strategic autonomy. While taking international treaty obligations very seriously, India’s threshold for joining such agreements is very high. Indian governments will in particular adopt unilateral actions or a very tough negotiation stance if there is a convergence between India’s core national interests and values. This applies particularly to climate and trade negotiations and the global nuclear regime, where India’s development imperatives and quest for autonomy, respectively, converge with its aspirations for global justice and equality, embodied by the social logic of non-discrimination discussed later. Even when facing strong international pressure or isolation, India is in these cases often not willing to yield and follows the practice of passive resistance (*satyagraha*)⁴⁶ by opting for staying out of treaties it conceives as discriminatory such as the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

6.2.3 Non-violence

The social logic of non-violence (*ahimsa*) is a strong principle for the conduct of inter-state relations. It is predicated on the general belief that international conflicts cannot be successfully solved through the use of force but should be tackled through dialogue, negotiations, growing economic interactions and people-to-people contacts. The commitment to non-violence, which has already informed the traditional Nehruvian discourse, is closely intertwined with India’s peaceful struggle for independence led by Mahatma Gandhi. As EAM Salman Khurshid (2012) notes:

“The world has known innumerable greats who won celebrated military victories. However, there is only one person who won the world’s greatest battles for emancipation and empowerment not by waging war but by waging peace. Mahatma Gandhi’s arsenal included no arms and ammunition, but only ‘truth force’ or *satyagraha*, which he described as, ‘*a force born of truth and the love of nonviolence*’, his moral equivalent for a war. [...] It is true that the world of today is vastly different from the world that Mahatma Gandhi lived in. But conflict and inequality continue to be an inevitable part of the human condition. Mahatma Gandhi’s greatest lesson to the world was that this need not be destructively so. Conflicts can be resolved and inequalities can be contained. And, worthy means are needed for achieving worthy ends. The Gandhian way is a real, live option, an option that informs and illuminates. We must have the courage and strength of mind to follow in his footsteps.”⁴⁷

⁴⁶ *Satyagraha* was also propagated and practised by India’s independence movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi against British colonial rule.

⁴⁷ See for a discussion of Gandhi’s political thought on *ahimsa* and *satyagraha*: Iyer 2000 and Jain 2011.

The social logic of non-violence denies neither the existence of the reality of conflicts nor the continuing relevance of military force in international relations, but the inevitability of violence and its utility for solving conflicts (Menon 2011b). There are thus no permanent or natural enemies. Rather, relations between adversaries can be transformed by accommodating and being sensitive to each others' core interests and concerns. In contrast to military conflict resolutions, the "resolution of disputes through peaceful means and dialogue [...] advocates the need for concessions and compromise from both sides in any dispute" (Sinha 2003e: 66) and "since the resolution of the dispute is by mutual consent, often arrived at after a kind of bargaining that may involve elements of give and take, there is a greater probability of the parties carrying out the agreement faithfully [...] [while] an imposed solution to a dispute is likely to be reopened by the party that feels aggrieved or compelled at the time of settlement, thus proving to be no real settlement at all" (Nambiar 2003). In other words, peaceful conflict resolution allows addressing the causes of conflicts and developing common understandings and perceptions, thereby gradually removing mutual mistrust and ultimately paving the way for peaceful co-existence.

The social logic of non-violence implies that Indian governments predominantly exercise strategic restraint when dealing with security challenges. It means that India is generally unwilling or unable to effectively generate and use military power to achieve its strategic objectives (Cohen/Dasgupta 2010: xii). The endorsement of the globalization discourse, which suggests that the use of military force has lost in importance in a globalized and interdependent world, into the Post-Nehruvian discursive framework has further substantiated India's inclination towards strategic restraint (Sinha 2004, Menon 2009).

'Arming without aiming'⁴⁸

The preference for strategic restraint in the Post-Nehruvian discourse, however, does not rule out the use of force or discards the importance of conventional and nuclear deterrence (Mukherjee 2006a). The discourse articulates the need to modernize India's armed forces and expand its military capabilities. Accordingly, India's high economic growth rates were accompanied by significant and steady increases in defence spending between 1998 and 2009 in particular. While India's defence budget amounted to \$12 billion in 1998, it has risen to \$30 billion in 2009. That year also saw the single largest year-on-year increase of 34 per cent in India's history (Cohen/Dasgupta 2010: 16; Sipri 2015). Given India's growing financial resources, there were growing expectations in the armed forces and strategic community that India

⁴⁸ This characterization of India's defence policy comes from Cohen and Dasgupta 2010.

would adopt a more robust military policy and give up its strategic restraint (see Chellaney 1999b; Kanwal 2000a; Karnad 2002a; Prakash 2008). India's defence acquisitions and planning suggest that India is indeed seeking greater "power projection capability", as the doctrines and strategies of Indian Navy, Air Force and Army demand (see MOD 2004, 2007, Indian Air Force 2012), by improving the scope of operations and offensive punch capacities of its armed forces.

However, India's defence spending has remained constantly between 2,0 per cent and 3,0 per cent of the GDP and dropped, in the course of the downfall of economic growth, from 2,9 per cent in 2009 to 2,4 per cent in 2013 (World Bank 2013). More importantly, "India's military modernization", as Cohen and Dasgupta (2010: xii) point out, "has lacked political direction and has suffered from weak prospective planning, individual service-centered doctrines, and a disconnect between strategic objectives and the pursuit of new technology. The haphazard character of military change in India suggests that the country's historical preference for strategic restraint remains firmly in place". In other words, the concrete strategic objectives linked to the acquisition of weapons remain often unclear in the Post-Nehruvian discourse. Given India's still very low nominal per capita GDP and degree of human development, the discourse also points to the financial and political constraints on India's defence spending (Bhaskar 2008: 121; Nair 2009), making it even more important to spend the limited resources efficiently. Finally, while Indian governments are trying to improve the power projection capacities of India's armed forces, as policy analysts note, the actual force strength will actually decline in the medium-term, due to the upcoming decommissioning and delays in defence procurement, indicating that India is primarily modernizing rather than building-up its armed forces and will remain a regional rather than global military power with limited power projection capabilities (Ladwig 2010; Pant 2010; Rehmann 2012).

Nuclear weapons and non-violence

The Post-Nehruvian discourse has sought to frame India's nuclear tests as a continuation of India's principled nuclear policy, which has always opposed nuclear weapons and demanded nuclear disarmament (Dixit 1998c; Ghose 2007: 985/1005; Subrahmanyam 1998a). "On the face of it, there is a serious contradiction", as Jasjit Singh (1998a: 9) notes after India's nuclear weapons tests in 1998, "of the land of Mahatma Gandhi and his creed of ahimsa (non-violence) acquiring the most destructive of the weapons of mass destruction". After conducting the nuclear tests and thus formalizing India's status as nuclear weapons state, PM Vajpayee sought to resolve this contradiction by highlighting the utmost restraint in exercising

the nuclear tests and India's continued support for global disarmament by declaring in the *Lok Sabha*:

“In 1947, when India emerged as a free country to take its rightful place in the comity of nations, the nuclear age had already dawned. Our leaders then took the crucial decision to opt for self-reliance, and freedom of thought and action. We rejected the Cold War paradigm and chose the more difficult path of non-alignment. Our leaders also realised that a nuclear-weapon-free-world would enhance not only India's security but also the security of all nations. That is why disarmament was and continues to be a major plank of our foreign policy. [...] These tests are a continuation of the policies set into motion that put this country on the path of self-reliance and independence of thought and action. India is now a nuclear weapon state. [...] Our nuclear policy has been marked by restraint and openness. We have not violated any international agreement either in 1974 or now, in 1998. The restraint exercised for 24 years, after having demonstrated our capability in 1974, is in itself a unique example” (Lok Sabha Debates 1998a).

This duality of possessing nuclear weapons and calling for nuclear disarmament underpins the Post-Nehruvian discourse. As the Congress-led UPA Government (2004: 21) stated in its National Common Minimum Programme: “The UPA government is committed to maintaining a credible nuclear weapons programme while at the same time it will [...] take a leadership role in promoting universal, nuclear disarmament and working for a nuclear weapons-free world”. Accordingly, India's nuclear doctrine emphasizes “credible minimum deterrence”, “no first use” and “[c]ontinued commitment to the goal of a nuclear weapon free world, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament” (Government of India 2003).

The doctrine of ‘credible minimum deterrence’ rests on the conviction that “where nuclear weapons are concerned, it takes very little to deter. Neither number nor technological sophistication matters. The capacity to inflict unacceptable damage gives a state minimum deterrence capability” (Basrur 2006: 25). Nuclear weapons are seen as “political instruments” (Mohan 1999; Singh [Jasj.] 2013: 73) and “not weapons of war but can only serve as a deterrent” (Saran 2014). This deterrence does not require a large nuclear arsenal, active deployment of nuclear weapons (i.e. warheads are not mated with delivery systems) or more nuclear tests to prove India's nuclear capabilities (Subrahmanyam 1998a; Sinha 2002c: 13; Roy-Chaudhury 2009: 410; Mansingh 2012: 191), but must possess nuclear forces that are large enough to survive a first strike and the ability “to retaliate against a nuclear attack on it by either of its two nuclear neighbours, should be credible to the potential adversary. In other words, the retaliation should result in unacceptable damage in terms of population and property” (Subrahmanyam 2009).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse re-affirms that “a non-violent world order, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament continues to be an important plank of our nuclear policy, which is characterized by restraint, responsibility, transparency, predict-

ability and a defensive orientation” (Saran 2007: 115). The discourse articulates strong doubts that nuclear weapons promote peace and stability, but rather that the “total prohibition of the possession, use and manufacture of nuclear weapons through a universal non-discriminatory regime” would enhance India’s security (Singh [Jasj.] 1998b: 287-288; cf. also Mukherjee 2008c; Tharoor 2012a: 24; Mansingh 2012: 191f.).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse approach to nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation is based on the conviction that these three issues are closely interlinked. “Non-proliferation cannot be an end in itself”, as Shashi Tharoor (2012a: 25) explains, “and has to be linked to effective nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should be seen as mutually reinforcing processes. Effective disarmament must enhance the security of all states and not merely that of a few”. In contrast to an absolutist demand for the immediate and total abolition of nuclear weapons, which has guided the Nehruvian discourse, the Post-Nehruvian discourse has shifted to a slightly more reformist perspective that also accepts non-discriminatory bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements and CBMs (Sibal 2003b: 81; Ghose 2007: 1006; Mohan 2007: 1030; Khilnani et al. 2012: 56).

However, while both the BJP-led NDA Government and the Congress-led UPA Government have indicated that India might sign the CTBT, there continues to be domestic opposition towards any compromise either on the grounds that India would not benefit from entering a treaty which does not acknowledge India’s nuclear weapons status and face constraints on its nuclear programme (Dixit 1998d; Mukherjee 1998; Vajpayee 1999a; Sinha 2000; Kumar/Kumar 2010: 15) or, in the view of more traditional Nehruvians such as the Congress politician Mani Shankar Aiyar or the former foreign secretary Muchkund Dubey, that it would be a deviation from India’s demand for nuclear disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons (Aiyar 1999; Dubey 2013). The more traditional Nehruvians also adopt a more critical view of the nuclear tests in 1998, given the negative effects for the global nuclear disarmament agenda and the incompatibility “to reconcile our acquisition of nuclear weapons with our demand that others eliminate theirs” (Aiyar 2009: 263).

Dealing with India’s adversaries

The social logic of non-violence also underpins India’s approach towards Pakistan and China. Ruling out the possibility of a military solution of the territorial disputes and other outstanding issues, India seeks to solve the bilateral conflicts primarily through negotiations, growing economic and political engagement and the introduction of CBMs, and exercised strategic restraint in times of crises. At the same time, it acknowledges the need to maintain

India's conventional and nuclear deterrence capabilities to prevent aggressions or blackmailing and the utility of forming strategic ties with other stakeholders, e.g. the U.S. and Japan, to increase its strategic room for manoeuvre and create strategic uncertainty for its adversaries, without, however, entering into alliances or alliance-like relationships which would not only jeopardize India's strategic autonomy, but also result in adverse reactions by Pakistan and China and impair India's engagement efforts (Mohan 1999: 82ff.; Sikri 2009: 44ff./105ff.; Kumar/Kumar 2010: 15-16; Khilnani et al. 2012: 18ff./38ff.; Menon 2014).

With Pakistan, India attempted to normalize its relations within the framework of a 'bilateral composite dialogue' process, which was intended to address all contentious issues between both countries. Originally devised by the Indian Prime Minister I.K. Gujral and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in 1997, the idea of a 'bilateral composite dialogue' was taken in by the BJP-led NDA Government after the nuclear tests in 1998. Calling for a resumption of bilateral talks as early as possible on the topics of CBMs, Jammu & Kashmir, economic and commercial cooperation and cross-border terrorism, PM Vajpayee pointed out that "India has always desired a peaceful, friendly and mutually beneficial relationship with Pakistan based on confidence and respect for each other's concerns [...] a secure and prosperous Pakistan is in India's interest" (Lok Sabha Debates: 1998c: 478-479). Vajpayee's peace initiative led to the Lahore summit in February 1999, where India and Pakistan agreed on solving the issue of Jammu & Kashmir and all other contentious issues peacefully. Given the Kargil war in 1999 and the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament in 2001, the dialogue process was fully assumed not until January 2004 and paused (and was not resumed) again after the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks. Amongst the achievements of the dialogue process are various CBMs, joint agreements to combat terrorism, the expansion of train routes and bus services, enhanced people-to-people contacts and an increase in bilateral trade (see Wojczewski 2014). In addition, India and Pakistan also discussed possible solutions of the Jammu & Kashmir issue in back-channel talks, which brought both sides close to a final settlement.

India's reactions towards Pakistan's provocations or aggressions were characterized by strategic restraint. The intrusion of Kashmiri insurgents and Pakistani soldiers disguised as insurgents into Kargil in 1999 took the Indian armed forces by surprise both from the intelligence point of view, but also in their initial defence preparedness to counter the attack. Though the Indian Army could ultimately prevail against the intruders and restore the status quo ante, the Indian Government deliberately limited its retaliatory operations to the Kashmir area instead of retaliating at a more favourable theatre and did not cross the LoC (Line of Control) (Subrahmanyam 2000: 1159ff.; Saran 2011). Highlighting India's strategic restraint during

the Kargil war, the then-External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh (2006: 227) asserts: “What truly was the greatest challenge to Prime Minister Vajpayee during this near sixty-day trial was his (PM’s) continued conviction to not expand the field of combat beyond the LOC, whatever the provocation. This obviously cost India many lives, it cost us time too, many gallant officers and soldiers had to lay down their lives because of this enormous restraint that India had placed upon itself”.

Similarly, India demonstrated its strategic restraint after the terrorist attacks on the Indian parliament in 2001 and the financial hub Mumbai in 2008 by terrorist groups operating from Pakistani territory and most likely with the support of elements in the Pakistani Army: In both cases, Indian governments did not take military action against Pakistan and soon started to re-engage Pakistan (Krishna 2009; Singh [M.] 2009c; Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 247).⁴⁹ Defending India’s strategic restraint after the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, Shashi Tharoor (2012a: 38-39) noted:

“India had to act: we all knew that anything that smacked of temporizing and appeasement would further inflame the public just a few months before national elections were due. But New Delhi also knew that though some hotheads in India were calling for military action, including strikes on terrorist facilities in Pakistani territory, this would certainly lead to a war that neither side could win, if anything, such an Indian reaction would play into the hands of the terrorist, by strengthening anti-Indian nationalism in Pakistan and easing the pressure on the Islamists. And since both India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, the risk of military action spiralling out of control is always too grave for any responsible government to contemplate.”

Strategic restraint has also marked India’s approach towards China. Believing in the possibility of peaceful conflict resolution and co-existence, the Post-Nehruvian discourse propagates a policy of economic and political engagement towards China, but combines its engagement with certain counter-measures to address the challenges and uncertainties emanating from the rise of China. This policy-mix can be described as a hedging strategy (Dutt 1998: 239; Aiyengar 2010; Kumar/Kumar 2010: 76ff.; Menon 2012b). “India will engage China [...]”, as the Ministry of Defence (2008/09: 6) describes this policy, “while taking all necessary measures to protect the national security, territorial integrity and sovereignty of India”. By the same token, PM Singh stated: “It is a historic necessity for the two great neighbours to work together. There will be areas of competition, and there will be areas for cooperation. There is enough space in the world for both countries to continue to grow and address the developmental aspirations of their peoples” (2008c); and, “[w]e want the world to prepare for the

⁴⁹ Though the NDA Government responded to the terrorist attack with the largest and longest military mobilization in India’s history (*Operation Parakram*), as we will see in greater detail in the next chapter, it ultimately opted against launching an attack and the crisis de-escalated into a stalemate along the LOC (Roy-Chaudhury 2009: 406).

peaceful rise of China as a major power. We ourselves have tried very hard to engage China. [...] But there is a certain amount of assertiveness on the part of the Chinese, I do not fully understand the reasons for it, that has to be taken note of' (2009c).

After the fallout of bilateral relations in the course of India's nuclear tests in 1998, the BJP-led NDA Government started to re-engage China and paved the way for the thaw in Sino-Indian relations. India's engagement of China becomes apparent: first, in the significant increase in high-level official visits as well as dialogue and consultative mechanisms. The major component of India's engagement policy are the economic and trade relations with China. However, the cooperation in other policy fields has also been steadily expanded. A crucial turning point in India-China relations was the India visit of the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao in April 2005, when India and China institutionalized and broadened their relationship by concluding a strategic partnership.

Second, Indian governments do not regard the solution of the border dispute as a precondition for normalizing and expanding their relations but seek to solve the dispute peacefully on the basis of the growing cooperation and common interests through an institutionalized dialogue (Rao 2011b). India is engaged in negotiations with China to settle the border dispute and agreed on CBMs to prevent an escalation of the conflict. An initial success was that China finally recognized Sikkim, another disputed territory between both countries, as a part of India (Garver 2012: 102); evenly important was the conclusion of the agreement on the 'Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question' in April 2005. However, the agreement has so far not brought about a solution of the border dispute, which has repeatedly created tensions in India-China relations in recent years (e.g. alleged Chinese incursions into Indian territory). Exercising restraint and reaffirming its commitment to an engagement policy, Indian governments largely played down reports on a growing number of incursions by stating repeatedly that the "the India-China boundary is, one of the most peaceful of all borders" (Rao 2011b) and that incidents "arise due to differences in the perception of the Line of Actual Control" (MEA 2013) and by adopting new CBMs to mitigate a conflict escalation.

Though Indian governments have been engaging China believing in the possibility of a resolution of the border dispute and a cooperative relationship between both countries, they have also sought to hedge against the risks of a pure engagement strategy (see Wojczewski 2016) by, first, enhancing India's conventional and nuclear deterrence capabilities towards China (e.g. development and induction of the nuclear-capable *Agni* ballistic missiles and improvement of India's defence preparedness in the border region); second, increasing India's strate-

gic room for manoeuvre through a strategic partnership with the United States⁵⁰; third and finally, deepening India's economic, political and strategic engagement of Asian countries through its 'Look East' policy. By forming closer political, economic and strategic ties with ASEAN and countries such as Japan, Vietnam, Singapore or Australia, Indian policy-makers want to prevent a Chinese dominance in Asia, successfully compete with China for markets and investments, and increase its strategic leverage towards China (Dutt 1998: 23; Gupta 2007: 352ff.; Sikri 2009: 44ff.). Rather than seeking to contain China, Indian governments understand the 'Look East' policy as a contribution for building "a regional architecture that promotes cooperation and reinforces convergence, reduces the risks of confrontation and conflicts, and draws *all* countries of the region into a common framework of norms and principles of engagement" (Khurshid 2012c; author's emphasis).

6.2.4 Non-discrimination

In addition to non-violence, the social logic of non-discrimination is a strong principle for the conduct of inter-state relations. The logic has two dimensions: First, it asserts the formally equal status of all states in the international system. This equality, as the logic maintains, is currently overridden by "a highly discriminatory, exclusive and prescriptive international order inherited from the last century's wars" (Sinha 2003f: 191). The logic opposes "all forms of political and economic hegemonism" (BJP [1998] 2000: 67) found, for instance, in treaties or institutional regimes that establish unequal relations among its members and marginalize certain interests and actors. A particular concern is the continuing marginalization and discrimination of developing countries in the contemporary world order. As the Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi explicated in 2008: "The basic problem of world scenario today is that rich countries consider and dictate the poor and underdeveloped countries as others. They should not dictate but should create structures where everyone's voice is heard. [...] It is necessary to democratise the World Bank and the IMF as they do not have representatives from the developing countries" (quoted in The Hindu 2008). The international system is represented by the discourse as a hierarchical political and economic structure established and largely dominated by an international alliance consisting of the United States and other, mainly

⁵⁰ Explicating the rationale of incorporating the U.S. into India's China strategy, Shyam Saran (2010a) noted:

"The more diplomatic options India is perceived to have, the more diversified its relations with other major powers, the greater the display of accommodation on the part of China on Sino-Indian issues. Therefore, we should actively pursue coalition-building globally as well as with all those major powers who wish to see a more plural and loosely structured economic and security architecture in Asia. [...] We should promote a more inclusive arrangement in the region, welcoming the participation of the US [...]. This is not a containment policy towards China. It is a strategy of expanding India's options".

‘Western’, industrialized countries often pressuring developing countries to follow their economic and political models, while, at the same time, impairing the development and political ascent of these countries by denying them access to their markets or certain technologies, the imposition of sanctions or other conditionalities and excluding them from international decision-making bodies (Dixit 1998b; Vajpayee 2000a; Sinha 2007: 30; Dubey 2013: 9ff.).

Second, the social logic of non-discrimination is directed against practices that do not recognize India’s status and virtues in world politics, for instance, by putting India on par with Pakistan. As the retired Indian diplomat Harsh Bhasin (2009: 48) notes with respect to the irritants in Indo-U.S. relations: “If there is one single issue that India always detested in its past relationship with the US, it was this US tendency to bracket India with Pakistan – a nation of 120 million versus a nation of 1 billion, a military dictatorship versus a flourishing democracy, a theocratic state versus a secular state, an epicenter of terrorism versus a victim of terrorism, and the list could go on and on”. Likewise, the existent global governance structure is believed to discriminate India in particular. For instance, India is no permanent member of the UNSC, even though it is “the world’s largest democracy, the biggest developing country democracy, and a pluralist, secular, and constitutional democracy” (Baru 2013b: 75). And Shyam Saran (2006) adds: “We believe that India, with its large population, dynamic economy, long history of contribution to international peacekeeping and other regional and international causes, deserves to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council”. This second dimension of the social logic of non-discrimination thus partially contradicts the assertion of the equality of all states and underscores that India has a special status in world politics.

Though the Post-Nehruvian discourse adopts a somewhat revisionist stance towards the existent global governance structure, it demands that India reshapes rather than overthrows the existent institutional frameworks (Sinha 2004; Singh [M.] 2009c; Baru 2010: 57). While it thus demands a place for India at the ‘high table’, it highlights that India does not want to be “simply co-opted into the existing international order that is controlled by the west. It must find its due place in it in its own right and be in a position to change the rules rather than simply adhere to existing ones” (Sibal 2012b; see also Sikri 2009, Khilnani et al. 2012, Dubey 2013).

‘Nuclear apartheid’

India has regarded the global nuclear regime based on “discriminatory non-proliferation treaties” as an attempt of some countries “to perpetuate their hegemony” (Vajpayee 1999a: 192)

and creating a situation of “nuclear apartheid” (Advani [1995] 2000, Singh [Jasw.] 1998, Subrahmanyam 2002, Sibal [Kap.] 2008, Singh [M.] 2008a) “that arbitrarily decided on the nuclear haves and have-nots. India has always insisted that all nations’ security interests are equal and legitimate. From the start, therefore, its principles were in opposition to the self-identified and closed club of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, who were also the Nuclear Five” (Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 167-168). This ‘nuclear apartheid’ is first and foremost embodied by the NPT signed in 1968, which “was never accepted by India because it was inherently unequal. It recognized 5 countries, i.e., U.S., Russia (then the Soviet Union), Britain, France and China as the only countries entitled to have nuclear weapons, with all other countries categorized as non-weapons states. Under this treaty, access to nuclear fuel and technology was restricted to those who joined the NPT, and all transfers to non-weapons states were subject to IAEA safeguards” (Singh [M.] 2008a). This created an “unjust hegemonic and racist status quo” (Subrahmanyam 1998a), because it denies the legitimate security and economic interests of developing countries such as India, while allowing unchecked nuclear proliferation by the recognized nuclear powers and the preservation of the ‘political, military and technology hegemony’ by the paramount nuclear powers.

In the early and mid-1990s, India was confronted with additional non-proliferation initiatives which were supposed to curb nuclear proliferation in South Asia in particular and put severe pressure on India’s nuclear policy of keeping its nuclear option open and simultaneously pushing for global nuclear disarmament (Dixit 1998a: 420/426; Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 326). Apart from the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, without any further amendments to promote nuclear disarmament, efforts were made to prevent the further nuclear weapons testing through a CTBT and to control the spread of fissile material and missiles. “The hegemony of the nuclear-weapons power”, as K. Subrahmanyam (2002: 70-71) noted, “was directly felt by India during the negotiations on the CTBT. Even while the negotiations were going on in the Conference on Disarmament they were totally marginalized by the parallel negotiations among the five nuclear weapons states [...]. [T]he five hegemonic powers behave in this roguish manner and attempt to impose on the world the legitimacy of weapons of mass destruction in their own hands and prohibition for other”. Realizing that the CTBT would ultimately close the nuclear powers club and not stipulate any concrete steps towards global nuclear disarmament, India’s chief negotiator at the Conference on Disarmament, Arundhati Ghose, made a definite statement in June 1996 that “India will never sign this unequal treaty – not now, not later” (quoted in the New York Times 1996). Explicating the “deficiencies of the CTBT”, Pranab Mukherjee (1998) pointed out:

“It was not aimed at nuclear disarmament; it was not an effective instrument to create a nuclear weapon-free world; it was not really comprehensive as it did not arrest the qualitative development of nuclear weapons; it does not enhance the global security for which the mandate was received at the Conference on Disarmament in January 1994; both the NPT and the CTBT were unequal and flawed and both the treaties were discriminatory and recognised the concept of ‘deterrence’ in favour of the five nuclear weapon states”.

Forcing India to accede to the CTBT, the international community led by Canada and China introduced a clause making it compulsory that India, along with 43 other states, signs the treaty before it enters into force. This measure is represented in the Indian foreign policy discourse as a severe violation of international law and interference into the country’s national sovereignty. Similarly, it put tremendous political pressure on India and created a time-bound imperative for India to demonstrate its nuclear capability (Ghose 2005: 53; Singh [Jasj.] 2013: 83-84). Though India’s nuclear weapons programme can be understood as an interplay of different social logics, it was ultimately the logic of non-discrimination that turned the balance and led to the decision to test nuclear weapons in 1998 and declare India a nuclear weapons state. Against the backdrop of the indefinite extension of the NPT and the CTBT negotiations, with the nuclear weapons powers showing “no signs of moving decisively towards a world free of nuclear danger”, Jaswant Singh (2013: 166-167), External Affairs and Finance Minister in the BJP-led NDA Government, explained:

“The tests carried out on 11 and 13 May in 1998 were in reality ‘against nuclear apartheid’. [...] India’s options therefore, narrowed critically and inevitably. India had to ensure that its nuclear option, developed and safeguarded over decades, was not limited by any self-imposed restraint. [...] The nuclear tests [...] were not only inevitable but a continuation of policy from almost the earliest years of Independence. India’s nuclear policy remains firmly committed to a basic tenet: that in a world of nuclear proliferation, the country’s national security lies either in comprehensive global disarmament or in exercising the principle of equal and legitimate security for all.”

Similarly, K. Subrahmanyam framed India’s nuclear tests as a challenge of “the present international nuclear hegemonic order”:

“Our whole purpose of going nuclear is to ensure that the nuclear club is wound up, nuclear disarmament is advanced. What we must do is to knock on the door of this club and say that something must be done about this unjust and iniquitous order which is creating two kinds of security paradigms in the world. It is racist, it is colonial and it is hegemonic. We should push for altering such a world order, not join it and consolidate it. Otherwise, it would be contrary to everything that India has stood for” (quoted in the Times of India 1998).

And the former Prime Minister I.K. Gujral (1998) noted:

“Going nuclear has never been an Indian preference, our over-riding preference is for a world free of all nuclear weapons. What we have difficulty in accepting is that countries armed to the teeth in nuclear weapons should preach to us the virtues of disarmament. This is hypocrisy somewhat akin to a clique of drunkards trying to enforce a regime of prohibition. This situation, bad enough in itself, was further

compounded by growing evidence of the clandestine proliferation being encouraged in India's neighbourhood by certain nuclear weapon states”.

This reference to the clandestine proliferation activities of some members of the global nuclear regime points to the second dimension of the logic of non-discrimination. While the (Post-) Nehruvian discourse regards the global non-proliferation regime as a discriminatory, neo-colonial order that divides the world into a group of privileged ‘monopolist powers’ and a group of disadvantaged subordinates, it also displays a deep resentment about the non-recognition of India’s status in world politics, a feeling that India in particular was discriminated against, since it was harshly criticized and pressurized before and after the nuclear tests despite having exercised tremendous strategic restraint and acting as a responsible country in a hostile regional environment, while some of the recognized nuclear weapon powers have directly or indirectly contributed to horizontal and vertical nuclear proliferation (Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 327; Sreenivasan 1999; Parthasarathy 2004: 74).

Highlighting India’s “commitment to non-proliferation”, PM Vajpayee ([1998] 2000: 23) underscored: “our record in this regard has been impeccable and better than that of some countries who are parties to the NPT or members of the Nuclear Suppliers’ Group or even Permanent Members of the UN Security Council”. As K. Subrahmanyam (2002: 81-82) pointed out with respect to China’s proliferation activities: “Pakistan’s nuclear and missile programs are highly dependent on Chinese help which is extended to Pakistan in clear violation of various international arms-control regimes. It is now well established that Pakistan continues to receive assistance for its nuclear and missile program from China, and the United States continues to look away”.

Given this ‘discriminatory’ and ‘hegemonistic’ global nuclear order, India continued drawing on the sub-logic of *satyagraha* (passive resistance), which has informed India’s nuclear policy since 1974, and resisted passively against this order by refusing to give up its nuclear weapons capability and enter into this “system of unequal and discriminatory rules” (Singh [M.] 2005b), while adhering to key principles such as non-proliferation and no further nuclear tests (Vajpayee 1999 [1998]: 185-186; Saran 2010b). At the same time, shrugging off the restrictions of India’s nuclear programme, imposed by the existent non-proliferation regime and the sanctions after India’s nuclear tests, and gaining recognition as a nuclear power became a major objective of Indian foreign policy after *Pokhran II*. In particular, Indian policy-makers have been concerned about the negative consequences of these “regimes of technology denial, created in the name of non-proliferation” (Sinha 2003g: 102) for India’s socio-economic development. Therefore, the NDA and UPA governments (re-)engaged the recognized nuclear

weapons states, particularly the United States, and could gradually achieve a higher degree of convergence of perceptions, with the United States now more willing to understand India's national security imperatives. An important role in this rapprochement between India and the U.S. played the talks between External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott (Chari 2000; Talbot 2004; Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 274ff.). This rapprochement process also paved the way for the nuclear agreement between the United States and India in 2005 and ultimately ratified by the parliaments of both countries in 2008 after protracted debates in the Indian parliament and the approval of the IAEA and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Highlighting the rationale behind the nuclear deal and its great potential for India, PM Singh (2008b) stated:

“In recent years our government has sought a new dimension to our relationship with the United States in the form of a nuclear deal. [...] [I]t is for the first time we got the US to appreciate that India is a nuclear weapons state, that India has the right to develop nuclear power to protect its strategic interests, and that it is a decision that must be made by the people of India not subject to any international supervision or any international interference. And despite the fact that we are not a signatory to the NPT, and we have also said that if the CTBT came into being we will not sign it, there is no pressure from the US on India to sign the NPT or any other international arrangement of that sort to enter into nuclear cooperation for civil energy. [...] [I]t is very important for us to move forward to end this nuclear apartheid that the world has sought to impose on India”.

By agreeing to separate its nuclear and civilian power reactors and placing the latter under the safeguards from the IAEA, India could not only bring an end to its nuclear isolation and gain access, without joining the NPT and CTBT, to urgently needed dual use high technologies and fissile material, but also achieve a *de facto* recognition as nuclear weapons power. The agreement, which required the amendment of U.S. national law and the rules of the global non-proliferation regime, demonstrates that the U.S., and ultimately other countries too, were willing to accept an ‘Indian exceptionalism’ in the existing nuclear order and thus to recognize India's status as a restraint and responsible nuclear power, its security concerns and its economic interests (see Subrahmanyam 2006; Mukherjee 2008b; Sibal 2008: 174f.; Chari 2012: 4/7). “No other non-NPT signatory country”, as the former diplomat Achal Malhotra (2014) pointed out, “has been given this privilege. And this can be considered as an outstanding achievement in the foreign policy pursuits during the past two decades.”⁵¹ While many countries have accommodated to India's nuclear weapons status after the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement, Indian governments continue to support non-discriminatory disarmament

⁵¹ The BJP, which played an important role in bringing about the rapprochement between India and the U.S. after the nuclear tests, also invoked the logic of non-discrimination in articulating its (formal) opposition against the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal by criticizing that India is not *de jure* recognized as a nuclear power and has not the same status as the U.S., China, Russia, UK and France (see Mishra 2006, BJP 2008, Shourie 2008).

and arms control agreements. This, in turn, means that India would only join the NPT, if it is recognized as nuclear weapons state and the treaty encompasses at least some initial steps towards nuclear disarmament. Likewise, it could only sign the CTBT, if the U.S. and China finally ratify it and concerns for nuclear disarmament are addressed (Singh [M.] 2009b; Ghose 2010; Kak 2010: 386; Rao 2010b).

Asymmetries in the multilateral trading system

At the same time, the logic of non-discrimination points to the continuing inequality between the developed and developing countries in the global political and economic order and attempts by the developed countries to maintain this condition by imposing discriminatory rules on developing countries that impair their development. This applies, in particular, to the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime, where developed countries have been trying to include labour or environmental standards at the expense of developing countries, resort to protectionist policies for products, in which developing countries have a competitive advantage, and deny developing countries the possibility to protect their own economies against the more competitive economies of the industrialized countries – a policy to which industrialized countries have themselves relied on in their development process (Vajpayee [1998] 1999: 209; Baru 2006: 122; Sinha 2007: 30).

While the Indian government recognizes, in the words of PM Vajpayee (2001), that “international trade can be a powerful engine of economic growth and social development around the world” and that the WTO can play an important role in this respect, “this benign potential can be realized only if the world trading system is re-oriented to make it just, rule-based, non-discriminatory, and dynamic”, because “[t]he WTO is born into an unequal world, into a world divided among developed and developing countries”. This division, as the prime minister goes on, continues despite the process of “globalisation was supposed to deliver economic equality among all nations through free flow of goods, services and capital”, but [t]he reality we see today is an asymmetry in the benefits from globalisation between the developing and developed worlds”. The growing “economic interdependence”, resulting from globalization, can help overcoming this asymmetry if “it is based on the principle of non-discrimination [...], [o]nly then can nations benefit equitably from global trade and commerce” (Vajpayee 2000a). India’s striving for “an open, non-discriminatory, predictable, rule based and equitable multilateral trading system” (Puri 2007: 1083-1084) is articulated in the Post-Nehruvian discourse as a response to the inequalities and asymmetries in the world, which go back to colonialism and imperialism. The discourse demands that today’s industrialized countries, which were all

colonial and imperialist powers, acknowledge their historic responsibility for the underdevelopment of the 'Third World' and compensate for the historical injustice they inflicted upon other nations by making greater concessions to developing countries in the international trade regime. As PM Vajpayee (2001) noted,

“the first mandate of the WTO was, and continues to be, to help bridge this developmental gap among nations of the world. The current inequalities and divisions, reflected in the poor human development indices of developing and least developed nations, are an affront to the collective dignity and ethical sensibilities of humankind. [...] It should be apparent to all that there cannot be equal treatment for all in a world that is essentially unequal. The principle of affirmative action justifies and demands reasonable protection for the developing nations and assistance for the least developed nations.”

In addition, Indian governments are aware of the fact that all states, as the social logic of the enlightened self-interest suggests, primarily try to maximize their own interests and that the industrialized countries' main interest lays in “preserving the status quo in the global balance of economic and political power” (Dubey 2013: 9; see also Saran 2012b). As a result, India must defend its interests in the WTO such as protecting its agricultural sector, food security and rural development (Mukherjee 2005). Though agriculture is not the most productive sector of the Indian economy and its contribution to the GDP has further declined in recent years, a large proportion of the Indian population is still employed in this sector, which cannot be easily transformed due to India's relatively weak industrial sector, high level of illiteracy and welfare mechanisms without threatening the livelihood of India's farmers (Narlikar 2013: 609). “While sensitivities of developed countries in matters of trade liberalisation”, as the Minister of Finance Kamal Nath pointed out, “involve commercial issues, for developing countries such sensitivities involve the survival of their poorest citizens, the bulk of whom depend on agriculture for their livelihood” (quoted in The Hindu 2006).

Against this backdrop, the discourse frames India as an important veto-player who must strictly adhere to the principle of distributive justice and does not shy away from blocking, obstructing or jeopardizing the WTO trade rounds in order to establish an open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system. At the WTO talks in Seattle in 1999, for instance, India raised its voice against the inclusion of labour and environmental standards on the WTO agenda and insisted that the developed countries must reduce tariff and non-tariff trade barriers of products where developing countries have a competitive advantage such as agriculture and textiles (Vajpayee 1999b, Congress Party 2004).

Though the Indian government gradually shifted its stance on trade in services between the Uruguay and Doha Rounds and agreed, mainly due to India's service-led economic growth, on a partial liberalization of trade in services, its strong demand for an end of agricultural sub-

sidies in developed countries and unwillingness to compromise on protecting its agricultural sector and issues of food security continued. Indian policy-makers also actively sought to coordinate and align India's positions with other developing countries in order to increase its bargaining power. Ahead of the WTO summit in Cancun in 2003, India organized a meeting with trade representatives of other developing countries to coordinate their bargaining strategy. It also formed the IBSA-Group with Brazil and South Africa in 2003 to deepen its cooperation in multilateral trade negotiations as well as other policy fields. India's uncompromising stance on agriculture and export subsidies and its successful coalition-building significantly contributed to the protected negotiations of the Doha Round (Sinha 2003h: 220-221). Lamenting the lack of progress of the Doha development round, PM Singh (2006c) pointed out:

“If the Doha Round has to have a successful outcome, and we sincerely wish this, then it must remain true to its original mandate of being a Development Round. We can not continue to live in a world of ‘butter mountains’ and ‘rivers of milk’, liberally funded by government subsidies, when the poor starve in the villages of the Third World. We all know subsidies distort trade. In the case of the agricultural subsidies offered by developed industrial economies, these not only distort trade but destroy lives.”

Against this backdrop, India, with the support of Brazil, confronted the U.S. and other industrialized countries on agriculture issues ahead of the Geneva talks of the WTO in 2008. As the members attempted to negotiate a package deal at the summit and came close to reaching an agreement to overcome the deadlock of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations, the Indian representatives ultimately blocked the conclusion of the agreement by adopting a particular hard line position on the ‘Special Safeguard Mechanism’, which would have allowed developing countries to raise tariffs temporarily and thus protected Indian farmers from import surges or price falls. The collapse of negotiations was largely ascribed to India's refusal to compromise on the issue of agriculture (Surie 2012: 91; Tharoor 2012a: 394). After the summit, India's chief negotiator, Kamal Nath seemed to claim credit for the failure of the talks and the ultimate deadlock of the Doha Round: “I kept saying ‘No, I don't agree’ at every point. [...] I come from a country where 300 million people live on 1 dollar a day and 700 million people live on 2 dollars a day. So it is natural for me, and in fact incumbent upon me, to see that our agricultural interests are not compromised. You don't require rocket science to decide between livelihood security and commercial interests” (quoted in the Washington Post 2008).

While India's negotiation behaviour might suggest otherwise, the Post-Nehruvian discourse affirms that a “rule-based, transparent multilateral trading system is in India's strategic interest” (Baru 2010: 56). The discourse thus believes that “[I]beralization of trade” has benefits

and it is “a far more effective tool for poverty eradication and economic development than foreign aid”, provided that it “include[s] policies that address societal needs and integrate the development dimension of developing countries into its framework” (Sinha 2003e: 292-293). Indian governments are also willing to take responsibility for maintaining the multilateral trading system. India joined the G-20, a multilateral forum of 20 major economies to discuss international trade and financial issues, and the G-8+5 process, which aims at integrating emerging economies into the group of leading industrialized countries. In doing so, the Indian government underlined its willingness to sit at the ‘high table’ of trade negotiations and constructively work with the industrialized countries. At the same time, however, Indian policy-makers do not want that India is being co-opted into the existing international economic order and simply acquiesces in the rules and norms set by the industrialized countries; rather they believe that India must seek to modify or alter these rules and norms in accordance with its own interests and priorities. For Indian policy-makers, responsibility means first and foremost a responsibility for India’s own developmental aspirations, and thus to the livelihood of roughly 700 million people affected by poverty in India, and – though to a lesser extent – for fellow developing countries which would, like India, benefit from a more open and equitable economic and financial order (Singh [M.] 2004a; Sikri 2009: 289-290; Baru 2010: 60-61; Saran 2012b: 8/38).

6.2.5 International Unity in Diversity

The social logic of International Unity in Diversity embeds the sovereign states with their national interests into a broader, universal framework that does not necessarily undermine the importance of states, but points to the shared global aspirations of an international community and thus to a universal subjectivity that transcends the narrow national interests of states and reckons the existence of shared global norms and objectives. This universal framework is derived from the ancient Vedic ideal *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, “the whole world is one family”, and India’s experience of being and managing a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and socio-economically heterogeneous political entity (see Vajpayee [1998] 1999; Tharoor 2010; Krishna 2012a; Singh [M.] 2005d). As External Affairs Minister Khurshid (2013) notes,

“in re-imagining the global order, the theorists and practitioners of international relations have to push the envelope and think out of the box to help give birth to a new global order which is reflective of the philosophy of the world as a family. I do hope that drawing upon vast Indian intellect we would be able to provide the lead [...] against parochialism, bloc-based politicking, etc. The rapidly globalising world has to think like one without diluting national and indigenous identities and cultures. This has been encapsulated in *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* the ancient Vedic ideal – One World, One Family. There are comparative formulations in all religions and value systems that we can draw upon.”

The Post-Nehruvian discourse projects India's national experiences and polity onto the global order and grants them a universal significance. In other words, the discourse seeks to universalize a particularity and tie a meaning to the signifier world order that corresponds to India's national political order. "This 'idea of India'", as PM Singh (2007a) pointed out, "is the idea of 'unity in diversity'. The idea of pluralism, the idea that there need be no 'conflict of civilizations', the idea that it is possible for us to facilitate and work for a 'confluence of civilizations'. These ideas, I believe, have a universal, a truly global relevance. In a world enveloped by the darkness of conflict and hatred, these ideas come as rays of sunshine, lighting up our lives, giving us hope, renewing our faith in our common humanity". However, the universal aspiration inherent in this ideal deviates, as India's foreign policy discourse asserts, from the 'Western' notion of universality in that it is more willing to acknowledge and appreciate difference and diverse ways to achieve particular objectives. It presupposes that all states strive for prosperity and peace but choose different political, social and economic means to arrive at these goals and that these different pathways are, in principle, all legitimate.

A world order in the spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* seeks to institutionalize a pluralist and equitable polity structure on the global level in which more actors have a voice and that stipulates the principles of peaceful co-existence (*Panchsheel*), originally enunciated in the 1954 India-China agreement⁵², to manage the diversity in the international system and arising conflicts: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference, and equality and mutual benefit (Sinha 2003f: 190ff.; Narayanan 2004; Singh [M.] 2009c; Rao 2011b). According to the Indian diplomat Sanjay Bhattacharyya (2007: 708),

"there is a need to promote an ideology of holism, which embraces coexistence, plurality and tolerance. [...] The world needs a new international order in which the old model of confrontation is replaced by a new approach that evolves from rule-based legitimacy, consultation and respect for the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention. Thus international relations need not only to display sensitivity to each other's concerns but also provide space for all to live in peace and prosperity. A future international order based on multipolarity connotes different nodes functioning in harmony and cooperation with one another and provide for economic and social development."

In a similar vein, Pranab Mukherjee (2008c: 16) noted:

"As the world becomes more connected and interdependent, the diversity that we see at the level of individual nations will necessarily get more and more reflected at the global level. The management of

⁵² As Jawaharlal Nehru (1961: 89) explicated the notion of peaceful co-existence: "It has always been our policy to build bridges and create links between the opposing groups of nations and at the same time expand the area of peace [...] It is a mental or spiritual attitude which synthesises the differences and contradictions, tries to understand and accommodate different religions, ideologies, political, social and economic systems, and refuses to think in terms of conflict or military solutions."

this global diversity under conditions of interdependence would require the application of democratic principles to global governance as well. India is not looking for new poles, but rather a pluralistic world order that is reflective of the diversity of the world today and accommodating of new players who can contribute solutions to tomorrow's problems.”

Towards a polycentric order

The social logic of International Unity in Diversity rejects the notion of a unipolar or bipolar order, in which one or two countries can act unilaterally and decide over the faith of the rest, but demands a multipolar world order that allows for managing and tackling global issues in a more multilateral fashion by taking better into account the interests and concerns of the main stakeholders of the order and the different interests and values held in the international system.

As Atal Bihari Vajpayee (2004) highlighted:

“India does not believe that unipolarity is a state of equilibrium in today's world. At the same time, we do not advocate a form of multipolarity, which creates tension between the poles. We believe a stable equilibrium lies in a cooperative multipolar world which accommodates the legitimate aspirations and interests of all its component poles and of the international community as a whole. This is the world which India is committed to working for.”

Underscoring the desire of the Post-Nehruvian discourse for multipolarity, his successor Manmohan Singh (2005e) stated:

“We live in a world which is not a world which we like in all respects. Yet, it is a fact that interdependence of nations is a reality. And, that in this inter-dependent world, there is such a thing as power relations. This power in the world is not distributed equally, and we know, through history, that where there is inequality of power – international relations are fundamentally power relations – those who are more powerful cannot resist temptation to coerce those who are weak. The United States is today a pre-eminent power. It is a super-power. It has global interest. In many areas, those interests do not coincide with our interests. Our ambition is to work to create a more just international system, a world which will be more moving towards multi-polarity. [...] We are not saying that this multi-polar world can become reality overnight, but we have a contribution to its realisation that can be done only by making India a strong pole of the global economy.”

Drawing on the discourses of ‘globalization’ and ‘global power shifts’, the Post-Nehruvian discourse presupposes that these two processes bring the world not only closer to a multipolar world order in the spirit of unity in diversity, but even make it imperative to establish such an order on the global level to maintain peace, stability and development in the 21st century. While the world, as the discourse of globalization presumes, is characterized by an increasing interconnectedness between states and societies and a growing number of transnational challenges that require global solutions, the benefits and opportunities of globalization are not distributed evenly among states and there are persistent economic and political inequalities (Sinha 2003f: 190/194; Tharoor 2010; Saran 2012b: 6; Singh [M.] 2013).

It is presupposed by the Post-Nehruvian discourse that “the increasing global interdependence and the trans-border nature of many threats have made strategic concepts developed in a bi-polar world somewhat irrelevant” (Singh [M.] 2005f). In an interdependent and interconnected world, the old mindsets of ‘containment’ or ‘balance of power politics’ are thus hardly feasible anymore and major powers are forced to cooperate with each other (Saran 2006; Mukherjee 2007b). As PM Singh (2005f) explicated:

“We must evolve a new paradigm of security cooperation relevant to an emerging multi-polar world in which global threats obtain global responses. This is precisely what India has sought to do. We have entered into strategic partnerships with the United States, Russia, Japan and the European Union and are pursuing strategic cooperation with China. Today, nations are engaged simultaneously both in competition and cooperation. [...] No doubt this involves sophisticated bargaining with each of them. It is unrealistic to expect nations to act for altruistic reasons. International relations are in the final analysis, power relations. This balance of power politics in international relations is more sophisticated than during the Cold War era. [...] Consequently, we should develop friendly interactive relations with as many major powers as possible.”

What is evolving, according to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, is thus a more diffused and diversified global order “marked by the preponderance of several major powers, with minimal likelihood of direct conflict amongst these powers, but where both cooperation and competition among them are intense” (Menon 2009). Though the United States remains the pre-eminent power pole and there exist substantial asymmetries of power among the major powers, the world is currently witnessing the emergence of various centres of power in an Asian-centred international system that encompasses the United States, China, Russia, Japan, India and potentially the European Union. These actors are able of acting relatively autonomously and have sufficient economic, political, cultural and military capabilities to shape the world order. Asia is the meeting ground of these different power centres and thus the geopolitical space, where the 21st century world order will be defined (Singh [Jasj.] 2001b: 69-70; Mansingh 2005; Mukherjee 2005; Subrahmanyam 2006; Rasgota 2007: 9-11; Kumar/Kumar 2010: 14/78; Mohan 2012).

In a globalized and interdependent world, where profound diversities and differences exist in terms of culture, religion, socio-economic conditions and political persuasion and power is increasingly diffused across several power centres, the Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates, through the logic of international unity in diversity, the conviction that the pursuit of confrontational hegemonistic or balance-of power politics, as exercised in 19th century Europe or during the cold war, is hardly sustainable. Rather, the major powers are trying to achieve a ‘balance of interest’ among them and are engaged in a more nuanced politics of competition and cooperation (Narayanan 2000; Mukherjee 2007b; Singh [M.] 2008b). Highlighting this spe-

cific characteristic, the discourse signifies the emerging global order more accurately as a polycentric order (see Subrahmanyam 1998b; Baru 2006; Dasgupta 2007; Kak 2010; Khilnani et al. 2012; Singh [Jasj.] 2013). In contrast to multipolarity, a polycentric order does not evolve around multiple power poles with exclusive spheres of interest, hostile alliance systems and zero-sum relationships, where good relations with one power automatically have a negative impact on relations with another power. Instead states are inclined to form temporary and shifting coalitions with partners that have a common interest on a specific issue (Subrahmanyam 1999: 22; Mishra 2003b: 350; Dasgupta 2010). As Shashi Tharoor (2012a: 425) notes:

“we are witnessing a world of many rising (and some risen) powers, of various sizes and strengths but each with some significant capacity in its own region, each strong enough not to be pushed around by a hegemon, but not strong enough to become a hegemon itself. They coexist and cooperate with each other in a series of networked relationships, including bilateral and plurilateral strategic partnerships that often overlap with each other, rather than in fixed alliances or binary either/or antagonisms. The same is true of the great economic divide between developed and developing countries.”

This move “from a nation-centric to an issue-centric approach, with no permanent enemies or allies, clearly pose a new challenge” (Tewari 2010). While states can, for instance, cooperate in economic matters, they may differ strongly on political issues or strategic objectives. They must thus manage the simultaneity of competition and cooperation in their relations with other major powers and avoid too close alignments which could be at the expense of relations with another state or group of states. In this sense, a polycentric order is represented by the discourse as less polarized and divisive. This induces a relatively high degree of flexibility into the international system, allowing to create a more cooperative and inclusive world order which replaces the competitive security paradigm with a cooperative security framework and is more accommodative to the legitimate concerns and interests of the major stakeholders and the international community in general. While the discourse believes that multiple centres of power and the frictions that exist between them maintain an equilibrium in which all major powers, including the U.S., can be kept in check, thereby preventing unilateral, confrontational or hegemonistic policies, it also acknowledges that a polycentric order entails a certain degree of fluidity and unpredictability (Singh [Jasj.] 2001b: 69ff.; Sinha 2003f: 193; Mukherjee 2008b; Congress Party 2013).

In a polycentric order, India must thus seek and maintain robust, constructive and issue-specific relationships with all major powers (Singh [M.] 2005f; Baru 2006: 72; Narayanan 2008: 88; Saran 2012a; Sibal 2012b). As Chandrashekhar Dasgupta (2010) notes:

“India must follow a multidirectional foreign policy, seeking to cultivate co-operative relations, to the extent possible, with all countries and, more particularly, the major powers. This will enable us to obtain maximum leverage with each of the major powers. For example, success in cultivating close bilateral ties with Washington can also raise our profile in Beijing. Likewise, a cooperative relationship with Beijing can give us leverage in Washington. In tomorrow’s polycentric world, nonalignment will be re-incarnated in the form of a multidirectional foreign policy.”

This multi-directional engagement or multi-alignment will allow India not only to maintain its strategic autonomy, sustain its economic growth and hedge against the uncertainties of an emerging polycentric order and the shifting balances in the international system, but also to contribute to the multilateral solution of urgent global challenges such as climate change (Menon 2011a; Tharoor 2012a: 425ff.; Khurshid 2013).

In the coming polycentric order, as the Post-Nehruvian discourse maintains, major powers are not only defined by their accumulation of military power, but by their advances in the spheres of economics, technology and science as well as the skilful management of relations with other major powers, in particular to find the right balance between cooperation and competition (Singh [M.] 2006b, Baru 2008, Gharekhan 2012, Khilnani et al. 2012: 9, Subrahmanyam 2012b). Against this backdrop, India must “[e]ngage with all major powers, but align with none”, and “become adept at forming and working through coalitions that are issue based and sometimes even specific” (Saran 2013: 54). For instance, with the United States, India has built a broad-ranging strategic partnership, which enjoys bipartisan support in both countries. The U.S. is a crucial source of investments, technology, knowledge and skills, which India urgently needs for its successful socio-economic development. As the preponderant power in the international system and major player in Asia, the United States has an enormous political clout and influences global and regional issues. With the nuclear agreement, the Bush administration has redefined the global nuclear regime and de facto acknowledged India’s status as a nuclear weapon power, thereby freeing India not only from sanctions against its nuclear programme, but also demonstrating the U.S.’ willingness to integrate India into the existent global security and economic architecture. In Asia, the U.S. government shares India’s concerns over a potential Chinese hegemony and provides India with strategic leverage to deal with a rising and more assertive China (Jaishankar 2007: 774; Saran 2012a; Menon 2013c). However, while the U.S. government has declared “to help India become a major power in the 21st century” (U.S. Department of State 2005), the Post-Nehruvian discourse seeks no alliance or alliance-like relationship with the United States. Such a relationship would contradict the logics of the world order model articulated by discourse. For instance, congruent with the logic of the enlightened self-interest, the U.S. focuses on its own national interests and thus regards Pakistan as a non-NATO ally and provides the anti-Indian regime with substantial

military and financial assistance; hollowing out the principles of state sovereignty and non-violence, the U.S. has repeatedly (militarily) interfered into other countries, showing hegemonic tendencies and often no real concern for the needs and interests of developing countries, the U.S. blocks the realization of a non-discriminatory order (Singh [M.] 2005a; Mishra 2007; Sikri 2009: 277ff.; Subrahmanyam 2010; Khilnani et al. 2012: 31-32; Dubey 2013: 144ff./166ff.).

Crucially, a close strategic alignment with the United States would also jeopardize India's relations with other states and partners such as Russia and thus violate a key logic of the poly-centric order, namely to rely on issue- rather than nation-specific relations and gain strategic leverage and room for manoeuvre towards all major players in the international system.⁵³ In particular, plurilateral groupings with other (re-)emerging powers such as BRICS, IBSA or BASIC⁵⁴ have become widely used instruments for pushing for "a more democratic multipolar order, in a world that is undergoing major and swift changes that highlight the need for corresponding transformations in global governance" (Mathai 2012). Lamenting on the urgent need to reform the system of global governance, PM Singh (2009d) noted that "[t]he unworkability of the existing structures has led to a greater reliance on plurilateral groupings". By joining and participating in these groupings, India wants in particular secure a place in the main global decision-making bodies and shape global rules and institutions, but also implicitly recognizes the diminishing importance of formal institutions such as the IMF or the UNSC (Kumar/Kumar 2010: 14; Mohan 2013: 59).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse thus suggests that India should pursue a multi-directional foreign policy to manage the challenges and benefit from the opportunities emanating from a world order in transition. While India should thus actively encourage the trend towards a more multipolar world and work with other countries who share this objective, the discourse believes that it is neither feasible nor in India's national interest to join or rely on a counter-

⁵³ Though India's multidirectional engagement or multi-alignment is a strategy of forming and managing shifting (often contradictory) coalitions of interests, this does neither imply that these partnerships or coalitions are all equally important or sustainable in the long run nor that India should discard its values or principles (e.g. democracy and pluralism). For instance, India's relations with the United States are and will remain closer than India's relations with China – and could even further deepen, if China should opt for a more assertive or aggressive foreign policy (Mohan 2012b; Subrahmanyam 2012b; Tharoor 2012a: 426/428).

⁵⁴ By joining forces and proposing a BRICS Development Bank as an alternative to the World Bank and the IMF, the BRICS countries have, for example, enhanced pressure on the United States and the European Union to implement a governance and quota reform in both institutions. The bank would also provide an alternative source of capital for countries that do not want to bow to the 'Washington consensus' and accept prescriptive loans (Krishna 2011; Sanwal 2013). After the financial and economic crisis in 2007/08, the BRICS group has also exerted pressure on the industrialized countries "to adopt responsible macroeconomic and financial policies, avoid creating excessive global liquidity and undertake structural reforms to lift growth that create jobs" (BRICS 2012). In addition, the BRICS states are also examining alternatives to the U.S.-dollar as primary international reserve currency.

hegemonic coalition to contest the contemporary world order, since India seeks to restructure rather than overthrow the current order and needs *both* the established and the emerging powers for realizing its vision.

India as the bridge between the worlds

The social logic of international unity in diversity presupposes that India has a “diverse identity”, represents “multiple interests” and can thus be “a unique bridge between different worlds” (Khilnani et al. 2012: 31). India is a pluralist, non-Western democracy, which opposes democracy promotion, a developing country with the potential to become an economic superpower and a secular country that is home of many religions and harbours the third largest Muslim population in the world. Given its diverse identity and multiple interests, India can, as the discourse asserts, not only pursue a multi-directional foreign policy and manage a set of complex and diverse relations, but also play a crucial role in a more pluralist world. On the one hand, the coming world order is believed to resemble India’s multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-lingual, democratic and pluralist nation-state model, so that India can draw on its vast experiences and human resources to deal with this diverse world order. On the other hand, India is due to its diversity and pluralism, as the Post-Nehruvian discourse claims, also seen by others as a role model, giving India substantial leverage and a leadership role in crafting, shaping and maintaining this order. India can assume the role of a bridging power and potential mediator between ‘West’ and ‘East’, the different religions, cultures and civilizations, democratic and non-democratic countries and the developed and the developing world (Sinha 2004; Mukherjee 2005; Tharoor 2007, 2012b; Baru 2010: 60-61; Subrahmanyam 2012b). As PM Singh (2007b) noted:

“The success of a secular democracy in a nation of a billion people with such diversity is viewed with admiration. This great idea of India as a symbol of unity in diversity is increasingly viewed with respect and regard. [...] India wants to have good relations with all the countries of the world. Big and small. Countries of the East and the West, the North and the South. Today, we enjoy good relations with all major powers and all developing countries. We have emerged as a bridge between the many extremes of the world. Our composite culture is living proof of the possibility of a confluence of civilizations. India will always be a nation bridging the many global divides.”

In a similar vein, Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao (2010a) notes:

“There is in some sense, a duality that India contends with – one as a developing country working to sustain inclusive domestic growth with a view to eradicate poverty and enhance prosperity for its own citizens and the other as a re-emerging global power with the requisite intellectual acumen and economic weight to work out solutions to global problems in cooperation with the developed as well as the developing economies. This ability of India to literally hold the world in its hands, because of our pluralism, our diversity, and our relevance in terms of the developmental experience we have accumulated, and our responsible image in the world, has resulted in our increasingly being called upon to play an in-

creasingly substantive role whether it is the G20 or the various fora of the United Nations, Trade deliberations or Climate Change negotiations.”

This bridging potential places India in a relatively privileged position to shape the world order by forming partnerships with a very diverse group of countries and to promote its interests and mediate between these different groups.

6.3 Political Logics: The Constitutive ‘Others’ in the Post-Nehruvian Discourse

Having discussed the social logics of the Post-Nehruvian discourse and thus carved out what the discourse takes to be the ‘reality’ of world order, we will now explore how the discourse generates meanings and identities. This process is captured by the political logics. Political logics aim to comprehend the emergence, institutionalization, contestation, defence or transformation of a hegemonic discourse and the practices it contains. In other words, political logics illuminate how a discourse articulates different demands and interests as equivalent by dividing the socio-political space on the basis of particular antagonisms and political frontiers. In this process, captured by Laclau and Mouffe’s logics of equivalence, a common ‘other’ or shared ‘negativity’ is identified as the cause for the problem/challenge and a desirable alternative is offered to the existing situation, which promises to fulfil all these demands and interests by overcoming the ‘other’ that blocks the identity of the ‘self’. This ‘sameness’ or ‘commonality’ of interests and demands, however, is illusionary and always subject to the logic of difference that subverts the equivalence and points to the plurality and particularity of meanings and identities (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 127ff.; Laclau 1996: 38). In short, the ‘other’ is both constituting but also threatening the identity of the ‘self’. The Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates two sets of ‘others’: While Western colonialism and the cold war constitutes the temporal ‘others’, Pakistan and China constitute the spatial-political ‘others’.

6.3.1 Temporal ‘Other’: Colonialism and Cold War

The temporal ‘others’, which the Post-Nehruvian discourse invokes to (re-)produce meanings and identities, are India’s encounter with European colonialism and the cold war. Colonialism constitutes not only a ‘shared negativity’, but was also the discursive context for articulating an Indian national identity. Colonialism symbolizes a strong form of humiliation and institutionalized oppression, exploitation and discrimination that gave rise to a “sense of victimization” (Chatterjee Miller 2009) in the Indian discourse. This collective and traumatic experience of domination and suffering led to a strong desire to correct the injustice inflicted upon

India and other peoples by the colonizers and to prevent the recurrence of colonial practices or relations in the future. There are thus particular post-colonial sensitivities, a set of principles and goals emanating from the colonial encounter, that inform the Post-Nehruvian discourse and India's engagement with the world. Apart from being recognized as a victim and casting other states as victimizers, these include a particular concern about status and equality in international relations and a strong commitment to uphold India's autonomy. Though the age of colonialism has long passed, anti-colonialism has survived the dislocation of the traditional Nehruvian discourse and continues to be a crucial signifier for articulating and maintaining India's national identity, not the least because neo-colonial practices, according to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, continue to shape world politics.

The colonial encounter provided the discursive context for the formation of an Indian national identity and shaped the kind of nationalism that emerged in India. It is a distinctive post-colonial nationalism characterized by an ambivalent relationship towards 'Western' modernity. It was mainly through European colonialism that Indian elites were imparted the notions of civilization, nationalism and modern statecraft via the Euro-centric, orientalist discourse which represented a 'civilized' Europe in opposition to a 'backward other', the colonies. The discourse was based on a hierarchization of different peoples in a Eurocentric framework: It placed peoples on a scale of development, ranging from the 'state of nature' to the 'civilized stage' represented by Europe and its 'modern' political, economic and social institutions and practices (Chacko 2012: 4-6).

Against this backdrop, a nationalist discourse gradually emerged in India in the 19th century that articulated the demand for independence from British colonial rule and sought to establish an Indian national identity. The opposition to colonialism has formed a very durable and effective basis for articulating and fashioning an Indian national identity. As the ethnic, religious, linguist and socio-economic heterogeneity and diversity precluded – in the reading of the dominant secular-nationalist discourse associated with Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru – the construction of an Indian nation along the lines of European nationalism, it was, above all, the collective trauma of colonialism and the joint struggle against colonial rule that created a bond and a common awareness among the Indian people (Khilnani 2003: 153ff.; Chakrabarty 2008: 39). In this sense, the colonial 'other' served as 'shared negativity' to construct the foundational chain of equivalence of the Indian nation and present different subjects, demands and interests as homogenous and equivalent. It places India into an antagonist relationship with the colonial 'other'. Social antagonisms, as Laclau and Mouffe explicate, occur when "the presence of [an] 'other'" blocks or threatens the identity of the 'self', because the

different identities are constructed in a way that they mutually exclude each other (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 125). The construction of antagonisms is, at the same time, a necessary precondition for the constitution of the identity of the 'self' by serving as a shared horizon of negativity that enables the articulation of different elements (e.g. Bengalis, Tamils, Punjabis, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, Jains and Dalits), which are at least in principle unrelated and heterogeneous, into a common chain of equivalence: the Indian nation.

At the same time, the experience of colonialism has created an awareness for India's backwardness, which also made it prone to fall under foreign rule, and a desire to mimic modern 'Western' discourses and its practices of statecraft, technology and science in order to overcome this backwardness or 'lack' and develop India into a modern nation-state. However, given the fact that this very 'Western' modernity has been closely intertwined with colonialism, imperialism and other destructive tendencies, the colonial subjects were confronted with a dilemma: they had to adopt and use the concepts, practices and institutions of the former oppressors and exploiters in order to become free, independent and modern (Chatterjee 1993: 5; Bhabha 1994: 44; Chakrabarty 2000: 4).

This has resulted in a very ambivalent and, at times, contradictory relationship towards 'Western' modernity characterized by the post-colonial subjects' simultaneous mimicry of and resistance to the colonizer, its institutions and practices. While the Indian nationalist discourse used and adopted 'Western' practices and institutions – such as the nation-state, democracy, industrialization or bureaucracy – driven by a desire for development, progress and modernity, it also sought to indigenize, repudiate, disrupt and distance itself from these colonial practices and institutions (Krishna 1999: 9-10; Muppidi 2004: 43). While opposing the 'West' for its destructive and imperialist path to modernity, India's national leaders nevertheless regularly framed their own demands and interests through the language of 'Western' discourses.

Though the Post-Nehruvian discourse has embraced globalization and emphasizes India's re-engagement with the world, the collective trauma of colonialism and the struggle for independence continue to serve as a source for India's national identity. It is, however, not the colonizer as a spatial-political 'other', represented by the British, but the practices and relations associated with colonialism – such as inequality, domination, military interventions, discrimination, economic exploitation, subjugation to the dictates of powerful countries etc. – that constitute the 'colonial other' today. The Post-Nehruvian discourse thus draws a political frontier between India and these neo-colonial practices and relations, thereby constructing a chain of equivalence between different social forces in India ranging from the communists to

the Hindu nationalists. While the British colonial power is blamed for the past discrimination and exploitation and served as the constitutive 'other' in the independence struggle, the role of the colonial 'other' can today be assumed by actors which are not directly linked to the colonial era such as the United States, the industrialized countries or the 'West' in general, international media, transnational corporations or environmental and human rights NGOs (see Advani 2006, Aiyar 2009, Sikri 2009, Dubey 2013, Sibal 2013b).

The colonial 'other' is predominantly embodied by the 'West' in the Post-Nehruvian discourse. Though the 'West' does not constitute a spatial-political enemy or threat to India, it can *potentially* become an antagonized 'other', since the discourse associates it with neo-colonial practices and thus the past injustice inflicted upon India. This makes the creation and maintenance of a chain of equivalence with the 'West' more difficult. While the Post-Nehruvian discourse sought to reconstruct the political space and re-define India's relations with 'Western' states by stressing a shared commitment to democracy and pluralism as well as the need for 'Western' investments and technology to advance India's socio-economic development, it could not fully shed its ambiguity towards the 'West'. The chain of equivalence is thus consistently under stress from the logic of difference, which highlights the differences between India as a post-colonial, developing democracy and the industrialized 'Western' democracies whose affluence and dominance in the world cannot be separated from their colonial and imperialist past.

The 'Western' interferences and military interventions in Iraq, Libya or Syria have nourished this ambiguity and difference. For the colonial encounter has created a bond, a chain of equivalence, with other peoples that have also suffered from colonialism and imperialism. This sense of solidarity with other post-colonial states, coupled with a strong distrust of the 'true' motivations beyond 'Western' interferences and military interventions into post-colonial states (Parthasarathy 2011, Dubey 2013, Menon 2013a), still shapes the Post-Nehruvian discourse. However, the chain of equivalence between India and other post-colonial states has been weakened in the Post-Nehruvian discourse through the logic of difference, whereby the political space is (re)structured in terms of plurality of different entities. Instead of drawing a political frontier between the post-colonial, developing states on the one side and the industrialized countries and former colonizers on the other side⁵⁵, the discourse organizes the political space in a more differentiated way by invoking the category of emerging powers and creating a chain of equivalence between India and countries such as Brazil, South Africa or China that

⁵⁵ For instance, this political frontier has underpinned the Non-alignment Movement and India's strong engagement with the NAM during the cold war.

assume a privileged position among the post-colonial, developing countries and sit at the 'high table' with the established powers. At the same time, the discourse has, as we have seen, sought to create a stronger chain of equivalence with the 'West' by underscoring India status as stable pluralist democracy that distinguishes India from many post-colonial, developing states. The logic of difference thus tends to prevent revolutionary or antagonistic politics in favour of a more nuanced politics of a gradual reform of the world order.

The articulation of the colonial 'other' as a source for India's national identity finds its main expression in a desire to maintain India's national sovereignty and autonomy, especially because India's independence coincided with the partition of British India and thus with another trauma resulting not only in large-scale violence and displacements, but also with a great loss of territory, which is seen as a direct consequence of colonialism (see Narayanan 2000; Aiyar 2004: 205ff.; Mukherjee 2005). This, in turn, has installed a strong impulse for preserving India's territorial integrity and "an inherent distrust of outside forces that had formed the new borders of India and Pakistan, an action seemingly undertaken to inspire instability in the region by failing to synchronize with ethnic and state borders" (Ogden 2011: 6).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse, however, has somewhat moved away from these post-colonial anxieties and depicts India's international environment less a threat than an opportunity. In the course of India's economic liberalization, for instance, the other "is now being invited inside the national economic space and is being coded not as colonial (and hence exploitative and dominating of the Self) but as beneficial to the Self" (Muppidi 2004: 53). However, post-colonial anxieties about the role of external forces regularly surface in India's foreign policy discourse, as the national debates on the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal or the allowance of FDIs in additional sectors of the Indian economy have illustrated. Warning India against joining the "American bandwagon" and associating itself with NATO, which might not hesitate to target India, the former prime minister I. K. Gujral, for instance, recalled what the former Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, had told him: "You [Indians] suffered earlier because you were rich in cottons. Now, we [Iraqis] are suffering because we are rich in oil" (quoted in *The Hindu* 2005).

The resilience of the colonial 'other' in India's foreign policy discourse can partially be attributed to the cold war. Having shattered the chains of colonialism, India was confronted with the challenge of the cold war. The cold war is represented by the Post-Nehruvian discourse as a continuation of colonialism and imperialism and a direct threat to India's independence and nation-building (Bajpai 2007: 80; Aiyar 2012: 3/10). By dividing the world into two antagonistic, nuclear-armed camps, the cold war discourse threatened to undermine In-

dia's newly won freedom and autonomy and to impair its developmental aspirations. Driven by the logics of balance-of-politics, alliances, containment and geopolitics, which have resulted in and legitimized European colonialism, the cold war was, according to this reading, an (anew) attempt to subjugate the post-colonial states and thus to defend the international political, economic and cultural structure of dominance, dependency, exploitation and humiliation created by European colonialism and imperialism.

The cold war evoked India's colonial experience and created an awareness for the very fragile status of India's independence and territorial integrity. Given the cold war dynamics, India, as all other states, was expected to join one of the two camps and largely subordinate its foreign policy under the dictates of one of the superpowers, thereby substantially circumscribing India's sovereignty and limiting its political room for manoeuvre in international affairs. Instead of pursuing a foreign policy in accordance with India's national interests and forging relations with other countries to India's benefit, the "Cold War paradigm" implied that "good relations with one power automatically entailed negative consequences with its rivals" (Mukherjee 2007b). The cold war paradigm also entailed frequent political interferences and military interventions in the Global 'South', which posed a severe challenge for a country in the midst of a nation-building process with unsettled borders. It also overshadowed and marginalized the concerns of India and other post-colonial states such as development, decolonization or anti-racism.

Against this backdrop, the Nehruvian discourse sought, as we have seen in chapter 5, to keep India away from the two power blocs and pursue a policy of non-alignment, thereby affirming the right of former colonies to assert their autonomy in world politics and allowing them to focus on their own national priorities. The Post-Nehruvian fully affirms this policy as the right choice and underscores that a bipolar order, which often reduces foreign policy to binary choices, benefits the interests of the two power poles at the expense of the concerns of the rest (Damodaran 1995; Dixit 1998a: 18ff.; Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 32; Narayanan 2008: 88). As Shashi Tharoor (2012a: 9) notes:

"It is understandably fashionable to scoff at the concept [of non-alignment] when there is no longer a pair of superpowers to be non-aligned between, but its origins were unexceptionable. At a time of great pressure to join one of the two Cold War alliances, as so many countries had done around us, our first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, chose to stay free of such entanglements in the pursuit of our enlightened self-interest. We had spent too long with foreigners deciding what was good for us internationally; we were not going to mortgage our freedom of action or decision to any alliance when we had just begun to appreciate the value of our own independence. So we stayed out of other countries' fights, and sought to judge each issue on its merits, rather than taking sides automatically or based on alliance politics."

The cold war has exacerbated and institutionalized India's post-colonial anxieties and provided the rationale for adopting the policy of non-alignment. As temporal 'other', the cold war suggests that a world dominated by power blocs negatively affects third parties such as India: on the one hand, it undermines India's room for manoeuvre by putting pressure on India to follow the interests and dictates of one power bloc. On the other hand, power blocs tend to wage and accommodate their competition and conflicts in third countries. Though the cold war discourse disappeared and could not serve as major reference point for the articulation of meanings and identities in India's foreign policy discourse anymore, there is still the threat that the world will be again divided into antagonist blocs as demonstrated by the hegemonistic and unilateral policies of the U.S., Russia's growing resistance towards the 'West' and the rise of China as a U.S. peer competitor, which could lead to a 'new cold war' or a U.S.-China condominium (also referred to as G-2) making India a subordinate power in Asia (Bhaskar 1998; Parthasarathy 2007c; Mohan 2009c; Sikri 2009: 10/260ff.; Subrahmanyam 2010).

By articulating colonialism and the cold war as 'others', the Post-Nehruvian discourse thus evokes the (still existent) threat of (neo)colonial domination and of a potential return of the cold war paradigm that circumscribed India's strategic space and role in world politics. Therefore, the discourse asserts that India must not jeopardize its strategic autonomy, become entangled in the strategic competition between the U.S. and Russia and China and strive for an equitable, non-discriminatory multipolar world order that provides a peaceful and stable equilibrium between different power centres.

6.3.2 Spatial-political 'Others': Pakistan and China

The spatial-political 'others' invoked by the Post-Nehruvian discourse are Pakistan and China. According to conventional poststructuralist IR scholarship (see Ashley 1984, Walker 1993, Campbell 1998), international relations is first and foremost based on a spatial-political differentiation that draws a hierarchical dichotomy between the 'inside', represented by the state as the space of order, peace, progress, unity etc., and the 'outside', represented by the international system as the space of disorder, violence, stagnancy, disunity etc. While the Post-Nehruvian discourse does not entirely override this inside/outside dichotomy, it defuses the notion of the spatial-political 'other'. This rests on the conviction that India's internal diversity and heterogeneity exacerbates the construction of an unified 'inside' and has given rise to a particular national narrative⁵⁶ that highlights diversity, pluralism, syncretism and peaceful

⁵⁶ This narrative will be discussed in greater detail in the sub-chapter 6.4 which looks into the fantasmatic logics underpinning the Post-Nehruvian discourse.

co-existence as the hallmarks of the Indian nation. Accordingly, given ethnic, regional, religious, linguist, caste and socio-economic cleavages, the Indian polity is not a homogenous and closed entity, but marked by a high degree of internal ‘difference’ and thus displays a similar plurality and complexity as the international system as a whole. Having opted for a pluralist and secular state model after independence, the Indian nationalist discourse has sought to accommodate, integrate and fuse these diverse elements into a common political entity. Indian-ness is thus less constituted on ethnic, geographic or religious grounds, but out of internal diversity and plurality (Mukherjee 2007c: 21; Tharoor 2007; Ahamed 2013, Ansari 2013).

As Sunil Khilnani (2003: xiii) points out: “The founding idea of India was never simply a commitment to abstract values or ideas – of pluralism and democracy – but was rooted in a practical understanding of the compulsions and constraints of Indian politics”. In other words, given the pervasive power of the logic of difference, the creation of *broad and stable* chains of equivalence between different social demands, interests and subjects can hardly be established merely on the basis of exclusive religious, ethnic, linguist, caste or class identities in India, but require a more diverse ‘shared negativity’. For instance, though Hindus constitute by far the largest religious community in India, they speak different languages, belong to different castes and classes and have different ethnic backgrounds. In the Post-Nehruvian discourse, difference and diversity is thus less represented as a threat that can or must be overcome, but rather as a natural condition of India that can be managed through accommodation rather than assimilation and uniformity.⁵⁷

Pakistan

Nevertheless, the Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates meanings and identities also in opposition to external ‘others’. Since the bloody partition of British India, Pakistan has been the prime external ‘other’ in India’s hegemonic foreign policy discourse. The partition marked the beginning of a relationship fraught by mutual distrust and hostility which generated four wars (1947-8, 1965, 1971 and 1999), frequent skirmishes at the Line of Control, severe crises with a high escalation potential and arms races. The Post-Nehruvian discourse invokes the secular-nationalist articulation of India’s identity, which was enunciated by Indian National

⁵⁷ This position is contested by the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse, which we will explore in chapter 7. However, even the BJP as the main political force invoking this discourse has deviated from its original Brahmanic Hinduist identity and moderated its political stance in order to integrate different social forces into its counter-hegemonic project and for coming to power. In doing so, however, the BJP has to a great extent re-affirmed and endorsed the secular-nationalism of the Congress Party and other political forces, except of the assertion that India’s pluralist, tolerant and peaceful ethos has originated exclusively in Hinduism.

Congress before Indian independence and constructed a diverse, syncretic, inclusive and tolerant 'self' in opposition to the Muslim League's assertion that Muslims and Hindus represent two different nations and cannot live together peacefully in a Hindu-dominated state (Com-muri 2010: 152/154). After the partition, Pakistan became the theocratic, intolerant and monolithic Pakistani 'other' against which the secular, tolerant and pluralist Indian 'self' defined itself.

According to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, Pakistan's identity as a Muslim state on the basis of the Two-Nation-Theory poses a challenge to India's secular and pluralist state model. Pakistan struggles to accept a multi-religious, secular and democratic India and India's claim to Kashmir, since this would jeopardize the political foundation and legitimacy of Pakistan's own – weak and fragmented – state-model that is centred around a religious nationalism. Therefore, particular forces within the Pakistani political and military establishment impede a peaceful co-existence of both countries and seek to disrupt and weaken India by supporting Islamic terrorist groups or separatist movements, conducting covert operations in India or using military force to recapture Kashmir (Dixit 2001: 136ff.; Vajpayee 2003d; Mukherjee 2005; Dubey 2013: 53ff.).

India and Pakistan are thus locked in an antagonist relationship. This antagonism is conditioned by the presence of an 'other' that prevents the 'self' from fully attaining its identity, as the different identities mutually exclude each other (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 125). The construction of antagonisms is, however, also the pre-condition for the constitution of the identity of the 'self' by serving as a 'shared negativity' against which the identity of the 'self' can be articulated. In this sense, dissimilar and heterogeneous elements – such as the different (already constituted) ethnic, religious, linguist, caste and class identities found in the discursive field in India – are articulated together into a common chain of equivalence: the secular, pluralist, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-linguist and democratic Indian nation, that is set in opposition to the authoritarian, theocratic and intolerant Pakistan, which symbolizes the antithesis to India *and* the impossibility to fully realize India's national identity.

The presence of a theocratic, hostile and revanchist Pakistan is, in other words, a permanent reminiscence of India's fragile nationhood and blocks the completion of India's own identity. Kashmir, the only predominantly Muslim state in the Indian Union, is thus considered to be crucial to the legitimacy and integrity of India's national identity and model of state. "India cannot allow", as J.N. Dixit (2002: 304) noted, "any part of its territory and any of its peoples to be alienated from the Indian republic on the basis of religious affiliation. Such an eventuality would destroy the basic terms of reference on which independent India came into exis-

tence, the terms of reference of a pluralistic, multi-religious, multi-lingual, national territorial identity”. Underscoring the antagonistic mind-set of Pakistan’s rulers, Rajiv Sikri (2009: 33/39) points out:

“Pakistan’s *raison d’être*, simply put, is that the Muslims of India allegedly cannot live and prosper in a single State dominated by Hindus. India obviously feels differently, and this gave rise to Pakistan’s political compulsion to prove otherwise. [...] Six decades after its Independence, Pakistan continues to search for a durable and credible identity, other than it being ‘not Indian’. Pakistan’s rulers constantly strive to show how Pakistan is equal to, if not better than, India in all respects. The complex psychology of the Pakistani ruling elite, dominated by the military, is seen in a small but telling illustration – some of Pakistan’s missiles are curiously named after various foreign invaders who ravaged India, including the territory of present-day Pakistan, centuries ago! [...]. The mindset of the ruling elite is a cocktail of arrogance and brashness, at times bordering on cockiness, which has of late become even more potent with the addition of a measure of fundamentalism. This has led to a policy of unremitting hostility towards India that occasionally breaks out into conflict.”

Given Pakistan’s religious identity, its very poor economic performance, its political instability and the dominance of the army in Pakistani politics, the Post-Nehruvian discourse frames India’s national identity and state model as superior and progressive and represents contemporary Pakistan as a backward state that is anachronistic in the age of globalization. Thus, Pakistan serves as a common negative reference point in the Post-Nehruvian discourse, a warning that India may never become a ‘Hindu Pakistan’, but must remain a pluralist, secular and democratic country.

In this sense, Pakistan simultaneously challenges but also reaffirms and strengthens India’s national identity in various ways: While Pakistan has been ruled directly or indirectly by the military that has internally prevented the development of a stable and democratic state, and resorts externally to risky military adventurism and pursues policies which jeopardize the country’s socio-economic development in order to maintain its power in the Pakistani state, India’s parliamentary democracy has generated a stable political system, a responsible and accountable political leadership, a prospering economy and armed forces that are fully controlled by the civilian leadership and act with utmost strategic restraint (Dixit 1998a: 217; Baru 2006: 25; Menon 2011b). In the words of Pranab Mukherjee (2005), “India stands as a bulwark against fundamentalism and extremism, a centre of economic gravity, a beacon of democracy despite challenges of human diversity, poverty and economic disparity, a bastion of stability, and a symbol of peaceful coexistence and non-violence”.

While India is a secular state in which all religions, as the Post-Nehruvian discourse asserts, are treated equally and people of different faiths live peacefully together (Aiyar 2004: 5; Sinha 2004; Varma 2004; Ansari 2013), Pakistan is a theocracy that suppresses religious freedom, encourages Islamic fundamentalism and uses “terrorism as an instrument of State pol-

icy” (Singh [M.] 2009c). In addition, Pakistan has become the ‘epicenter of terrorism’ and the same terrorist organizations nourished by the Pakistani Army in its proxy war against India are now turning increasingly against the Pakistani state and further undermine the country’s stability and integrity (Tharoor 2012a: 35; Dubey 2013: 54/151).

According to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, “India reconciled itself long ago to the creation of Pakistan” (Vajpayee 2003d) and has “made every effort to establish a peaceful and cooperative relationship” (Mishra 2003a: 363), while Pakistan has retained its “compulsive hostility towards India” (Singh Bhasin 2002: 10) and undermined India’s various peace initiatives by its continuing support of terrorist outlets, which conducted several terrorist attacks in India (Singh Mehta 2003; Vajpayee 2004 [2002]: 85; Mukherjee 2005). By depicting Pakistan as a belligerent, unstable, theocratic and militarized state, which has not only initiated all four wars (Tharoor 2012a: 28/32) but also ‘forced’ India to develop nuclear weapons (Subrahmanyam 2009), the Post-Nehruvian discourse can re-affirm India’s peaceful, tolerant and pluralist ethos. According to this reading of India-Pakistan relations, the persistence of the Indo-Pakistani conflict is thus almost entirely attributed to Pakistan’s hostile and revanchist attitude, its inferiority complex towards India and its inability to develop a positive national identity that is not solely bound by hatred towards India (Dixit 2001: 137ff.; Sikri 2009: 39).

The Post-Nehruvian discourse, however, does not represent Pakistan as a full-fledged antagonist ‘other’, not the least because the ‘other’ is literally part of the ‘self’. On the one hand, the discourse, though accepting the existence of Pakistan, presupposes that ‘Pakistan’ has been a part of the Indian nation and was carved out of the Indian polity as a result of colonialism and the fear of the Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, of being politically marginalized in a united, independent India (Narayanan 2000; Aiyar 2004: 205). The ‘other’ is therefore less constituted by the Pakistani people, who were all originally Indians, but by Pakistan’s anti-Indian military and political establishment and the Islamist fundamentalists in Pakistan. On the other hand, with a national identity centred around the notion of ‘unity in diversity’ and around 150 million Muslims living in India, the Post-Nehruvian discourse is disinclined to antagonize an Islamic country (Singh [Jasw.] 2001; Sinha 2004; Singh [M.] 2009c; Ahamed 2013).

Pakistan is thus a constitutive ‘other’ that simultaneously blocks the full realization of India’s identity, but also contributes to its articulation and preservation. The dissociation from an aggressive, intolerant, theocratic and militaristic Pakistan allows the Post-Nehruvian discourse to link together the interests and demands of various social forces (ranging from the Leftist parties to the centrist parties and various minority parties) into a chain of equivalence and to

stabilize India's pluralist-secular nation-state model and accommodate India's religious, ethnic and linguist diversity. Similarly, this chain of equivalence also appeals, as we will see in greater detail in the next chapter, to the BJP that invokes India's secular national identity to underscore India's superiority towards Pakistan and the inherent peacefulness and tolerance of Hinduism (see Vajpayee 1992, Advani [L.K.] 2001), which is contrasted with the 'Muslim invasions' of the Indian subcontinent, Islamist terrorism and Pakistan's continued aggressions against India. In contrast to the secularism of the Congress Party and other secular forces in India, however, the BJP points out that the 'Indian secularism' derives from the innate pluralism and tolerance of Hinduism and has thus religious roots.

China

In addition to Pakistan, the Post-Nehruvian discourse articulates China as spatial-political 'other'. Unlike Pakistan, which symbolizes in many respects the anti-thesis to India, China is represented in a more ambivalent way in the sense that China is both a rival and a partner, a challenge and an opportunity, and a source of fear and of admiration. For the Post-Nehruvian discourse, China's size, its status as ancient civilization and fastest growing economy in the world and its experience of imperialism mirror and re-affirm in many ways India's own identity (see Vajpayee 2003e, Gandhi 2007, Mukherjee 2008a, Singh [M.] 2008c). "When assessing their country's status in the hierarchy of nations", as Devin and Herbert Hagerty (2005: 23) note, "postindependence Indian decision makers have for more than half a century reflexively cast their gaze at China for purposes of comparison." The traditional Nehruvian discourse initially sought to construct a chain of equivalence between India and China, which both emerged as continental-sized, modern, post-imperial, civilizational states in the late 1940s and sought to find their destiny in the comity of nations. After India's independence, Jawaharlal Nehru declared that Indians and Chinese are brothers (*Hindi-Chini bhai bhai*) and should jointly struggle for a pan-Asian security and economic community and a more equitable and pluralist world order (Nehru 1961: 3/186).

However, the logic of difference disrupted this attempt to forge a chain of equivalence and realize the vision of Sino-Indian brotherhood in a united Asia. The border dispute and the 1962 war epitomize this difference. India's defeat in the war has given rise to a feeling of humiliation and betrayal. Though the Post-Nehruvian discourse concedes that the war was also triggered by mutual misperceptions and miscalculations, colonial border drawing and the cold war dynamics, there remain misgivings about the way how China reciprocated to Nehru's policy of friendship and uncertainties about China's long-term intentions, particularly about

Beijing's readiness to accept India as an equal player in Asia (Mohan 2004: 155; Dixit 1998a: 55/63; Motha 2007: 51; Singh [Jasj.] 2012: 2ff.). As the Indian diplomat Maharajakrishna Rasgota (2007: 12) notes: "Memories of Mao's hastily perpetrated war against India in 1962 linger in the minds of both countries and suspicions persist concerning each others' policies and objectives. In India, in particular, there are grave apprehensions about China's South Asia policy".

After the war, China formed an enduring partnership with Pakistan and thus created India's 'two front problem'. China is also believed to have substantially assisted Pakistan's conventional and nuclear build-up (Mattoo 1999: 22; Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 115/185; Kak 2010a: 373; Saran 2011: 14). Elaborating on the rationale behind China's military assistance, PM Singh (2004b) noted: "[w]e cannot also ignore the strategic cooperation that Pakistan secured from China in many ways. We cannot rule out the desire of some countries [read: China] to keep us engaged in low-intensity conflict with some of our neighbours as a means of getting India bogged down in a low equilibrium." Likewise, K. Subrahmanyam (1998c: 47-48) pointed out that "China presumably planned to countervail India and lock India and Pakistan in mutually deterrent relationship as regional powers. That would leave China to adopt the role of a global power with a patronizing attitude towards India, not necessarily antagonistic".

China's economic, political and strategic engagement with India's smaller South Asian neighbours such as Nepal or Sri Lanka and its increasing presence in the Indian Ocean have caused similar misgivings. Though the Post-Nehruvian discourse does not affirm the theory of a 'strategic encirclement of India', put forward, as will be shown later, by the Hyper-nationalist discourse, by conceding China's (legitimate) economic and political interests in the region, it acknowledges the potentially negative strategic implications and the growing competition for influence emanating from China's 'intrusions' into South Asia and the Indian Ocean (Saran 2006; Guruswamy/Singh 2009: 128-130; Singh [M.] 2013c). As Salman Khurshid (2012a) highlighted: "we will have to accept the new reality of China's presence in many areas that we consider an exclusive playground for India [...]. The rules of the game will change. China will come in and add to the richness of the participation, but will also then provide greater competition".

The Post-Nehruvian discourse's main concern is that China does not recognize India as an equal, but might seek a hegemonic position in Asia by confining India to South Asia (Bajpai 2007: 87; Dubey 2013: 200). Expressing his misgivings about China's long-term ambitions and its willingness to accommodate to India's rise in the international system, Rajiv Sikri (103-104) notes: "Traditionally China has never looked at India as equal, but merely as up-

start wannabe. India's place, in Chinese eyes, is in South Asia only; it should not aspire to be an influential Asian, much less a global player. [...] India is the only other Asian country with the size, resources, demographic profile and all-round capabilities to pose a credible challenge to China's dominance over Asia in the long term". This, according to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, makes India the potential antagonist 'other' for China and vice versa. The search for equality with China shapes not only the Sino-Indian relations, but also India's aspirations in the world order in the sense that India wants to achieve parity with China and enjoy similar privileges (e.g. becoming a recognized nuclear weapons power or member of the UNSC). In this sense, China blocks the full realization of India's identity, because it does not fully accept India as an equal and enjoys a privileged status in the world that India is denied.

However, the Post-Nehruvian discourse also recalls Nehru's vision and seeks to create a chain of equivalence between India and China, Asia's two emerging powers, "the world's two most populous nations and largest emerging economies" which face similar challenges and have "a growing congruence of regional, global and economic interests, driven by our respective developmental aspirations and shaped by the evolving strategic environment" (Singh [M.] 2013b). The bilateral relationship is thus believed to have far-reaching repercussions for the world and could serve as a potential role model for peaceful co-existence in a multipolar order that both countries seek to create (Rao 2009; Krishna 2010). Calling for "Revitalising Panchsheel", the former diplomat and Indian President K. R. Narayanan (2004) notes:

"China and India believe in a multi-polar world where power is diffused over several centres in a world of infinite diversities and differences in terms of culture, language, religion, economic condition, and political persuasion. Unipolar and interventionist theories and practices are unsustainable and opposed to a democratic and pluralistic world order. Recognition of sovereignty, non-aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of states and equality and mutual benefits and peaceful co-existence constitute the irreducible minimum on which a viable world order is based."

A revitalization of *Panchsheel* would also prove that there is no "inevitability of conflict owing to overlapping areas of influence between India and China" and that "both India and China are too large and too strong to be contained or cowed down by any country, including each other" (Sinha 2003g: 334). Likewise, Pranab Mukherjee (2006b) notes:

"The India-China relationship is bound to be one of the most important bilateral relationships in the coming decade simply by the sheer weight of demographic and economic numbers. How we manage this relationship will have a tremendous impact on peace and stability in the regional and increasingly the global context. India-China relations have traditionally been viewed through the prism of 'balance of power' or 'conflict of interests' with Asia as the theatre of competition. This theory has become outdated in today's interconnected and interdependent world. It is increasingly recognized that there is enough space and opportunity for both to grow."

The Post-Nehruvian discourse thus tries to frame India's and China's interests and demands as equivalent by stressing the exceptional character of both countries and placing them into opposition to the hegemonistic 'Western'-dominated world order. The chain of equivalence between China and India is, however, fragile and subverted through the logic of difference. This difference centres around China's authoritarian system of government and its more assertive foreign policy. While China's economic ascent in the world has been taking place under authoritarian rule, India adheres to democratic principles. As PM Singh noted:

"The uniqueness of Indian growth experience is that it takes place entirely within the framework of a democratic polity. This has demonstrative implications for the world at large. The success of India will be a living proof that growth need not come at the cost of human freedoms. [...] there is no doubt that the Chinese growth performance is superior to Indian performance. But I've always believed that there are other values which are important than the growth of the gross domestic product. I think the respect for fundamental human rights, the respect for the rule of law, the respect for multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious rights, I think those have values also" (Singh 2005b, 2009d).

By contrasting India's pluralist and democratic system of government with China's authoritarian rule, the Post-Nehruvian discourse seeks to compensate for China's superior socio-economic level of development and material capabilities and re-establish equality between India and China. In drawing this political frontier, the discourse also links together various societal demands and interests by invoking and re-affirming the notion of unity in diversity sustained by a democratic-pluralist state model as the foundation for India's existence as a nation. As K. Subrahmanyam (2012b: 14/20) pointed out:

"Many people since independence, including some political parties in this country, have debated whether our growth would not have been faster and whether our poverty alleviation could not have been expedited if the country had adopted alternative models of development. Communism in China led to 30-40 million deaths due to starvation and even today poverty has not been totally eliminated in that country though their effort has resulted in much higher percentage of poverty alleviation than in our case. Inequality in terms of the Gini coefficient is worse in China than in this country. [...] The Chinese are persuaded that their model of one party system combined with a market economy would allow them to rise fastest in the world. Like all oligarchies, the Chinese Communist Party wants to perpetuate itself without accountability to the people. With 92 per cent of its people being Han Chinese, they are not willing to extend minority rights to Tibetans, Hui Muslims, Uighurs, Manchus, Mongols and other minorities. [...] China considers India as a rival in spite of all verbal protestations to the contrary, since it has approximately an equal population and is proving that a developing country can grow fast economically without sacrificing democracy or pluralism."

Closely linked to this distinction between pluralist democracy and authoritarianism, which has in the case of China, for instance, resulted in the oppression of the Tibetans and other minorities, the discourse also draws a frontier in the realm of foreign policy between India as a benign power that follows international norms and strives for peaceful co-existence and a multi-lateral regional architecture in Asia and China as a more assertive power, whose long-term ambitions remain unclear due to its rapid military modernization and lack of transparency –

and that might attempt “to resurrect its traditional and historical ‘Middle Kingdom’ position”, which prevents it from accepting other states as equals, leading to the bullying of smaller ones and a desire for “regional predominance” in Asia (Gupta 2007: 352; see also Bhasin 2009, Subrahmanyam 2009; Dubey 2013). “Unlike China's rise”, as Manmohan Singh therefore pointed out, “the rise of India does not cause any apprehensions. [...] The world takes a benign view of India. They want us to succeed” (quoted in The Tribune 2010).

6.4 Fantasmatic Logics: Indian Greatness and Exceptionalism

Fantasmatic logics are closely intertwined with the ideological dimension of social relations and enable us to understand why specific discourses ‘grip’ subjects, i.e. why subjects identify with the subject positions provided by a discourse and how subjects contribute to concealing the radical contingency of all social relations. By exploring the fantasmatic logics of a discourse, we seek to carve out the underlying ideological narratives, myths and imaginaries, which are constructed by political subjects to hold the discourse together and defend it against the discursive exterior that is always threatening to dislocate the discourse. If a narrative constructs myths which manage to “cover over” the contradictions and ruptures of a discourse and incorporate a wide range of social interests and demands, as Laclau (1990: 60ff.) argues, these myths become social imaginaries and thus the “horizon” or “absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility”. The hegemony of the Post-Nehruvian discourse rests on the successful creation of a collective foundational imaginary. This collective self-imagination is above all conditioned by religious myths and ancient texts such as the *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and the *Arthashastra*, the mighty emperors that ruled over large parts of Indian Subcontinent in the pre-colonial era and the heroic and prophetic figure of Mahatma Gandhi who brought the mighty British Empire down to its knees in a peaceful independence struggle. Taken together, these mythic figures and narratives are interwoven into a foundational imaginary that symbolizes not only the qualities, characteristics, values and proper conduct of India, but also the continuous, pre-colonial unity and agency of India. This collective foundational imaginary can be divided into the two closely interrelated narratives of Indian Greatness and Indian Exceptionalism.

6.4.1 Indian Greatness

The narrative of Indian Greatness underscores India’s special importance and status in world politics. India’s innate greatness reflects in the sheer size of its population and landmass, its

endowment with material resources, its geopolitical location and its civilizational heritage. India is seen as the successor state of mighty 'Indian' empires dating back several millennia and belonging to the most advanced political entities of their time. India is, moreover, not merely a state, but a state that embodies a civilization. Accordingly, India is one of the very few ancient civilizations that has survived several thousand millennia of human history and is, along with China, the only state that represents a world civilization (Dixit 1998a: 17; Man-singh 2002, Singh [M.] 2010b). As one of the great world civilizations, India has a distinctive way of ordering relations within its own society and with the rest of the world, a rich cultural and spiritual heritage, produced its own language, made a great contribution to philosophy, art and science, and is the origin and home of four world religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism (and developed a distinctive strand of Islam) (Cohen 2002: 51-52).

Hence, long before modern forms of political organization and the industrial revolution took hold in Europe, as the narrative points out, "India was one of the great well-springs of human intellectual and spiritual achievement" and "a source of cultural influence" in Asia and beyond (Mukherjee 2005). As the great Indian epics, the Mahabharata and the Arthashastra, demonstrate, the Indian civilization has brought about "a highly evolved and intricate tradition of statecraft" (Menon 2010b) that not only preceded European theories and practices, but also contain still relevant lessons for organizing intra-societal and inter-national relations ranging from the art of diplomacy, peaceful conflict resolution and the achievement of political order to the legitimate and effective use of power and force (Dixit 1998: 24ff.; Sinha 2003e: 66; Badrinath 2007; Menon 2012a).

This narrative of India as an ancient and great civilizational-state creates the myth that India has always existed as some kind of cultural and political agent in the world. Nations, as La-clau (1994: 140/210) argues, generally evolve around such myths that construct an origin, a period of (fictional) purity, unity or glory that serves as the enduring foundation of the society and must be recovered.⁵⁸ The myth conceals that nations are inherently fluid and contentious entities, "'imaginary' constructions" that only exist *if and as long as* people imagine themselves as members of a community and have a common national consciousness that must be constantly reproduced through various rituals such as inscribing and controlling national borders, picturing territories and populations, and emphasizing certain characteristics and themes salient to this national community (Laclau 1990: 64).

⁵⁸ This has led poststructuralist scholars such as Derrida (1976) or Foucault (1976, 1979) to deconstruct origins and study the genealogy of particular discourses, respectively.

Crucially, such myths conceal that national identities and subjectivities can only come into being through the encounter with an 'other' against which the 'self' can define itself through articulating a chain of equivalence out of the diverse and dissimilar elements in the field of discursivity. This 'other' simultaneously constitutes and subverts the identity of the 'self', making every nation an incomplete discursive formation that is shaped by contestations and contradictions from 'inside' and 'outside'.

In the Indian case, this 'other' was, above all, the encounter with European colonialism. The Euro-centric, orientalist discourse granted India the status of a civilization in the sense that it has achieved a certain degree of development and possesses some distinctive social and cultural features. Emerging at the same time as the British sought to build and consolidate a modern Indian state, this discourse constructed the Indian civilization – in what Derrida calls a logocentric procedure – along the lines of the 'Western' civilization by understanding, evaluating and creating the 'other' against the background of one's own image and privileging written texts over spoken words. Accordingly, the discourse identified the main traits in the extremely diverse mixture of beliefs, practices, values and images that European scholars, traders, missionaries etc. encountered in India and constructed India as a civilization that originated in the Aryan-Vedic high culture (2000-5000 BCE) and was bound together by a common language (Sanskrit), a body of assumedly relatively coherent ancient texts (the Vedas), shared rituals and norms, and a shared sacred geography (Hansen 1999: 65-66). While the romanticist variant of this discourse represented India as a spiritual, ascetic, magic, sage and mythical civilization and placed it affirmatively in opposition to the rationality, materialism, utilitarianism and realism of 'Western' modernity, the anglicist-utilitarian version of this discourse saw the very absence of these virtues as the reason for the decline and backwardness of the Indian civilization (Hoebner Rudolph 2009: 140).

Drawing on the discourses of the colonizer and 'adapting' them to the Indian condition, the nationalist leaders searched in this rich civilizational past for promising elements for their nation-building project that would unite the people against the British colonial rulers and integrate them into a common Indian nation-state after the successful struggle for independence. They traced the origin and foundation of India back to the Aryan-Vedic high culture and cast the 'self' as a single homogenous entity held together by a common language, a body of holy ancient texts, shared rituals, norms and practices and a common territory, which encompassed almost the entire South Asia.

While there exists today an imagined Indian national community and the myth of an ancient Indian nation with a certain foundation and essence has become a collective social imaginary

acting as a general horizon or frame for the ordering of all social relations in India, the people living in the pre-colonial period in what today constitutes the Indian nation-state actually did not see themselves as members of any kind of pan-Indian national community. There was, in other words, no consciousness for being an Indian or Hindu in ancient India, whose inhabitants were split into various different castes, religious sects, ethnic or linguist groups, tribes and other affiliations that constituted the main sources of identification. For instance, the term 'Hindu' was introduced by outsiders such as the Persians and initially used in a purely geographical sense to refer to the inhabitants who lived beyond the river Indus (or Sindhu). The British colonial rulers appropriated the term 'Hindu' to characterize all cultural and religious elements and traits they encountered in India that were not Muslim, Christian or Jewish, and started to define communities by their religion. This led to a greater uniformity of the diverse religious beliefs and practices under the label of Hinduism and created among the Indians a stronger awareness for their religious allegiance, not the least because it had an impact on their status in the British *Raj* (Thapar 2000: 75ff.; Doninger 2010: 24ff.).

Given this absence of a common cultural, religious or national consciousness in pre-colonial India, it is hardly surprising that no enduring pan-Indian political entity emerged. The very short-lived periods of imperial unity under the Mauryan, Gupta and Moghul empires, which ruled briefly over large parts but never the entire Indian Subcontinent, were rather based on the will and power of the emperor and did not result in the political unification of the Indian Subcontinent. They were put and held together by force and did not manage to create a pan-Indian union or consciousness, but remained assembles of relatively autonomous kingdoms and princedoms who had their own cultures, languages and histories and disliked being ruled by either 'indigenous' or 'foreign' emperors and thus constantly revolted against them. Likewise, the kingdoms and princedoms waged wars and formed temporary alliances against each other, whereas they did not agreed on any pacts to defend India as a whole and hardly ever cooperated to fight 'invaders' (often individual kingdoms even sided with the 'invaders') (Tanham 1992: 25/50f.).

Given the very absence of a national consciousness and the diversity found in India, the construction of this national narrative of India as an eternal cultural and political agent has played and continues to play a crucial role in the way how the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse forged and maintains a chain of equivalence between the various demands, interests and (sub-national) identities to (re-)produce the Indian 'imagined community'. The civilizational narrative is of particular importance, because it 'gave' the Indian nation a seemingly natural and confined territory, which was further consolidated during British colonial rule, and was utilized by In-

dia's nationalist leaders to claim that the independent Indian nation-state is not a new but a continued international personality, making independent India to the single successor of the colonial state as well as the civilization that originated in South Asia (Thakur 2014: 63). As Rajiv Sikri (2009: 16) notes, for instance,

“South Asia has a distinctive personality and intertwined history arising out of its definite geographic identity. Virtually cut off from the rest of the world by the Himalayas to the north, the Indian Ocean to the south, impenetrable forests to the east, barren lands to the west, its inhabitants traditionally had relatively few contacts with the outside world. At the same time, the absence of any significant internal geographic barriers [...] created an inevitable geographical, cultural, economic and ecological interdependence of all parts of this vast expanse of territory. These circumstances gave to the heartland of the South Asian sub-continent, covering the bulk of the territory of present-day India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, a broadly common history and led to the evolution of a unique civilization and culture. Remote and protected in the pre-modern era from the cultural influences of the mainland by the sea and mountains, the periphery of the sub-continent (Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, Baluchistan, the north-west frontier and tribal regions of Pakistan and India's Northeast Region) had a more autonomous development and therefore more distinctive cultures. But even these regions had considerable interaction with, and were greatly influenced by the heartland.”

This claim that South Asia has a distinctive personality and that India is not only the single successor of the British *Raj*, but also of this civilizational heritage has important repercussions for the way how Indian governments deal with India's neighbours, particularly with Pakistan that also claims to be the successor state of the British *Raj* and the heir of this civilizational heritage. The narrative of Indian Greatness treats South Asia as a confined geopolitical and civilizational space with India at its core. India is the pre-eminent power, leader and hegemon in South Asia and the Indian Ocean – a status that is given by geographical, historical and cultural facts, and what happens in this geopolitical and civilizational space is of crucial importance to India (Mohan 2004a, Singh 2004b, 2009, Mukherjee 2005, Rao 2010c). “[N]o region is more vital for India than South Asia”, as the authors of grand strategy document *Non-alignment 2.0* point out, “India cannot hope to arrive as a great power if it is unable to manage relationships within South Asia” (Khilnani et al. 2012: 15). This means, in particular, that the countries in South Asia should acknowledge India's status as the pre-eminent power and be sensitive to its security concerns and interests (Saran 2005; Swaraj 2010), which transcend India's national boundaries and encompass South Asia and the Indian Ocean as a whole. As Pranab Mukherjee (2007) notes: “In our immediate neighbourhood, Indian policy has often been misconstrued as a search for hegemony. We have also often been accused of treating South Asia as an Indian sphere of influence. India's primacy in South Asia is based on demography and geography.”⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Denouncing any hegemonistic ambitions and acknowledging past failures in India's regional policy, the Post-Nehruvian discourse embraces a more conciliatory and integrative approach towards India's neighbours, which

This reasoning can also be partially traced back to the geo-political and imperialist thought of British colonial rule, in particular Lord Curzon's vision of a forward policy to dominate the entire South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, thereby protecting colonial India from land- and sea-based invasions. Drawing on this reasoning, the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse has articulated the necessity that India must closely bind the countries in the region to India and exclude extra-regional powers from it (see Mohan 2004: 204ff., 2012; Mansingh 2005: 54, Sikri 2009: 284ff.). "The interests and presence of major powers in this region", as the Ministry of Defence (2007/08: 2) notes in its annual report, "coupled with the relative instability in our immediate neighbourhood are a matter of concern to India". The articulation of Pakistan and China as 'others' by the Post-Nehruvian discourse is to a great extent shaped by the narrative of Indian Greatness and its vision for regional preponderance. Pakistan that was, according to this narrative carved out of the Indian body politic, epitomizes not only the loss of territory but also the main challenge to India's rightful regional status. Likewise, China through its various 'inroads' into South Asia and the Indian Ocean subverts this status.

Apart from its status as ancient civilization, the sense for India's greatness is derived from the fact that "India as a nation of over a billion people [...] contains one sixth of humankind" (Krishna 2012b) and is "a country of continental size with land borders shared with a large number of countries, 1197 islands and a coastline of 7516 kilometers with a vast Exclusive Economic Zone" (Ministry of Defence 2004: 5). In addition, India is located at "one of the world's great crossroads" (Bajpai 2007: 81) between the "'arc of prosperity' that includes half of the world's population and many of the world's largest and most dynamic economies", the "'arc of energy' starting from the Persian Gulf [...] to Siberia and Russia's Far East", "'the arc of instability'" from West Asia passing through Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to Central Asia and the "'arc of communications'" in the Indian Ocean that "today controls the energy flows from the Persian Gulf and the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) between Europe and Asia. [...] India, which has given the Indian Ocean its name, is at the heart of Asia, with links to all the sub-regions of Asia. Its geographical puts India at the vortex of these four arcs that carry both potential and peril" (Sikri 2009: 12-13).

This geopolitical location is believed to give India not only a particular importance in world politics, but also to make it prone to external interferences – a narrative that invokes the memories of the various 'outside' invasions and rulers of the Indian subcontinent ranging

found expression, inter alia, in the so-called Gujral doctrine, named after Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, that stipulates the principle of non-reciprocity calling on India to provide incentives and concessions and taking the lead in regional cooperation in South Asia (Mohan 1999: 82; Dixit 2001: 56; Sinha 2003c: 377ff.; Mansingh 2005: 54; Mehta Singh 2007: 69).

from the Mughal Empire to British colonial rule (Menon 2010). Invoking this narrative, the Chief of the Indian Navy, Sureesh Mehta (2008) notes,

“we cannot contest the historical surmise that India never lost her independence till she lost the command of the seas to the Portuguese in the first decade of the 16th century. The continental mindset of Indian rulers was shaped by their experience of invasions which came from landward. However, such invasions and conquests either led to transient political changes or to the foundation of new dynasties [...]. While dominance over the Indian Ocean passed from the Portuguese to the British, the Mughals remained oblivious of the importance of sea-power to the empire. Consequently, India’s maritime capabilities, and what existed of its naval power, could not prevent India’s subjugation by the British.”

India’s civilizational heritage, its past achievements, its geographic and demographic attributes, and its accomplishments as an independent nation that is today “the world’s largest democracy” (Vajpayee 2003c: 154) and “the world’s fourth largest economy, with the second highest rate of GDP growth” (Singh [M.] 2005g) have endowed Indian elites with a sense of self-importance, prestige and entitlement and further strengthened the belief, already formulated by Jawaharlal Nehru after independence, that India is destined to become a major global power (Mehta [P.B] 2009: 213). As External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna (2012b) pointed out:

“India is, no doubt, very large and contains one sixth of humankind. Its territory is astonishingly diverse, with its people differentiated by religion, language, caste, ethnicity, as well as by ecology, technology, dress and cuisine. India as a nation of over a billion people, driven by the energy and enterprise of its youth, living in a democratic framework, celebrating its unparalleled diversity, pursuing sustainable and inclusive growth, and fulfilling its role as a responsible international citizen, will be a major factor of global peace, stability, development and prosperity in the 21st century.”

The growing recognition by the United States and other major powers of India’s status as an emerging power, demonstrated, for instance, by the various strategic partnerships and the de-facto acknowledgement of India as a nuclear weapons state, have thus, in turn, resulted in a greater congruence with India’s self-imagination. This overconfidence in India’s role was expressed, for instance, by the BJP politician and former Minister of External Affairs, Yashwant Sinha (2010) who asserted in the wake of President Obama’s visit to India in 2010 that the “US needs India more than we do”.

6.4.2 Indian Exceptionalism

The narrative of Indian Greatness is closely intertwined with the narrative of Indian Exceptionalism which articulates the myth that India, as an ancient civilization and as a modern nation-state, is a unique symbol of tolerance, moral righteousness, pluralism and peaceful co-existence in the world and has despite its power and influence “never been an aggressor na-

tion, a colonizer or a hegemon in her long history” (Vajpayee 2004). Accordingly, India has a particular destiny and the capacity for moral leadership in world politics and can thanks to its composite, non-violent and syncretic culture make a substantial contribution to peace, pluralism and justice in international relations. In the words of the Indian defence minister Pranab Mukherjee (2005):

“India is not an aggressive country; it does not harbour any territorial ambitions; it does not espouse or export any particular ideology, except the spirit of peace, co-existence and tolerance. It has a strong military only to defend itself and protect its territorial integrity. It is one of the world’s oldest civilizations, but a new nation; the largest democracy of a bewildering mix of people and populations that has learnt to accommodate and assimilate over the ages. [...] Today, when a more mobile world looks for models of co-existence, where minorities live abroad as immigrants or expatriates, India’s historical experience of co-existence could be a valuable reference point”.

The narrative of Indian Exceptionalism complements the founding myth of India and plays a crucial role in the (re-)production of India’s national identity: India is not only a great and ancient civilization originating in the Vedic-Aryan high culture, but has also some unique and intrinsic characteristics. Drawing on Laclau’s work, Dirk Nabers (2015: 169) points out that “founding myths and narratives of uniqueness are significant in any nation”. They emanate from – what Laclau calls – “the absence of God as fullness of Being” (Laclau/Zac 1994: 36), that is, the absence of a final or universal ground for articulating meanings and identities. Myths are then “no more than a foil which represents the missing fullness of a nation” (Nabers 2015: 169).

The myth seeks to conceal or fill this emptiness by attributing the nation some intrinsic essences, thereby enabling a discourse to forge a chain of equivalence which integrates dissimilar elements (demands, interests, identities etc.) into a common national community and makes it possible that several actors identify with this community. Given the lack of any stable foundations and essences, every nation is in constant need of reproducing itself and thus of recreating the myths it is founded upon. Hence, myths are constitutive of national identities, since they symbolize the seemingly immaculate chain of equivalence around which the national community was originally institutionalized. They provide an important source of images, mythic heroes and events that are woven together in a narrative to define the nation’s values, virtues, ideals and proper mode of conduct. Usually, these myths evolve around empty signifiers such as exceptionalism and signifiers associated with it, thereby allowing the integration and symbolization of various (conflicting) social demands and interests (Laclau 1990: 141/144). By articulating the notion of Indian exceptionalism, the Post-Nehruvian discourse seeks – like the articulations of exceptionalism in the national discourse of other countries

such as the U.S. which frames the U.S. as an ‘indispensable nation’ in the world (see Madsen 1998, Hodgson 2009) – to universalize a particularity and represent its own actions as a service to humanity whereby India’s national identity is re-affirmed and stabilized.

The myth of Indian Exceptionalism centres, above all, on the notion of ‘unity in diversity’ – the hallmark of Indian nationalism – which epitomizes India’s unique tolerant, pluralist and peaceful ethos and underpins its moral leadership claim in global affairs. It has become a sedimented myth that has contained and survived the dislocation of the Nehruvian discourse and incorporated various social demands and interests, making it to a collective social imaginary that provides the discursive horizon in which political decisions and moral judgements are taken in India. The myth has emerged during India’s colonial encounter, when India’s nationalist movement began to contest the discourse of the colonizers (and the subordinated subject positions it created for them), as we have seen, by simultaneously drawing on these discourses but also subverting and misappropriating them in the process of forging and consolidating a nationalist discourse.

The myth of Indian Exceptionalism played a crucial role in this process. Confronted with the materially superior culture of the colonizers, the Indian nationalist discourse articulated, as Partha Chatterjee (1993: 6ff.) has prominently argued, a distinction between an ‘inner’ and an ‘outer’ domain. While the discourse largely acceded to the superiority of the ‘West’ in the outer domain of statecraft, science and technology and thus sought to emulate the ‘West’ in these areas, it asserted the superiority of India and the ‘East’ in general in the inner domain of culture, morality and spirituality that must be preserved and protected from the ‘West’. Though Chatterjee’s distinction is an oversimplification, because it presupposes a homogeneous notion of culture, the possibility to draw a clear line between the ideational and material domain and neglects the deep ambiguity of Nehru and other national leaders towards ‘Western’ statecraft, science and technology (see Prakash 1999, Mondal 2003, Chacko 2012), it captures the way how the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse sought to (re-)produce a distinctive Indian nationalism and articulated an aspiration for a new, ethically superior modernity by critically engaging ‘Western’ modernity and invoking India’s rich cultural and spiritual heritage. The myth of Indian Exceptionalism, of India as an inherently tolerant, pluralist and non-aggressive nation should, on the one hand, underscore that an independent India nation-state, though succeeding the British *Raj*, would not blindly emulate the destructive practices of the colonial oppressors, but follow a distinctively Indian path to modernity, and, on the other hand, define and maintain a national identity for an extremely diverse society. By constructing the narratives of Indian Exceptionalism and Indian Greatness, the (Post-)Nehruvian dis-

course can represent India as a continuous cultural and political agent, where different religious, ethnic and linguist groups have lived together in peace and harmony for thousand of years of history. It constructs and emphasizes a kind of organic link between the ancient Vedic ideal *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, Buddha, the ancient emperor Ashoka, who turned to Buddhism and became the ‘messenger’ of non-violence, the Mughal emperor Akbar, who is praised for developing a tolerant and impartial strand of Islam, and Mahatma Gandhi, who became the symbol of India’s successful non-violent struggle for independence. Invoking the two mythical narratives, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna (2012c) notes, for instance, that “India is a multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society. Our civilizational ethos has been underpinned by peaceful coexistence and tolerance, values that Mahatma Gandhi placed at the core of India’s national life”. Drawing on the same narratives, Pranab Mukherjee (2005) adds:

“Historically, India has been a fundamentally ‘open’ society. It has received and absorbed major influences from outside, like Islam and Christianity, and radiated cultural influences, outward. It was, with the Arab, Persian and Sinic civilizations, a source of cultural influence in Asia. India was one of the great well-springs of human intellectual and spiritual achievement, of the metaphysical insights of Hinduism, and the pacific mission of Buddhism. It is customary to talk of strategic perspectives in terms of ‘hard’ power: our strategic perspectives were those of trade, religion, culture, spirituality, and the arts; and later, the political morality of Gandhi.”

What Krishna and Mukherjee describe here is thus not an authentic account of Indian history and traits, but rather the reproduction of a national narrative which India’s nationalist leaders constructed and propagated for their nation-building endeavour by searching for elements of unity, continuity and cohesion in the – discursively conveyed history of the – civilizational past and selectively emphasizing those elements, which supported their vision of a great and undivided nation, as the essence of India. That is not say that there is no Indian history or culture. There surely is one – but this history or culture is not defined by some authentic, unchanging ancient tradition. Rather, it is defined by the modern imagining (and the continued discursive reproduction) of the Indian nation.

Given the fact that other nationalisms in the world were usually based on a common religion, language or ethnicity, India, in the reading of the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, had to articulate and must preserve a distinctive Indian nationalism centred around the notion of ‘unity in diversity’ (Khilnani 2003; Tharoor 2007).⁶⁰ Foreign policy has been and continues to be a crucial site for the (re-)production of India’s distinctive national identity by differentiating India

⁶⁰ The main counter-hegemonic discourse in India, the hyper-nationalist discourse also endorses, as we will see in chapter 7, the narrative of Indian Exceptionalism and its notion of ‘unity in diversity’, but attributes it exclusively to India’s Hindu heritage.

from the narrow, exclusive nationalisms of other states and the hegemonistic policies of great powers in the international system and granting India “the role as the conscience-keeper of the world” (Sikri 2009: 298): This implies that India acts a moral force which is committed to – what Gandhi called – the ‘truthful method’ and struggles for a more just and peaceful world, even when facing powerful opposition. Criticizing the U.S. military intervention in Iraq, the former prime minister H.D. Deve Gowda (2007) from the *Janata Dal* (Secular), for instance, demanded in the Indian Parliament: “It is high time that the land of Mahatma Gandhi, who led a prolonged battle against British imperialism, stands up and asserts itself against the hegemonistic tendencies of the U.S. We cherish friendship with the people of the U.S., but that should not be at the cost of the principles that our founding fathers stood for.” In other words, India’s foreign affairs allow the Post-Nehruvian discourse to construct a chain of equivalence by contrasting India’s exemplar of ‘unity in diversity’ and the ‘confluence of civilizations’ with an international system shaped by inter-national and inter-civilizational rivalries and conflicts. As E. Ahamed (2011), Minister of State External Affairs and President of the Indian Union Muslim League, states:

“India has been a living example of Confluence of Civilizations and not Clash of Civilizations. It is a place where we celebrate diversity and are enriched by differences. Each and every section of society in India has found equal opportunities for expression and for accomplishments. India is the largest democracy in the World and it has ensured for its citizens equality and dignity. Even the weaker sections of the society are provided equal status and equal opportunities.”

Likewise, the Congress politician and former diplomat Mani Shankar Aiyar (2004: 5) notes:

“Most civilizations posit nationhood and diversity as antithetical. The single greatest contribution of India to world civilization is to demonstrate that there is nothing antithetical between diversity and nationhood. Indeed, the celebration of diversity strengthens our unity, even as the imposition of uniformity gravely undermines national unity. No other civilization has as long a record as ours in evolving a composite culture. No other country has as long a record as ours of a polity based on secularism”.

The myth of Indian Exceptionalism suggests that India is a non-traditional power – a power that has never sought to and never will imitate past or current great powers, which invaded, exploited or suppressed other countries and strived for regional or global hegemony. Instead, India has acted as a moral and benign force that shaped the global order primarily through principled moral and political arguments rather than military means. Though the Post-Nehruvian discourse concedes the importance of hard power in world politics, it has preserved the notion that India should follow a principled foreign policy and rather seek to redefine the role of a great power by becoming “a different power, a power that works for development, peace and international understanding, in its own interest and in that of its friends

and partners abroad” (Menon 2011a). As the authors *Non-alignment 2.0* note, “India must remain true to its aspiration of creating a new and alternative universality” and thus “should aim not just at being powerful: it should set new standards for what the powerful must do” (Khilnani et al. 2012: 69-70). As the External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha (2004) points out:

“‘Great Power’ or ‘Major Power’ should be seen in a modern 21st century setting and not in its historical context. India does not subscribe to the conventional idea of power. India approaches the notion of power with an alternative vision. India's power capabilities are a guarantee of the freedom and security of its people who constitute one sixth of humanity. For us, power is a means of advancing the welfare of our people and a tool for preserving and consolidating the autonomy of our foreign and domestic policy. Moreover, as befits India's history and the traditions of its post-independence foreign policy, our pursuit of power is firmly anchored in an international mission aimed at eliminating the scourge of war, protecting international law, strengthening the U.N. and striving for a new deal for developing countries whose people constitute the large majority of the world.”

Expressing her general uneasiness with the term superpower at the 2006 *Hindustan Times* Leadership Summit ‘India: The next Global Superpower’, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi pointed out:

“During long periods of our past, India exercised a profound influence on the course of world history, and it did so without exercising any kind of overt power. Consider, for instance how Gandhiji, mocked as ‘half-naked fakir’ by the British, took on the Superpower of the day through the mere force of his values and ideas. We Indians have always known our place in the world even when the world was treating us lightly. [...] Why should we think of ourselves as a ‘Global Superpower’? Why not instead work towards becoming a global force for Peace, Progress and Prosperity?” (Gandhi 2007b: 32).

In contrast to other great powers, India, as the myth of Indian Exceptionalism suggests, is a benign power that has always been tolerant and non-violent, acting as a pro-active agent of peaceful co-existence, equity and justice in its internal as well as external affairs. “India’s universal vision”, as PM Singh (2008d) points out, “defines her place in the comity of nations. [...] It is a vision that defines India, that defines the idea of India and that defines India's message to the world at large.” Though India, as the narrative of Indian Greatness asserts, was once among the most powerful civilizations of the world and its civilization spread to many parts of Asia and beyond, “this was not a ‘Territorial’ but rather, a ‘Cultural’ and ‘Civilisational’ presence. This historical tradition survives to this very day. It underscores our oft-stated assertion that India has no territorial ambitions and no desire to establish any form of regional or extra-regional hegemony” (Mukherjee 2007). “[I]n line with our history, culture and civilization”, as PM Singh (2006d) notes:

“For centuries, we have lived in peace with the world around us, travelling to distant lands as traders, teachers and scholars. Rarely has the world seen armies sailing out of India as conquerors. The Indian influence across much of Asia has been one of culture, language, religion, ideas and values, not of

bloody conquest. We have always been respected for our traditional export knowledge! Does that not also make India a 'global superpower', though not in the traditional sense! Can this not be the power we seek in the next century?"

The (Post-)Nehruvian discourse ironically draws on the notion of a 'civilizing mission', which also underpinned European colonialism and India fiercely resisted, to make sense of India's past engagement with the world, whereby India's influence is represented in purely benign terms. In accordance with the myth of Indian Exceptionalism, the spread of India's influence must have been peaceful and benign, because India is and has always been inherently non-violent, non-expansionist and tolerant. It has a general discomfort with or no proper instinct for power, and military power in particular, but rather leads by "the power of its example" and the moral superiority of its principles and values (see Mehta [P.B.] 2009, Khilnani et al. 2012). The main source of this benign power is that India constitutes a multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-linguist society that is today the largest pluralist democracy in the world and undergoing a major socio-economic transformation process, thereby demonstrating not only that diversity and peaceful co-existence are not antithetical, but also that development can take place in a democratic framework. As PM Singh highlights:

"The uniqueness of Indian growth experience is that it takes place entirely within the framework of a democratic polity. This has demonstrative implications for the world at large. The success of India will be a living proof that growth need not come at the cost of human freedoms. At the same time, its intrinsic stability and consensual basis will make themselves fully felt in long-term partnerships. Many of you probably know the diversity and the complexity of a country of one billion people that India is. All the great religions of the world are represented in our country. We have 150 million citizens who practice the faith of Islam and I say it with some pride, about their patriotism, that not one of them has joined the ranks of these gangs like Al-Qaeda or other terrorist activities [...]. Our success has a global significance. India's success and the success of this experiment can alter the course of history in the 21st century" (Singh [M.] 2005h, 2007c).

Likewise, E. Ahamed (2011) highlights:

"When we look around for successful models of inclusiveness, tolerance and peaceful existence, I have no doubt in my mind that India stands out as a living example of Unity in Diversity. India is a land of variety with a mosaic of geography, climate, lifestyles, religions, habits, thought processes and cultures. With a population of over 1.2 billion, it has more than 30 languages, more than 1600 dialects and hundreds of ethnic groups. India is the birth place of the great religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism. We also have one of the largest populations of Muslims in the world and our land has provided the ground for other religions like Christianity and Zoroastrianism to flourish. And in spite of all these differences, all these diversity, the Indian civilization, from time immemorial, has been characterized by inclusiveness and by unity in diversity."

The fantasy of India as a non-traditional or exceptional power, which is a moral force and the messenger of tolerance, peaceful co-existence and equity in world politics, is not simply a narrative that Indian policy-makers invoke and utilize as a diplomatic instrument to convince

the world of the benign nature of India, but a sedimented myth that has gripped subjects and become a collective social imaginary that serves as the surface of inscription for various political practices. As we have seen, the discourse even uses the myth of Indian Exceptionalism as an interpretative framework for depicting the past influence and expansion of the Indian civilization. Likewise, the main counter-hegemonic discourse, as we will see in the next chapter, invokes and re-affirms the myth of Indian Exceptionalism, thereby contributing to its sedimentation. Even Indian realists (see Chellaney 2009a, Pant 2009b), who generally deplore the ‘moralizing’ and ‘idealist’ tendencies in India’s foreign policy, are gripped by the myth, when they lament that Indian policy-makers have no understanding of power and military force or when they highlight that India’s pluralist, tolerant and non-violent ethos is an asset on India’s path to the great power status.

The mythical narrative of Indian Exceptionalism seeks to conceal the ruptures and inherent contradictions of the Post-Nehruvian discourse, functioning as a glue that holds the discourse together and defends it against the discursive exterior which always threatens to subvert and dislocate it. The myth constitutes India’s national identity and defines its position in the world order. In short, if India was not exceptional, it would neither be a nation-state nor have a meaningful place in the world order.

By de-mystifying the notion of an Indian Exceptionalism, we can disclose some of the ruptures and inherent contradictions that shape the Post-Nehruvian discourse. The myth of India’s pluralist, tolerant and peaceful ethos obscures that India, like every other nation and civilization, experienced in its history periods of creative peaceful and assimilative interaction, but also of extreme violence and intolerance. Non-violence has thus not been an enduring condition in ancient and modern India, but rather has become a cultural ideal, which has been and continues to be extensively debated in India, against the backdrop of recurrent violence and intolerance, coupled with the desire to overcome this state-of-affairs (Doninger 2010: 10-11). India’s nation-building process, like the nation-building projects of most states, has been accompanied by excessive violence from the very beginning. The bloody partition of British India in 1947, which resulted in a mass flight, outbursts of extreme violence and pogroms (see Pandey 2002, Talbot/Singh 2009), already demonstrated how difficult it would be to hold the ethnic, religious, linguist and socio-economic extremely heterogeneous society together in a nation-state.

Though India is formally a democracy and upholds the principle of peaceful co-existence, the modern Indian nation-state has produced, as Itty Abraham (2014: xv/2) has shown, “an uneven domestic space” that is characterized by internal divisions and hierarchies “that mark

majorities and minorities and that exclude populations from the national center on the basis of ethnicity, class, religion, gender, and civilization”. The formation of core-periphery relations has resulted in a marginalization and discrimination of certain segments of the Indian society, which have contested and upraised against the Indian nation-state, ranging from secessionist/separatist movements in Kashmir, the North-east and Punjab to the Maoist insurgency, which originated in an uprising of peasants in the union states Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal in 1967 and has become the most violent internal conflict in India. Confronted with these dissident movements and insurgencies, Indian governments have frequently resorted to force, including the use of the air force against the own population in the north-eastern Nagaland, to coerce ethno-nationalist communities in its periphery or socially deprived and dissident peasants, Dalits and Adivasi into the nation-state. Between 1992 and 2014 more than 75,000 people died in India’s internal conflicts (SATP 2015).

For Dibyesh Anand, the narrative of India’s peaceful, tolerant and pluralist ethos shall obscure that the modern Indian nation-state is ultimately a “Postcolonial Informal Empire” which has continued in many respects the imperialist policies of the British *Raj* and sought to coerce, discipline and co-opt minorities into the overarching nationalism:

“In India, the self-serving notion of being a moral postimperial country with values of Gandhian non-violence and Nehruvian nonalignment, and therefore avoiding crude power politics, remains entrenched. Even as the Indian state brutalizes populations in its peripheries and subverts democracy by allowing the military and paramilitary a free hand, it peddles the myth of a postcolonial democratic nation [...] Beyond the rhetoric of unity in diversity lies the reality of the dominance of a majoritarian identity” (Anand 2012: 74f./77).

Though this account of India’s democracy and minority policies is too harsh in its critique, it exposes the shortcomings of peaceful co-existence in India and the divisions, hierarchies and inequalities prevalent in the Indian body politic.

What the myth of Indian Exceptionalism obscures is that peaceful co-existence in India does not mean equal status and equal opportunities for everyone, but the marginalization and discrimination of certain segments of the society. Indian Muslims, who constitute the largest minority in India, have for instance also become the socio-economically most discriminated community in India (Jaffrelot 2011: xxiii-xxv). The Muslim minority also suffers from political marginalization and has increasingly become the target of militant Hindu nationalists, while, at the same time, Indian Muslims have joined radical Islamist organizations. Inter-religious or communal violence, in particular between Hindus and Muslims, has recurred repeatedly in India, assuming in some cases the proportion of pogrom-like clashes such as the Gujarat riots in 2002. Responding to this recurrent violence, the Post-Nehruvian discourse

invokes the mythical narratives of Indian Exceptionalism and Greatness and represents these events as anomalies in India's long history of peaceful co-existence or as the result of external powers that have – such as the British through their divide-and-rule policy in the colonial era – inflicted strife between the communities. Asked about the communal riots in Gujarat in 2002, the Indian diplomat Lalit Mansingh (2002) highlighted:

“You have to look at India's track record: long years of civilization and more than 2,000 years of religious coexistence and harmony. After all, how many countries can boast having eight major religions coexisting together? The point is that when you have a billion people subscribing to eight religions, some amount of religious tension is to be expected from time to time, and of late, there has been this concerted effort to create divisions between the communities and to provoke hatred and animosity.”

Elaborating on the alleged peaceful nature of Indians, the former diplomat and author Pavan K. Varma (2004: 165) concedes: “Indians are not non-violent per se. The myth of ahimsa or non-violence, as an intrinsic part of the Indian personality, was sold by Mahatma Gandhi and conveniently bought by the nation. [...] Indians are capable of a great degree of violence, and newspapers routinely report instances of domestic servants battered by educated employers, of brides tortured and burnt for dowry and of unprovoked police brutality” (Varma 2004: 165). While somewhat de-mystifying India's inherent peacefulness, Varma, simultaneously, contributes to the sedimentation of this myth, when he asserts that:

“the violence that Indians exhibit in society against hierarchically ‘inferior’ or vulnerable, which is easier to inflict and often has social sanction, turns into an inexplicable form of pacifism in dealing with an *external* enemy. [...] Historically, Indians have a very mediocre record in defending themselves against foreign invaders. Unlike the Mongols, the Turks or the European powers, Hindus have never pursued military conquest outside the extended periphery of the subcontinent. The impact of Hindu civilization is visible all over South and South-East Asia, but it is mostly religious and cultural [...] The simple truth is that Indians are not warmongers. They have never initiated war against another country. In victory they have been accommodating. In defeat, such as that suffered at the hands of China in 1962, they have endeavoured to be forgiving. Their military track record has been marked by a distaste for military adventurism, and lack of desire for conquest by violence” (Varma 2004: 166-168).

The mythical narrative of Indian Exceptionalism, of India as the non-traditional and benign power, is very resilient in India's foreign policy discourse, although independent India has in many respects emulated the behaviour of great powers. For example, India articulated either explicitly or implicitly exclusive Indian spheres of influence (South Asia and the Indian Ocean), pursued imperialist-like foreign policies towards its smaller neighbours (e.g. unequal treaties with Nepal and Bhutan) and acquired typical great power symbols such as nuclear weapons, long-range ballistic missiles or aircraft carriers. Unsurprisingly, most of India's direct neighbours, including China, do not share this depiction of India as a non-hegemonic, non-aggressive and non-interfering state (see Garver/Wang 2010, Pande 2011, Mazumdar

2015). By attributing the wariness of many South Asian countries towards India, for example, as a ‘big brother syndrome’ emanating from their envy and resentments about India’s achievements, its size and superior resources and national identities, which are overwhelmed by India’s civilisational and cultural grandeur and thus emphasize differences with India (see Saran 2006, Sikri 2009, Sibal 2012b, Malhotra 2014), the Post-Nehruvian discourse negates the possibility that these countries have legitimate security concerns that are a direct consequence of India’s words or deeds, resulting for instance from India’s military intervention in East-Pakistan to foster the break-up of Pakistan in 1971 or, in the case of China, from India’s covert support of Tibetan resistance in the late 1950s and India’s provocative forward policy before the outbreak of the 1962 war (Mohan 2006).

Instead, the discourse tends to victimize India. India is, for instance, represented as a “reluctant nuclear power” that was “compelled” to go for nuclear weapons because of a deeply flawed and discriminatory non-proliferation order that turned a blind eye to China’s support of the Pakistani nuclear-weapons programme (Subrahmanyam 2009). Instead of abandoning the notion of Indian Exceptionalism after India’s nuclear tests and launching – what some Indian policy analysts (see Mohan 2004, Kapur 2006) have called – a ‘normalization’ of India’s foreign and security policies, Indian policy-makers have not given up their nuclear ambiguity and the nuclear weapons programme was framed through the myth of Indian Exceptionalism as “a unique voluntary restraint of 24 years” and a continuation of India’s principled nuclear policy (MEA 1998-99: 73, see also Dixit 1998c, Singh [Jasw.] 1998, Vajpayee [1998] 2000: 17). Accordingly, by conducting nuclear weapons tests, India spoke truth to power and was, like Gandhi during the independence struggle, not intimidated by a powerful opposition and negative consequences.

“Following the Indian nuclear tests, many people in this country and abroad have questioned whether declaring itself a nuclear weapon state befits a country which claims to have gained its freedom through a non-violent struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. [...] Gandhiji successfully used non-violence in its offensive mode to compel the British to quit India and thereby changed the status quo. [...] Gandhiji believed that non-violence will triumph over violence and the atom bomb could not crush the human spirit. He also urged that injustice should be resisted at all costs. Given these parameters, those who admire Gandhiji and his approach must reason and reach a conclusion on the ethics of the Indian nuclear arsenal” (Subrahmanyam 1998a).

The notion of Indian Exceptionalism, which prescribes a principled and truthful policy, implies that India is inclined to justify almost all of its actions with a magniloquent moral principle in order to demonstrate the correctness of the Indian position, while exposing the incorrectness of India’s opponents. In doing so, Indian policy-makers seek to establish at least parity, if not superiority, with these opponents. Speaking on the topic of nuclear proliferation in

Asia at a panel discussion in the United States, the Indian diplomat T.P. Sreenivasan (1999), for instance, defended India's nuclear tests by saying that:

“The backdrop to any discussion on Nuclear Proliferation in Asia and the United States must consist of the following objective factors: (i) The only continent which has been subjected to a nuclear attack is Asia. (ii) The US is the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons. (iii) The victim of the attack did not possess nuclear weapons. (iv) The US did not have a no-first use or no-use against non-nuclear weapons state doctrine.”

In this sense, the myth of Indian Exceptionalism is an attempt to obscure the apparent hypocrisy in India's nuclear policy: India has been taken the moral high ground for several decades and criticized the established nuclear powers, but ultimately wanted to join the nuclear club too. It justified its actions as a protest against the 'nuclear apartheid' in the international system and continued to deploy the language of morality, but at the same time does not want that other countries follow India's example and also contest the discriminatory nuclear order by becoming nuclear weapons states.

This exposes a tension in the Post-Nehruvian discourse that has two dimensions: first, the tension between mimicking and resisting the great powers in the international system. While Indian policy-makers regularly deplore the hegemonistic and bullying attitudes of the great powers which for example seek exclusive spheres of influence or prescribe which countries are allowed to have nuclear weapons, India regularly resorts to the same hegemonistic behaviour. Apart from India's de facto entry into the global nuclear order through the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement, India, for instance, seeks to insulate South Asia and the Indian Ocean from external interference and implicitly denies its smaller neighbours their full external sovereignty by expecting that they should be sensitive to India's concerns and have closer relations with India than with China which is portrayed as an external or “distant country” (Metha 2007) despite the fact that China has direct borders with almost all South Asian countries. Second, India regularly invokes and stresses the principles of equality and equity when it seeks to overcome its exclusion or discrimination (e.g. nuclear order), and the principle of proportionality and discrimination when it seeks to maintain its privileges (e.g. climate change and trade).

6.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed the Post-Nehruvian discourse that gradually emerged from the dislocation of the erstwhile hegemonic Nehruvian discourse and successfully transformed this discourse by reinterpreting and adapting it to the changed 'structural' circumstances of the

post-cold war world. The Nehruvian discourse was thus not overthrown and replaced by a counter-hegemonic discourse but changed and modified largely within its own discursive parameters. The chapter illuminated how the nodal point of the discourse shifted from non-alignment to multi-alignment which emphasize India's re-engagement of the world and a multi-directional foreign policy that seeks to build stable and mutually beneficial relations with all major players in the international system, while avoiding a one-sided tilt in India's foreign policy and maintaining the independence of India's decision-making and its strategic autonomy.

The chapter elaborated the social, political and fantasmatic logics underpinning the Post-Nehruvian discourse. By looking into the social logics, we could carve out what the discourse takes to be the 'reality' of world order. It was shown that the discourse articulates the social logics of state sovereignty, enlightened self-interest, non-violence, non-discrimination and international unity in diversity as the building blocks of world order. The investigation of the political logics invoked by the Post-Nehruvian discourse shed light on the temporal and spatial-political 'others' that serve as reference points for the articulations of meanings and identities in the discourse. While the temporal 'others' are embodied by 'Western' colonialism and the cold war, the spatial-political 'others' are Pakistan and China. By examining the fantasmatic logics of the discourse, we could illuminate why specific practices or discourses 'grip' subjects in the sense that they desire or enjoy identifying with the discourse and its subject positions. Hence, the ideological fantasies and myths underpinning the discourse were exposed and discussed, namely the narratives of 'Indian Greatness' and 'Indian Exceptionalism'. The chapter has shown that major events in India's foreign policy (such as the nuclear tests in 1998) and its understanding of world order can be understood and explained as an interplay of these different logics which can thus serve as interpretative framework for analysing India's post-cold war foreign policy.

7. Hyper-nationalist Discourse: Making India Strong

The hegemonic Post-Nehruvian discourse is contested by the Hyper-nationalist discourse. As the main counter-hegemonic discourse in India, the Hyper-nationalist discourse emerged and developed parallel to the mainstream Nehruvian discourse and gained in importance after the end of the cold war and the dislocation of the Nehruvian discourse which was no longer able to serve as a source of identification for many political actors. From this dislocatory moment, as was shown in chapter 6, the Post-Nehruvian discourse gradually emerged. Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse did not manage to gain discursive hegemony in the moment of dislocation, it contributed to the transformation of the Nehruvian discourse and left its mark on the transformed hegemonic discourse.

The Hyper-nationalist discourse consists of two overlapping sub-discourses, the Hindu nationalist (*Hindutva*) discourse and the ultrarealist discourse, which converge in the social logic of national strength (*shakti*). The discourse is invoked and propagated by members of the *Sangh Parivar* – the family of Hindu nationalist organizations⁶¹ which include, inter alia, the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS) and the *Bharatiya Janata Party* as the political wing of the movement –, (former) military and intelligence personnel such as Bharat Verma, Gurmeet Kanwal, Ajit Doval, Raja Menon or G.D. Bakshi, some members of the Indian Foreign Service among them the prominent retired diplomats Kanwal Sibal, Satish Chandra and G. Parthasarathy and government advisors such as the policy analysts Brahma Chellaney and Bharat Karnad, who both served in the National Security Advisory Board during the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance Government. As the Hyper-nationalist discourse consists of two sub-discourses and only constitutes a counter-hegemonic discourse, which has (so far) not generated a broad and inclusive hegemonic project and thus remains a rudimentary and fragmented discourse, there exist not only differences and tensions within the discourse, but its proponents have also been regularly drawing on the hegemonic (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, i.e. the discourse re-articulates or re-affirms in various ways the social, political and fantastic logics of the hegemonic discourse, while, at the same time, seeking to distinguish itself from the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse.

The Hyper-nationalist discourse represents India's foreign policy as overly idealistic and moralistic, deploring a lack of strategic thought, a nonchalant dealing with the country's national security and a disregard of military power. It is an inherently conservative discourse characterized by a more pessimistic worldview, a desire to preserve or recollect past traditions

⁶¹ See for an overview of the *Sangh Parivar*: Jaffrelot 2005.

and an aspiration to build a strong, uniform nation-state. The *Hindutva* sub-discourse, which represents the core of the Hyper-nationalist discourse, originated in movements for religious revival and reform in the 19th century that emerged in a response to colonialism, Islam and Christianity. It is centred around the concept of *Hindutva* ('Hindu-ness')⁶², a culturally and ethnically defined nationalism that seeks to (re-)construct a Hindu nation (*rashtra*) based on a common culture (*sanskriti*), bloodline (*jaiti*) and geographical belonging to the Indian fatherland (*pitrabhoomi*) (Jaffrelot 2007: 5/15; Corbridge/Harriss/Jeffrey 2013: 179-180). Accordingly, *Hindutva* is the unifying force for the creation and maintenance of India's national identity and a stable, strong and wealthy nation-state that can play a supreme role in the international system.

The discourse of ultrarealism, by contrast, is largely a phenomenon of the post-cold war era. Its proponents can be found in India's armed forces, intelligence apparatus and the strategic community in general. The discourse articulates a particular variant of IR realism that represents world politics as an amoral, recurrent cycle of violence and power competition and regards the accumulation of supreme military power as the highest objective of states. While it embraces modern 'Western' modes of statecraft, technology and science and resembles the offensive realism articulated in IR⁶³, the discourse, at the same time, recalls – like the Hindu nationalist discourse – the glory and power of the Indian civilization in the Vedic age and regards the ancient Hindu thought as the foundation of India's strategic culture and grand strategy in the contemporary international system (see Singh [Jasw.] 1999; Karnad 2002a, 2014, Parthasarathy 2003, Prakash 2009). Likewise, both sub-discourses are united in their aspiration to create a powerful, uniform nation-state that deals from a position of strength with internal and external enemies. While the ultrarealist discourse, however, places greater emphasis on military power, the Hindu nationalist discourse, though conceding the importance of the material foundation of state power, ultimately attaches greater importance to the cultural dimension of state power and regards a strong national will and unity embodied by *Hindutva* as the fundamental source of power. *Hindutva* thus serves as the privileged signifier around which a chain of equivalence is constructed. Though sharing the concern for a strong national will and unity, proponents of the ultrarealist sub-discourse, in turn, do not necessarily or fully endorse the *Hindutva* 'agenda' as the right path to achieve this objective.

⁶² The term *Hindutva* was coined by the Hindu nationalist ideologist V.D. Savarkar (1922) in his treaty *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, which was the first systematic account of the Hindu nationalist ideology and served as a foundational text for the Hindu nationalist movement in India. For Savarkar, the term *Hindutva* should designate that Hinduism is the cultural foundation of India.

⁶³ A prominent proponent of this realist school of thought is John J. Mearsheimer who elaborated the main elements of offensive realism in his work *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (2001).

This chapter argues that the Hyper-nationalist discourse has so far not been able to forge a comprehensive alternative hegemonic project that could challenge the mainstream foreign policy discourse in India. The fact that the Hyper-nationalist discourse did not achieve discursive hegemony is illustrated by an analysis of the foreign policy of the BJP-led NDA Government under Prime Minister Atal Vajpayee in particular. Though the BJP harshly criticized India's foreign policy and promised substantial changes before coming to power in 1998, it rather substantiated and accelerated the transformation of India's dislocated hegemonic discourse than radically changing the direction or parameters of India's foreign policy. These nuanced changes included the accentuation of India's great power ambitions, a re-calibration of relations with key states such as the United States and attempts to reform India's national security apparatus (e.g. establishment of the National Security Council and National Security Advisory Boards). In other words, the BJP-led NDA government occasionally invoked the Hyper-nationalist discourse and could incorporate some of its elements in the disrupted hegemonic discourse, thereby contributing not only to its successful transformation but also shaping to a certain extent policy decisions such as India's nuclear tests in 1998. However, the Hyper-nationalist discourse could not sediment and thus key BJP policy-makers fell back on the logics of the hegemonic (Post-)Nehruvian discourse such as non-discrimination and non-violence.

In contrast to assertions of BJP politicians that “[t]he Vajpayee era of 1998 to 2004 witnessed a very substantial transformation of Indian foreign policy”, whereby “the pursuit of outdated ideologies had given way to the pursuit of national interest” and “India had moved from idealism to pragmatism” (Arora 2006: 19), also found in parts of the literature that speak of a fundamental shift towards an assertive ‘realism’ and ‘realpolitik’ under the BJP rule (see Kapur 2006; Vanaik 2007), this chapter shows that the BJP-led government was still gripped by the Nehruvian discourse and did not fully contest it, but rather sought to modify and adapt it to the new ‘structural context’. In other words, the foreign policy under BJP rule was an updated Nehruvian foreign policy. This duality of continuity and change under the BJP-led government has been pointed out by several authors, but has never been fully explicated (see Chaulia 2002, Muni/Mohan 2004, Chiriyankandath/Wyatt 2005, Sridharan 2006, Ogden 2010, 2014b). This study shows that the Hyper-nationalist discourse, on which the BJP occasionally draws, has so far not articulated a broad, inclusive and distinctive hegemonic project, but is characterized by inherent contradictions and tensions which impede its efficacy in the struggle for discursive hegemony. In addition, the discourse re-produces in many respects the logics of the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse.

In the first part of this chapter, national strength as the nodal point and main social logic of the Hyper-nationalist discourse is discussed. The second part explicates the temporal and spatial-political ‘others’ of the discourse. The Hyper-nationalist discourse is constituted largely by the same temporal and spatial-political ‘others’ as the Post-Nehruvian discourse, but the colonial ‘other’ includes here also the Muslim rulers over the Indian Subcontinent and the relationship with the two spatial-political ‘others’ (Pakistan and China) displays a higher degree of antagonism. Likewise, a variation of the fantasmatic logics of the Post-Nehruvian discourse, ‘Indian Greatness’ and ‘Indian Exceptionalism’, also underpins the Hyper-nationalist discourse. These two narratives are discussed in the third part of the chapter.

7.1 Social Logic: National Strength (*Shakti*)

The Hyper-nationalist discourse laments that India suffers from “an absence of strategic culture, lack of commitment to territory and a somewhat naive and idealistic approach to the country’s security” (Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 106). Accordingly, India failed to develop a tradition of strategic thought and understanding of state power. It has not elaborated a national security strategy and proper system of defence planning, has no settled borders, and the armed forces are largely excluded from the decision-making processes. The cause for this state of affairs is, according to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the prevalence of a ‘pacifist’ and ‘moralist’ mind-set resulting primarily from the influence of Jainism, Buddhism and Gandhianism in India and partially re-affirmed by Nehru’s foreign and security policies after India’s independence (Verma [B.] 1998; Menon 2000: 23/38; Prakash 2005: 2/5; Nehra 2010; Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 8-9). As the retired General V.P. Malik (2010) notes:

“we had acquired, and accepted, an image of being an accommodative and a forgiving society, full of piety and ahimsa: one, which believed more in God-given destiny than making our own destiny. Out of spirituality, pacifism and nonviolence, many of our 20th century political leaders conjured up the idea of a morally superior India, professing peace and harmony, in a world where nations indulge in cut-throat competition for their national interests. We talked of *Vasudeva Kudumbakam*, when India itself could not live like a family. In foreign relations, our leaders professed, and practiced, morally superior value-based politics, but which does not reflect the international realism.”

As a result, India did not acquire the necessary military capabilities to defend its national interests, shied away from using power and military force effectively and could not realize its great power ambitions in the international system. Instead, India became a “soft state” with a defensive, defeatist and reactionary approach to national security threats and, therefore, fell

victim to foreign subjugation and aggressions, in which it lost parts of its territory to China and Pakistan (Chellaney 1999a: 189; Karnad 2005: 95-95; Advani 2008b: 611).

As the Hyper-nationalist discourse suggests that India faces the most dangerous security environment of all states in the international system, this negligence of strategic thinking and planning as well as India's defence preparedness has fatal consequences for India's national integrity and interests. India is surrounded by two hostile and aligned nuclear weapons states, China and Pakistan, with whom it has unsettled borders and fought wars, in a region characterized by endemic violence, political and social turmoil, fragile statehood and the growing power of Islamist fundamentalism. India is not only a major target for Islamic terrorists who try to islamize the entire Indian subcontinent, but also pushed to the margins by a rising and assertive China that seeks to dominate Asia (Karnad 2008a: 5; Doval 2010; Verma [B.] 2012; Sibal 2013a; Kanwal 2014). Instead of devising a national security strategy and acquiring the necessary military and non-military means to deal with these fundamental challenges effectively, India's response to (potential or actual) threats to its national security has remained amateurish, indecisive and passive (RSS 2003; Jaitley 2012; Parthasarathy 2013; Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 1/9).

The Hyper-nationalist discourse represents world politics as an inherently competitive and conflictive arena where strength and power decide about the fate of nations. The struggle for influence and power runs not only between states, but also between civilizations and can always turn violent. As Brahma Chellaney (1999b: 558) points out:

“Global politics in the state-centred, power-driven international system clearly works to the advantage of the powerful. We would all like to live in a world in which unilateral resort to force by any state is unthinkable and untenable. But the reality is that power and force are at the core of international relations – and will remain so. The underlying principles of international relations are that power respects power, and that power pursues more power. The powerful states set the international rules and ensure compliance by the weaker nations”

For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the international order is thus characterized by a relatively strict hierarchy that, similar to the Hindu caste system, ranks states on the basis of their material as well as non-material capabilities and allocates them specific rights and responsibilities in this order. After the end of the cold war and a short period of U.S. unipolarity, the international order is now believed to be gradually shifting towards an Asian-centric multipolar order (Mishra [2000] 2005: 17; Kanwal 1999: 1713f.; Advani 2006: 1/15; Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 274ff.; Parthasarathy 2007c; Chandra 2011a). The proponents of the Hyper-nationalist discourse are convinced that India is destined to become a great power and central pillar of this order, provided that it has a clear strategic vision and accumulates comprehensive na-

tional power (Karnad 2002a: xii/xvii; Verma [B.] 2009: 13; Doval 2010; Singh/Gera/Dewan 2013: 16f./235). Deploring that “India is yet to find a place and a role commensurate with its size, population, strategic location and its potential in various fields in the new world order”, the BJP noted in its 1996 election manifesto, “India’s national objective must be to become one of the most powerful nations in the world” (BJP [1996] 2000: 64-65). In particular, India must come to terms with the ‘geopolitical realities’ of the international system and question old “shibboleths” such as non-alignment or non-violence, which have become ‘empty mantras’ in the post-Nehru period, and adopt a foreign policy driven by ‘realpolitik’ and ‘pragmatism’ (Mishra [2000] 2005: 18), whereby, as the former defence minister and BJP politician K.C. Pant (2006: 85) notes, “the enhancement of national power is the strategic objective of nation States” and not the promotion of certain values. Criticizing the ‘moralism’ in India’s foreign policy, Jaswant Singh (1999: 42-43) noted:

“This ‘moral aspect’ was in essence a confusion [...] It is a search for the ‘moral’ in the realm of international affairs, a reconciliation then of that ‘moral’ with the demonstrated reality of the conduct of nations in pursuit of their respective national goals and interests. It is a confusion that arises from not differentiating between individual human morality and ethics, and the reality of national interests. [...] Always being ‘troubled’ by the individual ‘moral aspect’ resulted in serious long-term consequences, for India and its successive generations, in four more specific areas of critical importance: Tibet, Sino-Indian relations; Indo-Pak standoff relations as exemplified by Jammu & Kashmir; and the nuclear armament question.”

The discourse contends that India still struggles with the fact that international relations are driven by power, violence and the pursuit of narrow national interests rather than lofty ideals and morality. More concerned about upholding certain moral ideals and India’s moral reputation in the world, Indian policy-makers, as the discourse asserts, tend to be very uncomfortable with power and disregard the use of force as an instrument of state policy believing in a flawed understanding of the relationship between the ends and means in international politics (Menon 2000: 23f.; Malik 2010: 2; Karnad 2014: 214). This prevents not only the effective defence of India’s national interests and security, but has also led to “a besieged psyche and psychology of victimhood” that results from the belief that India’s opponents adhere to the same principles to which India subscribes and the moral outrage after India has been once again outmanoeuvred by them (Nehra 2010). Similarly, the Hyper-nationalist discourse, and the ultrarealist sub-discourse in particular, cautions about privileging India’s alleged ‘soft power’ over its ‘hard power’ and believing that India, as the authors of the report *Non-alignment 2.0* suggest, can lead by ‘the power of its example’. This belief in India’s ‘soft power’ “displays a disquieting naiveté” by ignoring the fact that “comprehensive national power rather than example is what counts for in the real world” (Chandra 2012) and that is no

coincidence that the concept originated in the country with the greatest hard power in the world: the United States (Karnad 2012a).⁶⁴ As the former foreign secretary Kanwal Sibal (2013b) points out:

“Bollywood, which is loved by the Pakistani public, hasn’t reduced Pakistan’s hostility towards India, just as the fondness of some here for Pakistani plays and affection for sufi music does not change negative thinking about Pakistan in India. Our secularism and pluralism is hardly viewed with admiration in the Islamic world, where the more conservative regimes actually see secularism as a form of heresy and minorities are denied equal status in law. Our other cultural attributes, however attractive, haven’t persuaded countries to be on India’s side against dictatorships and military regimes that inflict violence or make territorial demands on us. Across the world people can love Indian food and enjoy Indian art forms, but that does not lessen political differences on key bilateral or international issues, just as the popularity of Chinese food in India does not alter our thinking about Chinese claims on Arunachal Pradesh or its strategic alliance with Pakistan.”

Despite its critique of the Nehruvian foreign policy, the Hyper-nationalist discourse does not really question or contest the utility of non-alignment during the cold war and its continuing relevance for India’s contemporary foreign policy, but the way how it was put into practice and became a mantra, an end in itself, instead of a mean to promote India’s national interests and great power ambitions (cf. BJP 2000, Kanwal 2000a, Karnad 2002a, Singh [Jasw.] 2006, Parthasarathy 2007a). In other words, the Hyper-nationalist discourse has not sought to establish an alternative *and* inclusive nodal point, but rather to promote a different understanding of non-alignment. The Hyper-nationalist discourse thus embraced and supported the shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment in the transformation process of the hegemonic discourse. For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, multi-alignment implies strategic autonomy and a multi-directional foreign policy backed by the accumulation of national strength. As Brahma Chellaney (2010b: 154) describes this ongoing shift:

“India has now come of age. It is displaying greater realism in its economic and foreign policies and moving gradually from doctrinaire nonalignment to geopolitical pragmatism. It has come to recognize that it can wield international power only through the accretion of its own economic and military strength. India will increasingly be aligned with the West economically. But politically it has multiple options, and there is no reason for it to put all its strategic eggs in one basket. It can advance its interests by forging issue-based partnerships with different players to create more strategic space for itself. That means it can progress from being nonaligned to being multialigned while preserving nonalignment’s kernel – strategic and policy-making autonomy”.

The shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment has been promoted by proponents of the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourse and informed the foreign policies of the NDA and UPA Government which sought to forge – as far as possible – mutually beneficial rela-

⁶⁴ Though the Hindu nationalist sub-discourse shares to a certain extent this critique of emphasizing India’s soft power over its hard power, it ultimately, as we will see, regards cultural power as the main source of Indian might and influence in the international system.

tions with all major powers. In contrast to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, however, the Hyper-nationalist discourse points out that national strength is the pre-condition for genuine strategic autonomy, since only a strong and powerful country that possesses the military-industrial capabilities to defend itself is really autonomous (Pant 2006: 91f.; Sibal 2011; Singh/Gera/Dewan 2013: 224).⁶⁵ In an inherently competitive international system, where all countries are driven by their narrow self-interests, India cannot rely on other states, not even on so-called strategic partners such as the United States, when it comes to its national security and interests (Karnad 2002b, 2014; Vijay 2008: 74f.; Doval 2010; Sibal 2013b; Chellaney 2014). The social logic of national strength thus suggests India has no interest or reason to join an alliance and become a subordinate state of any great power, but must acquire comprehensive, autonomous defence capabilities. This does not mean, however, that India should not seek strategic alignments to advance its national interests. In fact, the Hyper-nationalist discourse criticized India's strategic tilt towards the USSR during the cold war and demanded a more balanced relationship with both superpowers (BJP [1981] 2000: 5-6). Activating the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the BJP actively furthered, for instance, the transformation of Indo-U.S. relations after coming to power in 1998. BJP leaders even talked of India and the United States as "natural allies" (Vajpayee 2000b; Singh [Jasw.] 2006). However, they did not seek a formal alliance, but a strategic partnership on 'equal footing' that may not compromise India's strategic autonomy (Mishra 2007; BJP 2008). "What must be at the core of our understanding is that 'strategic partnership'", as the BJP (2005) noted, "is ordinarily between two equals. Any 'lock-in' with US strategic relations or accepting an asymmetrical relationship is not 'strategic partnership', it would be capitulation".

The resistance of proponents of the Hyper-nationalist discourse against the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement was also formulated through the social logic of national strength. It was criticized that the nuclear deal imposes direct or indirect restraints on India's nuclear weapons programme and thus harms its strategic autonomy by restricting the size of the programme and the possibility to conduct further nuclear tests, while the political costs of the agreement lie in the U.S.' expectations regarding India's positioning on certain international issues such as Iran's nuclear programme and thus potential infringements of its decision-making autonomy, making India into a 'subordinate power' and undermining its great power ambitions (Advani 2007; Karnad 2007; BJP 2008; Sood 2008; Doval/Chandra 2011).

⁶⁵ In this sense, India, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse points out, was not a truly non-aligned country under Nehru's leadership, because the Indian Government, for instance, had to turn to the United States and Great Britain and beg for military support during the 1962 China war. This demonstrated once more the absence of strategic thought under Nehru's leadership who had not thought through the strategic implications of non-alignment (Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 60ff.).

Nuclear weapons as symbols of national awakening, resurgence and unity

In a world where nation-states and civilizations engage in ruthless competition for their national and cultural interests, violence is a permanent feature and the most powerful states/civilizations assert their will, India, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse demands, must become militarily strong to stand its ground (Vijay 2009: 9). “For any nation to establish its influence in the world”, as the BJP president Rajnath Singh (2008) pointed out, “it requires to become a military superpower”. The discourse deplores the state of India’s defence preparedness, poor strategic planning, very slow defence acquisition and procurement processes, and low defence expenditures which reflect a general negligence of the country’s national security by various governments (Singh [Jasw.] 1999; Oberoi 2008; Doval 2012; Jaitley 2012; Anand 2013; Singh [P.] 2013; Kanwal 2014). As the BJP noted in its 1998 election manifesto: “The frenetic pace of military expansion and modernization by some of our neighbours and the growing pressure and power of foreign navies in the Indian Ocean compel us to take the state of our defence preparedness very seriously” (BJP 1998). Apart from increasing India’s defence budget, the party promised to “[r]e-evaluate the country’s nuclear policy and exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons” and “[i]ncrease the radius of power projection” (BJP 1998). Nuclear weapons epitomize national strength in the Hyper-nationalist discourse (Chellaney 1999a: 146ff./199; Verma [B.] 2001; Karnad 2002a). They have taken the form of a *synecdoche*, a figure of style that Laclau (2014: 86ff.), taking recourse to the deconstructivist Paul de Man, uses in order to account for the way how discourses produce meanings and seek to hegemonize the discursive field. A *synecdoche* oscillates between metaphor and metonymy and expresses that a term for a particular thing symbolizes the whole of something. In this sense, nuclear weapons are not merely weapons, but an epitome for India’s national awakening, resurgence and unity. Accordingly, the series of nuclear tests under the name ‘Operation *Shakti* (strength)’ in May 1998 symbolize for the BJP leader L.K. Advani (2006: 69) the beginning of “India’s emergence on the global horizon as a major power player” that pursues a self-confident and assertive foreign policy by “placing national security concerns above all other considerations and refusing to buckle down under pressure”⁶⁶ (BJP 2000 [1998]: 71). This tendency to bend under the pressure of the great powers and world public opinion “arises as much out of ignorance of our rightful place and role in world affairs as also from a loss of

⁶⁶ This is a hint at previous Indian governments that shied away from conducting the nuclear tests due to international pressure and the fear of economic sanctions. Accordingly, the BJP presents itself as a truly nationalist and principled party that has courage and keeps its promises on issues on vital importance to India’s national security (see Advani 2005).

national self-confidence and resolve. A nation as large and capable as ourselves must make its impact felt on the world arena” (BJP 1998).

The nuclear tests must be seen in this context as an attempt to make India internally and externally strong. As Atal Vajpayee (1998a) noted after the nuclear tests, “the greatest meaning of the tests is that they have given India shakti, they have given India strength, they have given India self-confidence.” According to L.K. Advani (2005): “To make India ‘Shaktishali (strong), Samruddha (prosperous) and Swabhimani (self-confident)’ has been the motto of the BJP since its inception. We have always believed that equipping India with a nuclear weapons deterrent is a key pre-requisite for making India strong”.

Externally, the nuclear tests should substantiate India’s status a great power and force the world to accept India’s ‘rightful place’ in world politics. As the *Sarkaryavah* (general secretary) of the RSS, H.V. Seshadri (1998) noted after the nuclear tests, “all the world has got a loud and clear message that India can no more be treated as second or third rate nation now”. Internally, the nuclear tests should not only unite the people behind the counter-hegemonic project of the Hyper-nationalist discourse and increase the self-confidence in India’s achievements, capabilities and potentials: “Operation Shakti [...] has made India stronger than ever before, more self-confident than ever before, and given her higher global standing than ever before. [...] Operation Shakti has, thus not only given India security, but has also unleashed the energies of the hundred crore children of Bharat Mata to work harder, and work with pride, for their motherland” (BJP Today 2000: 26).

The nuclear tests were thus framed by the Hyper-nationalist discourse as a mean to install a strong sense of unity, assertiveness and muscularity in the Indian society and make India into a uniform nation-state that has a strong national will, social cohesion and the military whereabouts to stand tall and powerful in the comity of nations (Verma [B.] 2009; Doval 2010; Karnad 2012b). As the BJP leader L.K. Advani (2008b: 611) notes, “national will is not only an intangible component of national power, but by far the most vital. All the other determinable ingredients of power fail to achieve desired results in the absence of this crucial element. India should build the collective will of its billion-strong population and counter all efforts to erode and weaken it.” For the Hindu nationalist sub-discourse in particular, this requires the existence of a strong, unifying and appealing national culture (see BJP 2004; Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 87ff.; Singh [R.] 2006), which is embodied by *Hindutva* and should be further strengthened by the nuclear tests

The 1998 nuclear tests have often been represented in the literature as a turning-point in India’s foreign and security policy, marking a shift from idealism to *realpolitik*. Several schol-

ars, drawing on realist IR theory, argued that (real and perceived) security threats, emanating from China and Pakistan in particular, and a *realpolitik*-driven awareness for the importance of military power in the international system played a crucial role in the decision to nuclearize (cf. Ganguly 1999; Mohan 2004; Kapur 2006; Sridharan 2006). Others highlight the BJP's Hindu nationalist ideology and see India's nuclearization in 1998 as "emblematic of a new kind of aggressive and belligerent Indian nationalism" that seeks to establish a strong, militaristic nation-state (Vanaik 2007: 381; see also Bajpai 2009, Das 2009). The BJP itself has repeatedly claimed that the decision for overt nuclearization was driven by national security imperatives and a recognition that pragmatic *realpolitik* should guide Indian foreign and security policies (see Vajpayee 1998a; Singh [Jasw.] 1999; BJP 2000; Mishra [2000] 2005; Arora 2006; Sinha [2002] 2007). In the context of India's nuclear tests in 1998, the BJP-led NDA Government also drew on the Hyper-nationalist discourse and its representation of Pakistan and China as a collaborative threat to India. Prior to the tests, defence minister George Fernandes (1998) stated that China is India's "potential threat number one" and that "[i]t is no secret that China is helping Pakistan militarily [...] there is the threat of Chinese encirclement of India". Likewise, L.K. Advani (2006: 23) refers to the Sino-Pakistani threat in its justifications for the nuclear tests:

"the BJP had always felt that India should develop its nuclear capabilities, essentially as a deterrent, to meet its security requirements. India was sandwiched between two nuclear states China and Pakistan, the former with an ambitious programme and resources to acquire military primacy not only in the region but also far behind it and the latter a covert and devious nuclear programme. Their working in tandem seriously compounded the problem and India could not imperil its vital security interests to placate international opinion. Though the stated position of China remained that its nuclear cooperation with Pakistan was only for peaceful purposes, the ground realities were quite different and India was in no doubt about their common programme of strategic containment of India".

Though invoking the Hyper-nationalist discourse and declaring India a nuclear weapons state, the BJP-led NDA government was still gripped by the dislocated hegemonic Nehruvian discourse and its nuclear ambiguity. As a result, the government did not replace, as hoped by the Indian ultrarealists in particular, the policy of strategic restraint with hard *realpolitik* and materialize a key demand of the Hyper-nationalist discourse. This hope has soon faded away in the post-*shakti* period, because "after declaring itself a nuclear-weapons state, India has hesitated to take the preliminary steps to fully integrate nuclear weapons into its defence structure and make its deterrent operational in a military sense" (Chellaney 1999a: 189). According to Raja Menon (2000: 241), a former rear admiral in the Indian Navy:

“[t]here is prevalent in India the view that deterrence is created once the scientific community produces nuclear weapon prototypes. [...] The implication is that behind the technical capability implicit in the production of the weapon prototypes lies larger concurrent technological capabilities. The deterree is then supposed to assume that he may be struck by nuclear weapons, of a kind not yet advertised, and thus deterrence is established. Such is the belief of many in India who have risen to high positions in government and academia, but who have not read deterrent theory.”

Instead of making India’s nuclear weapons capability operational and thus making India into a true nuclear-weapons power in the first place, the Vajpayee Government, as the former Chief of Naval Staff Arun Prakash (2008a) laments, “voluntarily and gratuitously declared a ‘moratorium on testing’ and offered a ‘no first use’ guarantee within days of the 1998 tests, without consulting a single military person”. These self-imposed restrictions on India’s nuclear weapons programme are of particular concern for proponents of the Hyper-nationalist discourse, since the conducted nuclear tests have not sufficiently demonstrated India’s thermonuclear capability. As Bharat Karnad (2008b: 338) points out, “India is an incomplete nuclear weapon state. The 1998 tests proved that. While the fission, tritium-boosted fission and low-yield weapons designs worked satisfactory, the thermonuclear (or hydrogen) bomb – which is the decisive armament in any advanced arsenal – needed reconfiguration and re-testing. But the A.B. Vajpayee’s voluntary test moratorium prevented that.” In addition, the government rushed into talks with the United States after the tests and thus accepted further restrictions on India’s nuclear weapons programme (Chellaney 1999a: 202).

For Bharat Karnad and others, the 1998 nuclear tests thus resemble the 1974 ‘peaceful nuclear explosion’ under prime minister Indira Gandhi who also shied away from a full-fledged weaponization and left the military out of the picture. This suggests that the

“‘nationalistic’ Bharatiya Janata Party really does not understand or appreciate the politico-military utility of an advanced megaton yield thermonuclear force or the gains from genuine ‘strategic autonomy’ – which concept it has talked about without seemingly understanding it – and is satisfied with only a symbolic nuclear force. And, furthermore, that the decision to test in May 1998 was mere nuclear tokenism with no conviction behind it to pull India into the top rung of countries” (Karnad 2002b).

This discursive representation of Pokhran-II raises doubts that the decision to test was driven *primarily* by ‘national security imperatives’ and ‘strategic considerations’ or marks a shift towards a belligerent and militaristic foreign policy (and could thus be seen as the successful activation of the Hyper-nationalist discourse). To begin with, the decision to test was made by a very few senior BJP politicians and the RSS leader and nuclear physicist Rajendra Singh (Corbridge 1999: 241; Perkovich 1999: 404/408ff.) without conducting, as promised in the BJP election manifesto, a “Strategic Defence Review” that was supposed “to study and analyse the security environment and make appropriate recommendations to cover all aspects of

defence requirements and organization” (BJP [1998] 2000: 69-70). A key concern of the Hyper-nationalist discourse in general, and the ultrarealist sub-discourse in particular, has been the total lack of a tradition of strategic thought and planning and the exclusion of the military from decision-making processes in India (see Chellaney 1999b; Singh [Jasw.] 1999; Kanwal 2000a, Malik 2010; Chandra 2011; Prakash 2012b; Anand 2013). Instead of ‘correcting’ these strategic deficiencies and to wait for the formation of the new National Security Council, which was supposed to conduct the comprehensive strategic defence review, or consult military leaders, the BJP leadership largely continued the ad-hoc policy-making style of previous Indian governments and made the decision to test within a few weeks after assuming office.

After conducting the nuclear tests, the BJP-led government did relatively little to integrate the nuclear force with the military and make the deterrent operational. In the aftermath of the tests, the absence of a clear strategy and military expertise became also apparent in the government’s contradictory statements regarding India’s nuclear posturing. If the nuclear tests were really driven by national security concerns, the government would have taken immediate steps to establish the strategic command and control structures and acquire delivery mechanisms for making India’s nuclear deterrent operational. Instead, there remain – until today – some doubts among international observers and retired Indian military officials about the credibility of India’s nuclear deterrent (see Karnad 2008a: 69ff./93ff.; Prakash 2009; Cohen/Dasgupta 2010: 120ff.; Kanwal 2012; Koithara 2012).

This is not to suggest that the BJP has taken no steps to operationalize India’s nuclear deterrent and to induct a ‘strategic culture’ into India’s foreign and security decision-making. The BJP-led NDA government established, for instance, a National Security Council (NSC) in November 1998 “to advise Government on all issues of national security and in establishment of a credible nuclear deterrence” (NDA 1999). Adjunct to the NSC, the National Security Advisory Board was created to provide the government with external expertise and strategic inputs. The NSAB under the chairmanship of K. Subrahmanyam published a draft nuclear doctrine for India in August 1999. In addition, the government appointed the Kargil Review Committee in 1999 to investigate India’s response to Pakistan’s invasion and published a Group of Minister Report on National Security (2001) that reviewed India’s entire national security system, assessed the security environment and made recommendations for a more effective and integrated approach to the country’s security challenges. Following the recommendations of the report, the government created two new offices, a Chief of Defence Staff and a Defence Intelligence Agency in order to enhance the coordination and defence planning between the Army, Navy and Air Force. In practice, however, all these reforms and initiatives

had, as scholars, policy-makers and military officials conclude (see Chaulia 2002, Shankar 2008, Pant 2009a, Cohen/Dasgupta 2010, Bakshi 2011, Prakash 2009, Anand 2013, Kanwal 2013), only little effects on India's foreign and security policy-making. While the NSC and the NSAB are inadequately equipped and side-lined in the decision-making process, the Chief of Defence Staff has not been implemented until today due to intra-services rivalries and resistance from the Ministry of Defence. Finally, the BJP-led NDA government has neither published a national security strategy nor formally adopted a nuclear doctrine. As Jaswant Singh, who assumed office with the publically announced objective to make India's foreign and security policy more strategically oriented, concedes:

“there remain some paradoxes. The principal one is the absence of a formally adopted nuclear doctrine by India. Post the Kargil review, a strategic command has been established but other than that first pronouncement by Prime Minister Vajpayee, no other doctrine has been enunciated. The National Security Council did deliberate upon this subject and produced a paper⁶⁷, but this was not formally discussed by the government of the day. It does not, therefore, have the stamp of any authority, and remains a mere discussion paper” (Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 171).

Hence, instead of using the newly established institutions and fully integrating them into the decision-making process, the BJP-led government rather relied on the established institutions such as the Cabinet Committee on Defence and, like previous governments, shied away from formalizing any strategy or doctrine. The continuity in India's nuclear policy becomes also apparent in the fact that BJP leaders persistently invoked social logics of the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse such as non-discrimination and non-violence in the aftermath of the nuclear tests. As was shown in chapter 6, the BJP-led government represented the nuclear tests, above all, as a reaction to the “nuclear apartheid” in the international system and thus drew on a long established theme of India's mainstream foreign policy discourse. Reiterating India's commitment to non-violence, the government exercised strategic restraint by showing no urgency to make India's nuclear deterrent operational and announcing a ‘moratorium on testing’ and a ‘no first use guarantee’. Running through all government statements after the tests was, moreover, a reference to India's continued striving for global nuclear disarmament, which was also incorporated into the draft nuclear doctrine of the National Security Advisory Board.

The harsh intra-discursive critique of the BJP's nuclear policy by proponents of the Hyper-nationalist discourse does not only show that we can hardly speak of a shift to a ‘realist’ or ‘militarized’ foreign policy under the BJP-led NDA government and a successful institutionalization of the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse in India, but also indicates

⁶⁷ This paper was based on the deliberations of the National Security Advisory Board and its draft nuclear doctrine.

how a ‘realist’ or ‘militarized’ foreign policy would look like. Such a policy would require a fully operational and large nuclear force with at least 350 warheads and delivery systems that can target all nuclear weapons states, including the United States. This more assertive and maximalist nuclear policy is based on the conviction that India must resist all restrictions to its nuclear weapons programme (e.g. through bilateral and multilateral arms control or test ban agreements) and conduct further nuclear tests (as well as ballistic missile tests) until it has proven the reliability and survivability of its (thermo-)nuclear capability and has the reach to strike every nuclear weapons state in the world. In addition, India cannot rely on a de-alerted, de-mated nuclear deterrent, but must have a deployed nuclear force and a fully functional nuclear command and control system (Karnad 2002a: xvi/xviii; Karnad 2008a: 88ff.; Shankar 2008; Chellaney 2009b).⁶⁸

Moreover, military power, including nuclear weapons, must be acquired and used strategically to protect the country’s national security and advance its national interests, i.e. India needs a clear strategic vision and the political will to use these military capabilities in order to promote its national security, interests and great power ambitions. Therefore, India’s military doctrine and force structure needs to shift from the defence of territory to the defence of its national interests in Asia and beyond. This requires a massive military build-up and modernization giving India substantial power projection and network-centric warfare capabilities. India’s long-term strategic objective must be to become the dominant power in Asia and to defend its ‘natural sphere of influence’ that ranges from the Persian Gulf to Central Asia to the Strait of Malacca (Verma [B.] 2009; Karnad 2012b; Shankar 2008a; Bakshi 2011: 17ff.). As the realist strategic thinker Bharat Karnad (2005: 62) deplored shortly after the end of the BJP’s tenure, “India is almost entirely out of the picture and wherever else it may be ‘emerging’, it is not doing so in the military sphere. [...] India’s national security budget of some \$20 billion is one-twentieth that of the US, and one-third that of China’s annual defence expenditure”.

At the same time, the harsh critique of the BJP’s nuclear policy articulated by the Hypernationalist discourse also points to divergences within the discourse that run between the Hindu nationalist and the ultrarealist sub-discourses. Though both discourses seek to build a strong and powerful India, the ultrarealist sub-discourse emphasizes the importance of military power and its strategic use to further India’s interests, whereas the Hindu nationalist dis-

⁶⁸ This is also critique of the minimum deterrence concept propagated by the influential Nehruvian ‘realist’ and strong advocate of India’s nuclearization, K. Subrahmanyam, who maintained that it takes very little to deter adversaries so that India needs neither a large nuclear arsenal and a thermonuclear capability nor a deployed nuclear force (Karnad 2007).

course tends to attach greater importance to the symbolic power of military capabilities such as aircraft carriers or nuclear weapons. Conceding the “indispensability of military power” in world politics, the BJP president Rajnath Singh (2008), for instance, points out that “[m]ilitary might can establish one’s awe but cannot ensure one’s respect, affection and oneness” and is thus insufficient for making India into a strong global power. This requires, by contrast, as the Hindu nationalists assert, the existence of a strong, unifying and appealing national culture (BJP 2004; Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 87ff.; Singh [R.] 2006a).

Peace through strength: dealing with threats to India’s national security

For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, national strength is the precondition for dealing with security threats effectively, because “history is not made by weak nations. It is only the strong who can forge peace” (Thakre 1999: 5). In contrast to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse has a more military- and state-centric concept of national security. Though the discourse acknowledges non-traditional security challenges such as climate change, energy or health (Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 237f.; Sibal 2013b), it argues that India faces a fundamentally different security environment than ‘Western’ states which propagate this ‘new’ common security agenda. Apart from the challenge of economic development, India’s “physical security is seriously under threat not only by hostile state actors but also non-state actors inspired by violent religious ideologies that receive state support. India’s security dilemmas are particularly acute. It is facing two hostile powers on its frontiers, Pakistan and China, and both cooperate with each other to threaten its security. With both countries India has outstanding border problems, with unsettled, undemarcated or disputed borders” (Sibal 2011a).

Unless India upholds a high level of defence preparedness and accepts the reality of violence in world politics, Pakistan and China will continue their inimical policies and seek a military solution of the border disputes. “India remains a soft target”, as the retired Brigadier Amar Cheema (2014) notes, “because she has invariably taken a re-active approach, and the effect gets compounded since the articulation of her strategic outlook is not only defensive, but pacifist by nature.” As the RSS leader and BJP National General Secretary, Ram Madhav Varanasi (2013), points out: “Bharat has historically practised the principle of world peace. However, it should not forget the dictum that ‘to be prepared for war is the best way of ensuring peace’”. Attacking the pacifist mind-set of India’s political establishment, Bharat Verma (2013) warns: “Violence unleashed upon a nation can only be met by developing the capability to counter the violence. In the twenty-first century, unless societies with deep-rooted be-

liefs in non-violence and pacifism secure themselves with a grid of violence provided by a lean and mean military machine, their survival as a nation-state will be in question.”

Therefore, India must react to shifts in the military balance-of-power and be willing to use its hard power capabilities strategically. According to the retired Major General and deputy director of the Hindu nationalist Vivekananda International Foundation, G.D. Bakshi (2011: 17), “India’s declining defence capability in the nineties was undoubtedly one of the factors that prompted Pakistan’s intrusion in Kargil.” Therefore, India must counter Pakistan’s and China’s growing conventional and nuclear military capabilities in order to prevent aggressions in the future. “The irony is that Pakistan”, as Vinay Shankar (2008) notes, “is one fifth our size. In every measure of national power it is way below us. Currently, it is struggling for survival. Yet it has not abandoned its plans to take Kashmir and keep us destabilised. The reasons are obvious. It believes that we neither have the capability nor the will to do anything in retaliation. [...] Unless Pakistan sees in India a punitive capability, it will not abandon support to militancy and terrorism. We must understand this.” Likewise the BJP politician General Tejpal Singh Rawat points out with respect to the military build-up of Pakistan and China: “The more power our adversaries accumulate, the more provocative and aggressive their posture will be to humiliate us. Our efforts should be to offset or neutralise such power imbalances by building our defence capabilities and allocating adequate Budget. India being often termed as a ‘Soft State’ stems from our weaknesses and lack of developing matching capabilities” (Lok Sabha Debates 2008: 415).

Against this backdrop, it is vital that India deals with its adversaries from a position of strength. “Enduring peace can come only if the nation is strong and has the required capabilities to deter aggression” (Chellaney 1999b: 594). “Talking from a posture of strength”, as Kanwal Sibal (2010) explains, “makes sense as a strategy as the adversary knows that other, harder options are available to the other side if a genuine opportunity to resolve differences through dialogue is spurned.” This applies, in particular, to India’s most immediate security threat: Pakistan. Instead of trying to appease Pakistan in the naive hope that cooperation and dialogue can change Pakistan’s intrinsic anti-Indian and belligerent mind-set, India needs to adopt a pro-active and assertive policy to counter its multi-pronged strategy to destabilize India and annex Kashmir (Sood 2007; Chandra 2013a; Parthasarathy 2013b).

Such a policy would take advantage of India’s superior economic resources and change the military balance-of-power in India’s favour, providing India with potential strategic leverage to deter Pakistan from any anti-Indian moves. This requires, however, the existence of a credible threat to use force and the willingness to take the war into Pakistani territory through

air strikes, massive artillery shelling and ‘hot pursuit’ attacks. As long as India, as the Kargil war in 1999 and the Operation Parakram in 2002 have demonstrated, shies away from crossing the Line of Control and conducting counter-insurgency operations in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, Pakistan will not end its hostile and destructive policies. By adopting a more offensive military strategy that tests Pakistan’s defence preparedness and creates strategic uncertainty, India, by contrast, would be able to put coercive pressure on Pakistan and raise the costs for its military adventurism and support of cross-border terrorism (Kanwal 2000a: 1619f.; Chellaney 2009c; Verma [B.] 2009: 47). This coercive pressure could be further aggravated, if India exploits Pakistan’s various internal vulnerabilities and covertly supports separatist forces particularly in Baluchistan (Karnad 2011; Chandra 2013a). While most proponents of the Hyper-nationalist discourse see this policy as a strategic instrument to contain the Pakistani threat and enforce a change in Pakistan’s policy, the more radical wing of the Hindu nationalists and some former military officials see it as a strategic blueprint to break up Pakistan and eliminate this threat to India once for all (see Verma [B.] 2008b; Singh [A.] 2014).

Given Pakistan’s repeated aggressions against India and its aiding of the bloody insurgency in Kashmir starting in the 1980s, the oppositional BJP declared that a nuclear-armed Pakistan poses “[t]he gravest threat to the security of India” (BJP 2000 [1992]: 35-36), and propagated a more assertive policy towards Pakistan: “it is clear that Pakistan is doing everything in its power to destabilize India. Its policy of creating instability and unrest in India through its military intelligence network is nothing short of an inimical act”. Therefore, “the time has come for India to issue a firm warning to Pakistan that if it does not stop exporting terrorism to this country, India would perfectly within the limits of its rights in international law if it launches a strike against those who actively train the terrorists and send them across the border with view to undermine India’s sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity” (BJP 1995: 3-5). Coming to power in 1998 with the pledge to bring an end to this “policy of hostile interference in our internal affairs” and affirm “India’s sovereignty over the whole of Jammu and Kashmir, including the areas under foreign occupations” (BJP 2000 [1998]: 68), the BJP seemed to have embraced the Hyper-nationalist discourse’s demand for a more vigorous and belligerent Pakistan policy. In fact, directly after the nuclear tests, the BJP leader and home minister L.K. Advani declared that “Islamabad should realise the change in the geo-strategic situation in the region [...] and roll back its anti-India policy” (quoted in *The Economic Times* 1998a) and that India will “take pre-emptive measures to counter militancy” in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (quoted in *The Economic Times* 1998b). This and other statements by

BJP politicians appeared to signify a radical shift in India's Pakistan policy and an end of strategic restraint, thereby indicating an activation of the Hyper-nationalist discourse.

However, in the framing of the Hyper-nationalist discourse the Vajpayee government ultimately adopted, like other Indian governments, a "conciliatory approach towards Pakistan" that "seemed based less on a cold power calculus and more on inchoate hopes and sentimentalism" (Sibal 2014a). Instead of dealing with Pakistan from a position of strength and pursuing a coherent strategy with the objective to bring an end to Pakistani aggressions, as Brahma Chellaney (2013a) notes, Vajpayee, in his naive "quest to make peace with that implacable enemy", treated the process of engagement with Pakistan as an end in itself and "executed more policy U-turns than probably any other prime minister since independence", thereby replacing "institutionalized policymaking" with an ad-hoc, personality-driven style of decision making. This leads Chellaney (2007) to the conclusion that "Vajpayee's foreign policy was in reality an updated, post-Cold War version of Nehruvian diplomacy"⁶⁹.

After the nuclear tests and the belligerent rhetoric, the Vajpayee government launched a peace initiative. Vajpayee undertook the historical Lahore bus ride to Pakistan to meet his counterpart Nawaz Sharif in February 1999 and was the first Indian prime minister who visited the neighbouring country since Jawaharlal Nehru. Believing in the possibility of peaceful change, Vajpayee underscored that India and Pakistan share a common history, culture and destiny and should thus live and prosper together as friendly neighbours (Vajpayee [1999] 2004: 97). The Lahore visit was Vajpayee's first peace initiative and attempt to establish a composite dialogue process that should include consultations on cross-border terrorism, the nuclear issue and Kashmir.

In spite of the intrusion of Pakistani soldiers and militants into the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir a few months after the Lahore visit and the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament on 13 December 2001, the Vajpayee government soon resumed the peace talks with Pakistan and did not deviate from India's strategic restraint. Criticizing India's strategic restraint in the wake of the Kargil crisis, Brahma Chellaney (1999b: 537) notes: "Kargil emerged as a national embarrassment, because India first failed to anticipate that Pakistan would open a new front and then was slow to understand the gravity and extent of the encroachment when it

⁶⁹As Chellaney (2007) explicates: "Nehru and Vajpayee mistook casuistry and word games for statecraft [...]. Both valued speech as a substitute for action or camouflage to concession. Vajpayee's fascination with telling the world about the 'greatness' of Indian culture was his rendering of Nehru's moralistic lectures to the mighty and powerful. Like Nehru, he was so enthralled by his own illusions and desire for international goodwill that he could not deal with ill will from India's implacable adversaries. Even in war, Vajpayee declined [...] to take the fighting to the aggressor's territory, battling the enemy on the enemy's terms and relying on the United States to midwife a 'victory' in Kargil."

came to light. The Vajpayee government fell victim to its own rhetoric on the bus diplomacy with Pakistan, getting betrayed not by a friend but an archenemy – something unusual in the annals of history”. This failure to anticipate and counter threats results, according to Chellaney, from a century old “battered-victim syndrome” that constricts a forward-looking, strategic policy, leading him to the conclusion: “Vajpayee’s admission before Indian troops at Kargil that he extended his ‘hand of friendship’ to Pakistan but got betrayed was reminiscent of Nehru’s 1962 confession about how he had been stabbed in the back by China” (Chellaney 1999b: 581).

Though the international community blamed Pakistan for the war and the Indian government could stage India as a responsible power committed to peace and restraint, the Hyper-nationalist discourse criticized the government for being “excessively cautious” (Oberoi 2005: 101) and argued that “not crossing the LoC gave a very wrong signal”, because it conveyed to the Pakistani generals the message that India has accepted the LoC de facto as international border and will not punish any Pakistani military misadventure (Bakshi 2009: 46-47). For the radical wing of the BJP and the Hindu nationalist movement in general, Kargil was a (missed) opportunity to recapture Kashmir and teach Pakistan a lesson. As Seshadri Chari (1999), editor of the RSS newspaper *The Organiser*, resents: “It is not the Line of Control alone that Pakistan has crossed. The barbaric state has crossed all limits of morality, decency and ethics. [...] They have provoked us beyond all tolerable limits forcing us to throw the Pakistani army regulars and terrorists out of our territory. [...] The action that has begun in Kargil can end only in Kashmir”.

Though the Kargil intrusion was seen by the NDA Government as “a betrayal of trust which has done great damage to the Lahore process” (Indian Embassy 1999), Vajpayee soon gave the peace dialogue with Pakistan another chance and overrode intra-governmental criticism. Threatening to leave the NDA coalition, a leader of the Hindu nationalist *Shiv Sena* party taunted: “by bending over backwards to please Pakistan, the BJP has outsmarted even the Congress, but Vajpayee's ambition to be India's second Nehru will cost us dearly in the next elections” (quoted in Times of India 2001b). Likewise, the Vajpayee government also exercised strategic restraint after the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament in 2001. The government accused the terrorist groups *Lashkar-e-Taiba* und *Jaish-e-Mohammed*, both known for their links with the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), for the attack (BJP 2001a). Hardliners inside and outside the government demanded ‘hot pursuit’ actions against terrorists in Pakistan (see Kamath 2002; Karnad 2002a; Verma [B.] 2009). As the BJP’s parliamentary spokesperson Vjijay Kumar Malhotra asserted: “If the terrorist attack in Parliament yesterday

is sending the message that India is a soft state, we certainly want the government to take to hot pursuit so that their camps in PoK can be destroyed. That will teach them a lesson and also underscore that the government's might cannot be challenged in so defiant a fashion” (quoted in rediff 2001).

A few days after the terrorist attack, the Indian government launched *Operation Parakram*, which was, according to government officials, part of India’s “coercive diplomacy” to threaten Pakistan with the use of force unless it complies with India’s demands to extradite terrorist leaders, destroy terrorist training camps on its territory and end cross-border terrorism (Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 266). Parakram constituted the largest and longest military mobilization in India’s history with the deployment of 500,000 troops on the LoC. However, the government ultimately decided against a retaliatory attack on Pakistan and the crisis de-escalated into a long stand-off between Indian and Pakistani soldiers along the LoC. Despite the continued cross-border infiltration, the Indian government ultimately began withdrawing the troops from the LoC in November 2002. Once more, the BJP-led government exercised strategic restraint and did not launch an attack against insurgent camps in Pakistan occupied Kashmir. As the retired General Vinay Shankar (2005) laments:

“When Kargil happened, again, we were content settling for a draw, despite the grave provocation and considerable international support. After the terrorist attack on the Parliament in Delhi, there was the faint possibility that India had eventually found its national will. For a short while during the massive military mobilisation for Parakrama, there were some of us who felt that at last our threshold of tolerance had been crossed. But the pacifists prevailed and the troops returned to barracks without firing a single shot”.

According to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, this failure to mount a credible retaliation will have long-term strategic implications for India: “When India pulled its troops back after staying nearly one year at the brink”, as the retired Air Chief Marshal and NSAB-member S. Krishnaswamy (2007) notes, “Pakistan took the credit of having deterred India from taking a drastic step”. In other words, Pakistan now knew that India – even under the rule of the more nationalistic and ‘belligerent’ BJP – shies away from crossing the LoC and retaliating the Pakistan-backed jihad terrorism.

To sum up, the nuclear tests and the Pakistan policy under the BJP-led NDA government are often cited in the literature (see Mohan 2004, Kapur 2006, Sridharan 2006, Vanaik 2007) as the main examples for a shift towards greater ‘realism’ or even ‘militarism’ and ‘belligerence’ in India’s foreign policy. This would indicate the successful activation and institutionalization of the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse. This section, by contrast, has shown that the Hyper-nationalist discourse indeed shortly surfaced during the BJP’s tenure, but could

not sediment. This was illustrated by looking at the way how the Hyper-nationalist discourse itself framed the policies of the Vajpayee government and harshly criticized them as a continuation of the ‘conciliatory’, ‘idealistic’ and strategically restrained approach that has informed India’s foreign policy since Nehru.

7.2 Political Logics: A Uniform and Muscular National Identity

Political logics, as we have seen, capture the formation and constitution of a discourse by examining the way a discourse articulates different social demands and interests as equivalent through drawing political boundaries between the ‘self’ and a common ‘other’. In this process, a national identity is created in opposition to a shared negativity that blocks the full realization of the self’s identity, but, at the same time, is the necessary precondition for this very identity. Like the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse invokes colonialism as a temporal ‘other’, and Pakistan and China as spatial-political ‘others’. For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, however, the colonial ‘other’ does not only signify the British colonial rule over India, but also the rule of Muslim kingdoms over the Indian Subcontinent beginning with the Delhi Sultanate in the 13th century. While the large Muslim population in India represents the internal ‘other’, Pakistan as Islamic state embodies the external ‘other’. The discourse thus casts Muslims as foreign intruders which could ‘subjugate’ India, because Indians were disunited and weak. Therefore, the Hyper-nationalist discourse seeks, in contrast to the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, to forge a uniform and muscular national identity to build a united and powerful nation-state. This sub-chapter begins with a discussion of colonialism as temporal ‘other’ before attention shifts to the spatial-political ‘others’ Pakistan and China.

7.2.1 Colonial ‘Others’: The Encounter with the Islamic and Western-Christian Civilizations

As in the case of the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, the colonial subjugation serves for the Hyper-nationalist discourse as the most important source for the articulation of an Indian national identity. The colonial encounter has not only generated strong feelings of humiliation, victimhood and being under threat by external forces that seek to weaken and disrupt India, but also, and even more importantly, brought about a common consciousness among Indians that allowed for the constructing an Indian nationalism. European colonialism imparted Indian elites with the concepts of civilization and nationalism, but also raised awareness for India’s backwardness that made it prone to fall under foreign rule, and a desire to mimic modern

‘Western’ statecraft, technology and science in order to overcome this backwardness or ‘lack’ and develop India into a modern and independent nation-state. For forging a common national identity and overcoming British colonial rule, the Hyper-nationalist discourse, which emerged during the colonial era, sought to reinvigorate and unite the Hindu community by re-collecting the glorious past of the Hindu nation/civilization and casting not only the British but, in particular, the Muslims as foreign ‘others’ which invaded and colonized the Indian Subcontinent.

Against this background, the discourse understands India’s anti-colonial struggle as the liberalization, purification and revival of the Hindu nation after centuries of foreign subjugation, looting and humiliation beginning with the Islamic Delhi Sultanate in the 13th century to the British/European domination of India from the 18th century onwards. “India, a rich and ancient society known for its tolerance and resilience”, as Brahma Chellaney (1999b: 542) notes, “was plundered, raped and overrun by a slew of foreign invaders for almost eight centuries before winning independence from Britain in 1947. The British, like the other foreign invaders before them, came to India because of its wealth, but thanks to colonial rule, India remains a ‘Third World nation’”. Accordingly, India could fall prey to foreign invasions and colonialism, which marked the ultimate decline of the ancient Hindu *rastra* and civilization, because it was confronted with a religiously and ethnically united enemy, while the Indians/Hindus were weak, disunited and split in various sects and along ethnic, caste, regional and linguistic lines. In other words, the encounter with the Islamic civilization and the ‘Western’-Christian civilization, mainly through British colonialism, posed a civilizational threat to India (Apte 2002; Doval 2012; Punj 2013). “Indian history”, as N.S. Rajaram (2001) thus writes in the *The Organiser*, “lies concealed in two layers of colonization – the first Islamic and the second European Christian”. As Tarun Vijay (2008: 15/60) notes:

“since last several centuries, invaders have been attacking the Hindu society, their temples, libraries, ashrams, universities and their right to live the way their accepted values demand or instruct, making them the most persecuted people [...] One must not forget on this planet earth that it is only India where Hindus can at least dream and aspire to be free to grow and enjoy an unobstructed life guaranteeing security to their Dharma and culture after centuries of excruciatingly horrible subjugation, much of that was under the alien religious flags and barbaric motives. Muslims and Christians may be having any number of countries, which guarantees their religious growth as the majority demands, but Hindus have only one nation.”

Hence, the foreign others not only threatened to deprive the Hindus of their sacred land, but also to subvert the Hindu society by undermining its civilizational heritage through the destruction of Hindu holy sites and converting Hindus into Muslims or Christians, respectively (Mishra 1998). Thus, freeing India from the colonial yoke had to require acknowledging and

asserting India's genuine and natural identity as a Hindu nation. As the Hindu nationalist ideologist and *sarsanghchalak* of the RSS, M.S. Golwalkar (1939: 55) wrote towards the end of India's independence struggle:

“As a matter of fact we have in Hindusthan a triangular fight, we, Hindus, at war at once with the Moslems on the one hand and Britain on the other. The Moslems are not misled. They take themselves to be the conquering invaders and grasp for power. In our selfdeception, we go on seceding more and more, in hopes of ‘Nationalising’ the foreigners and succeed merely in increasing their all-devouring appetite. The consequence, for us, is that we go more and more astray and lose sight of our cherished goal of National regeneration.”

The Hyper-nationalist discourse thus seeks to create a chain of equivalence and thus link together dissimilar subjects, demands and interests by drawing a political frontier between Hindus and non-Hindus. In other words, the discourse tries to generate a common and distinctive Hindu identity for India by uniting different – already constituted – ethnic, caste, class, religious sectarian and regional identities under the privileged signifier Hindu/Hinduism by placing it into opposition to Muslims and Christians which constitute antagonistic ‘others’ that block the fullness or realization of India's ‘true’ identity. While Muslims are represented as the original invaders and oppressors of India, the ‘Western’-Christian civilization continued the foreign subjugation of India. As a counter-hegemonic discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse thus seeks to subvert the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse and its identity articulation through the logic of difference that (re)constructs political frontiers by breaking up chains of equivalence and exposing the plurality and differences between the entities/elements that constitute the ‘Indian nation’.

While the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse articulates a secular nationalism and seeks to preserve the territorial integrity of India by, in principle, including all different religious and ethnic groups into its definition of the Indian nation and thus conceding their contribution to the Indian civilization, the Hyper-nationalist discourse articulates either implicitly or explicitly an exclusive, majoritarian nationalism. The concept of *Hindutva*, propagated by the Hindu nationalists, represents the more explicit variant of this nationalism. It is based on an exclusive Hindu identity whereby, as the creator of *Hindutva*, V.D. Savarkar (1938: 146), pointed out, only those that see India both as their fatherland (*pitribhu*) and holy land (*punyabhū*) are full members of the national community.⁷⁰ Accordingly, the Hindu nationalists seek to assert that Hindu-ness and the majority community embody the essence of the Indian nation and identity, while the religious minorities such as Muslims and Christians, whose religions originate out-

⁷⁰ Jainists, Buddhists and Sikhs, whose religions originated on the Indian subcontinent and are closely intertwined with Hinduism, are therefore included in this nationalism.

side of the sacred land and are thus ‘un-Indian’, are suspected to have different loyalties (e.g. Mecca or Rome) and can only be part of the Indian nation if they embrace *Hindutva* as the cultural bond that holds India together. As the BJP leader Advani (2008b: 864) points out, “[this] sense of ‘Indianness’ has unified India’s diverse religious, ethnic, linguistic and caste groups for thousands of years. Since the word ‘Indian’ itself is of recent vintage, this unifying principle is Hindu-ness or Hindutva, the name given to a broad-minded, tolerant, pluralistic and inclusive tradition. If India is de-Hinduised, there will be no India left anymore” (Advani 2008: 864). Hence, Hinduism assumes the role of a *synecdoche* (see Laclau 2014: 86ff.) in the Hindu nationalist sub-discourse in the sense that Hinduism symbolizes India as a whole. For creating a long and stable chain of equivalence, the discourse thus substitutes and equates India with Hinduism – India becomes Hindustan.

The colonial ‘others’ symbolize – what Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 125) call – antagonist ‘others’ that prevent India from attaining its true identity and epitomize India’s long subjugation. As descendants of the colonial ‘others’, Muslims and Christians are implicitly represented by the discourse as ‘foreign’ others that block – through their presence in the rightful homeland of the Hindus – the completion of India’s ‘true’ identity and thus threaten to undermine the Indian nationhood.

Religious minorities such as Muslims and Christians are, however, not formally excluded from the Indian nation by the discourse, but their inclusion presupposes their assimilation and full integration into the Indian ‘national mainstream’, i.e. the recognition of Hinduism as the cultural and political essence of India. As the BJP writes in its 1998 manifesto, *Hindutva* as a cultural nationalism embodies a common cultural heritage and system of beliefs, values, customs and experiences, that holds India together as “one nation” and “one people” (BJP 1998: 4). It is, in other words, the accommodative nature of the Hinduist culture that unites India and enables the co-existence of the all different communities in India and is the hallmark of Indian nationalism: ‘unity in diversity’ (Singh [R.] 2009; BJP 2014: 10). *Hindutva* is thus “[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’” (BJP 2014).⁷¹ Since India is equated with Hindu-ness, this implies the privileging of the Hindu community and the subjugation of all other communities under the majority community. Hence, *Hindutva* symbolizes national unity and unity is strength in the Hindu nationalist discourse.

⁷¹ Against this backdrop, the Hindu nationalists oppose all those demands and policies that privilege regional, religious, ethnic or linguist identities at the expense of the larger national identity of Indian-ness and thus divide the Indian nation (e.g. special status of Kashmir in the Indian constitution, a special civic code for Muslims and religion or caste-based reservations in education and employment).

The ultrarealist sub-discourse articulates the more implicit variant of this exclusive, majoritarian nationalism. It highlights the need for a uniform national identity as the precondition for building and maintaining a united, powerful and independent nation-state, since sub-national identities encourage divisive tendencies and are exploited by foreign actors to weaken India. Commenting on the popular notion of “[u]nity in diversity”, Bharat Verma (2009: 39/310) notes: “The Indian tragedy is that this slogan since 1947 has only harped on the aspect concerning diversity, encouraging divisive tendencies from Kashmir to Kanyakumari! For aspirations towards building a modern nation-state, the buzz word has to be integration and not disintegration [...] There can never be unity in diversity. Unity requires a fair amount of uniformity”. Likewise, the authors of a study on “comprehensive national power” for India, argue: “The reasons for not exercising effective power are internal instability, structural weakness, and multi-religious and multi-ethnic historically. Our democracy has enabled us to deal with these factors in our society. But we should not believe that diversity is our strength. This is the line we have to take if we have to face that we are diverse country” (Singh/Gera/Dewan 2013: 113).

The Hyper-nationalist discourse thus articulates the fear that India’s diversity and various socio-political fault-lines prevent India from adopting an integrative and determined approach towards national security threats and that external forces could exploit this lack of national unity and will (Verma 2007; Sibal 2008a; Doval 2010, Chandra 2011c). Rejecting the notion “that nation-building is a morality tale”, Bharat Karnad (2012c) notes on India’s Kashmir policy:

“as history shows, nations are sewn together, often from disparate parts, by craft, graft, and bloodletting. It is dirty, usually violent business in which peoples who would otherwise have remained separate were dragged kicking and screaming into the national fold, and no nonsense about it. Again, ask the American Indians who, because they resisted, were exterminated. By reinforcing the notion of their distinctness, Article 370⁷² has perennially fuelled discontent and insurgency, stoked dreams of independence in Kashmir, ill-served India, and should be done away with. It is best that the Kashmiris be told that once however in, there’s no out.”

By upholding their religious identities and remaining outside the ‘Indian mainstream’, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse fears, Muslims and Christians – like the other ethnic or linguist minorities – prevent the development of a strong, uniform nation-state and promote the centrifugal forces within Indian society which can be exploited by external actors (Verma [B.] 2009: 39-40). Some even actively seek to subvert India’s national identity be it through the conversions of Hindus to Islam and Christianity, terrorist attacks by Islamist fundamentalists,

⁷² Article 370 in the Indian Constitution grants Kashmir special privileges.

claiming historical sites of Hinduism or the support of separatist movements in Kashmir and the Northeast (The Organizer 2000; Paliwal 2003: 11/21ff.). As the RSS notes, “a person born in India forgets his ancestors and becomes a part of aggressors after his conversion [...] the frequent partitions of India prove that the regions where Hindus are reduced to minority start agitating for separation. A united Hindu society is the only way to an integrated India” (RSS n.a.: 7-8).

Accordingly, the growing number of Muslims and Christians in some Indian states such as Assam, Nagaland or West Bengal caused by illegal immigration from Bangladesh and conversions constitutes for the Hyper-nationalist discourse a “Demographic Aggression” (Singh [R.] 2006a) that changes the religious composition of India and poses a national security challenge by creating areas where Hindus are a minority and anti-Indian activities can flourish. As the BJP politician Varun Gandhi called upon Hindus in a controversial election speech in Uttar Pradesh: “Go to your villages and give the call that all Hindus must unite to save this area from becoming Pakistan”, promising that the BJP “will cut the throat of the [derogatory Hindi reference to a Muslim] after the elections” (quoted in The Indian Express 2009).

This statement also points to the way how the Hyper-nationalist discourse links the religious minorities to external ‘forces’ ranging from Pakistan and Islamist terrorist networks to ‘Western’ state or non-state actors that threaten to undermine India’s cultural and national integrity. Accordingly, Pakistan and Islamist terror groups seek the secession of Kashmir from the Indian Union or even seek to islamize the entire Indian Subcontinent. “This wave of Jehadi terrorism”, as the RSS (2008) points out, “is home-grown with active funding, training and sheltering being made available from within the country while the enemy across our borders is providing necessary ideological and logistic support”. For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, India, as a democracy with the third largest Muslim population in the world and surrounded by two Islamic states, is one of the main targets and potential breeding grounds for the global jihad (Shourie 1997; Apte 2002; Advani 2006: 54ff.; Doval 2011a; Punj 2013). As Brahma Chellaney (2006) notes: “India is under siege from the forces of terror” that seek India’s “death by a thousand cuts. [...] Nowhere is India's frailty more apparent than on internal security, which historically has been its Achilles heel [...] [with] [t]he jihadists having ethnically cleansed much of Indian Kashmir of its Hindu minority”.

The exclusive and monolithic imagination of national identity, which informs both the Hindu nationalist and ultrarealist sub-discourses, thus represents difference and diversity as a threat to national unity and seeks to curtail this difference and diversity through an overarching, homogenous and assimilative cultural framework. This conviction is for the Hyper-nationalist

discourse the quintessence of India's history. Because Indians/Hindus were divided, India could be invaded and subjugated. Because the Hindu majority failed to assert its authority towards the Muslims, the Indian nation was partitioned after it had overcome British colonial rule. In other words, India can only become and remain a strong and united nation-state, if all heterogeneous elements are excluded and centrifugal tendencies within Indian society are oppressed. This requires, as the early Hindu nationalist Savarkar demanded, to "Hinduise all politics and militarise Hinduism" (Savarkar 1949: 302) by transforming Hindus into a "martial race" that can resist and confront internal and external aggressors and overcome the decline of the once strong, united and powerful Hindu nation. This means, in particular, to overcome the effeminacy of Indian/Hindu culture, which reflects, for instance, in Gandhi's teachings of non-violence (*ahimsa*) or the privileging of superstitious beliefs over material facts and reason – a concern that has remained at the centre of the Hyper-nationalist discourse until today (see Karnad 2002a; Verma [B.] 2009; Singh [Jasw.] 2013; Nehra 2010). Against this backdrop, the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan, which destroyed the dream of a revival of the great Hindu *rashtra*, were attributed to this emasculation of Hinduism and the Indian National Congress' attempt to appease Muslims instead of asserting India's Hindu identity. Describing the thinking of Hindu nationalists around India's independence, L.K. Advani (2006: 5-6) notes:

"They vehemently opposed the doctrine that assertion of traditional India's cultural and civilizational reality was obscurantist and will accentuate disintegrative social fault lines. On the contrary, they felt that only they could cement these artificially created fault lines and lay the foundation of a strong and resurgent India. Taking a much deeper and broader view of nation building, they felt that a modern India could not be built without protecting and strengthening the traditional India. Securing and strengthening this twin India, one representing its body and the other is soul, one defining its tangible form and the other is vital life force, were mutually complementary, and should constitute fundamental doctrines of our national security."

Though often claiming to return to or recollect the thought and practices of the 'traditional India', the Hyper-nationalist discourse, in fact, as we will see in greater detail in the discussion of the fantasmatic logics, is shaped by the colonial encounter with the British and the 'Western' civilization that imparted the early proponents of the discourse with European nationalism and the importance of rationality, realism, utilitarianism, positivism, pragmatism and scientific temper for creating a modern and independent Indian nation-state (Devare 2009: 156-157; Wolf 2009: 93ff.). For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, British colonial rule marked the continuation of India's millennial-old colonial subjugation and served as a crucial source to unite Indians/Hindus. While the discourse acknowledges that British colonial rule 'freed' India from centuries of Muslim rule and brought India a more defined territory and a common

administration, civil service, currency, law, and foreign and defence policy, thereby overcoming India's stagnancy and backwardness and inducing material progress (Verma [B.] 1998a; Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 10/18), the colonial rulers also repressed and discriminated the Indian people, plundered their resources, converted Hindus into Christians, undermined India's national and cultural consciousness and played an important role in the partition of India, which vitiated the aspirations to (re-)create a great and undivided Indian nation (Gandhi 2006, Shourie 2009, Lal 2011, Advani 2013).

While mimicking modern 'Western' discourses of statecraft, technology, economic development and science, the Hyper-nationalist discourse has always sought to distinguish India from the thought and practices of the former colonial oppressors and demanded that India may not merely follow the 'Western' path to modern nationhood, but should re-collect the glorious past of the ancient Hindu civilization which already contains the necessary ingredients for – a distinctive Indian and superior – modernity. Similar to the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse thus displays a certain post-colonial ambiguity towards the 'West'. It is, however, less the 'West' as a spatial-political 'other', but (neo-)colonial and (neo-)imperialist practices attributed to 'Western' state and non-state actors, in particular the United States, and fear of a 'Westernization' of Indian society, which could undermine India's Hindu identity, that underlie this ambiguity and reflect in the interplay of the logics of equivalence and difference. The Hyper-nationalist discourse thus simultaneously emulates and differentiates itself from the 'West'. On the one hand, the discourse has mimicked 'Western' discourses to transform India into a modern and prosperous nation-state and seeks recognition by the 'West'. For instance, it has sought to incorporate India into the global discourse on the 'war on terror' as a beacon of democracy and tolerance that is the antipode to the extremist, theocratic and aggressive forces of radical Islam and, therefore, a natural partner of the 'West' (see Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 170ff.; Verma 2009: 15). On the other hand, the discourse also draws a political frontier between India and the 'West' by representing India as a great and ancient civilization, whose tolerance, morality and spiritual achievements contrast with the overly materialistic, rationalist and expansionist 'West'. Though the discourse articulates India's identity in opposition to the 'West', it is not anti-western – what the discourse desires “is recognition of [...] India by the Western powers, but a recognition through assertion of cultural difference and assertion of India's sovereignty and self-determination” (Hansen 1999: 12).

For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the 'Western' inclination towards expansionism and imperialism has not ceased with the end of colonialism, but is said to continue to shape the poli-

cies of ‘Western’ societies and states, in particular of the United States as the dominant power in the world. Against this backdrop, the Hyper-nationalist discourse often associates U.S. foreign policy with (neo-)colonial practices. Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse has already during the cold war called for a recalibration of Indo-U.S. relations and criticized the one-sided tilt towards the Soviet Union as a deviance from true non-alignment (BJP [1981] 2000: 5-6), it displays a deep ambiguity towards the U.S. and the ‘West’ in general – an ambiguity that is particularly prominent in the more radical wing of the *Sangh Parivar*. Deploring the “US expansionism”, the RSS activist Radha Rajan (2006) for instance argues: “The US is seeking to conquer the world for the sake of the American Creed. This is the core of all American foreign policy. It is a predatory lust for power that is devoid of moral authority and powered only by military might. The American state’s ruthless ambition to subjugate the rest of the world makes it the classic *asuravijayi* [demoniac conqueror]”. And the BJP ([1991] 2000: 30/51) notes after the end of the cold war:

“The international situation to-day is also characterized by the emergence of one Super alliance, the Euro-American Alliance, which now includes the Soviet Union among its partners. By its very dominance, it is all pervasive in its influence on international economy, polity, defence and culture. Most countries find it difficult to escape from its influence so as to maintain their independence and separate identity [...] The attempt to impose a new world order based on the military and economic strength has vitiated the international atmosphere. The political and economic domination sought by some affluent countries reminds us of the colonial and imperialist era prevalent before the Second World War.”

According to Ajit Doval (2011a), this inclination towards expansionism and imperialism is intrinsic to monolithic religions such as Christianity or Islam in which “violence was approved to achieve, mutually intertwined, politico-religious objectives”, whereas “oriental religions, like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism etc., even when at their zenith, with no major religions to compete, did not opt for political conquests or holy wars to expand their empires or propagate their religions”. For Doval, “[c]olonial imperialism was a manifestation of this phenomenon so was defining new jurisprudence formulated to regulate the world order, including rules of war and peace, trade and commerce, international relations and human rights. Christian West, the dominant player, crafted these rules which sub served their interests. This constituted a challenge to others- either to change or to confront. Those unwilling to comply constituted challenge to the West.”

For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the contemporary world order thus represents in many ways a continuation of imperialist practices and benefits the interests of the former imperialist powers that try to impose their will and interests on developing countries such as India. Deploring “Geopolitics behind humanitarian cover” (Chellaney 2011) and the way how “the

strongest economic and military entity in the world, the United States of America has begun to betray imperial yearnings” (Karnad 2002a: xi) and selectively uses human rights abuses, the absence of democratic norms or nuclear proliferation as rationales for intervening jointly or singly into the internal affairs of states in the Global ‘South’, the Hyper-nationalist discourse argues that a country like India, which is still in the process of nation-building and confronted with insurgencies, secessionist movements and domestic unrest, is exposed to international pressure by ‘Western’ states and NGOs or may even fall pray to external interferences (ibid.: xiv).

The fear of international pressure, influence and interferences has increased in the context of the globalization discourse and India’s economic liberalization in the 1980s and 1990s. It was during this time that the Hyper-nationalist discourse and its concept of *Hindutva* gained in importance by providing a source of identification in an age of apparently increased complexity and substantial socio-economic transformations that are challenging traditional ways of being and belonging. The globalization discourse, while also encompassing many opportunities and benefits, is linked to global economic competition, foreign direct investments and global capital flows, job losses, transnational terrorism and mass migration or Americanization and Westernization. The apparent globalization of all social spheres of life alters notions of time and space and generates threats and challenges without borders that can be felt but not effectively dealt with locally. This exposure to processes of globalization and modernization create feelings of vulnerability, insecurity and social alienation (Kinnval 2006: 4ff.).

The Hyper-nationalist discourse, and in particular the *Hindutva* sub-discourse, takes up fears, articulated in the globalization discourse, of foreign influence and a (re-)colonization of India that threaten to undermine India’s national identity and culture and are used to forge a chain of equivalence. Globalization and Westernization thus serve as ‘shared negativity’ to link together different subjects, interests and demands into the discourse. As the BJP president Rajnath Singh (2006b) notes: “New concepts and lifestyles are taking roots in the Indian society posing a challenge to our cultural values in the same manner foreign companies and products had increased their presence in the country in the wake of globalisation and liberalization in recent times”. Nevertheless, the discourse in its totality is not an anti-globalization, anti-Western or anti-modern discourse, but rather promises to protect the Indian national identity and its culture in an age of rapid socio-economic changes and to make India into a powerful, prosperous and modern nation-state. In other words, the discourse presents itself as a part of and not as an antipode to globalization and the ongoing transformations within Indian society by claiming to have the necessary means, namely order, spiritual clarity and wisdom, security,

discipline and collective strength embodied by *Hindutva*, that India needs to take advantage of globalization and successfully pursue the path of modernization *without* losing its traditional culture and values. Recognizing the need for embracing globalization and economic liberalization, the discourse thus seeks to harmonize these two objectives and bridge the internal divide between pro- and anti-globalization forces within society by invoking the concept of *swadeshi* (self-reliance) and re-brand it as economic nationalism which is said to constitute an innate Indian development model and the middle path between liberal market economy and communist planned economy, thereby promising to protect India from the negative effects of both development models and to follow indigenous rather than foreign economic theories (BJP 2004; Advani 2009; Singh [R.] 2009b).

To sum up, the Muslim and European-Christian colonial ‘other’ symbolize in the Hyper-nationalist discourse antagonistic ‘others’ that block the realization of India’s true identity and underscore the importance of national unity and strength that can only be realized if India becomes a uniform nation-state that assimilates and forces minorities (and other national dissenters) into the Indian mainstream. While a uniform pan-Indian identity must thus be emphasized and strengthened, sub-national identities must be weakened. The past invasions and colonial subjugation of India are a testimony for what happens, if India is disunited. Though the era of colonialism is over, India’s national identity is still threatened by the Muslim and European-Christian colonial ‘other’ through Islamic fundamentalism, globalization and Westernization or missionary work.

7.2.2 Spatial-political ‘Others’: Pakistan and China

Having discussed the way how the Hyper-nationalist discourse articulates colonialism as temporal ‘other’, we will now shed light on the spatial-political ‘others’, Pakistan and China, and how they shape the construction of meanings and identities in the discourse.

Pakistan

For the hyper-nationalist discourse, Pakistan is the external symbol of India’s colonial subjugation and the traumatic and bloody partition of the Indian nation in 1947. By denying their cultural and religious heritage and siding with the British colonial power, who pursued a divide-and-rule policy to disintegrate Indian society and safeguard its power, the Indian Muslims under the leadership of the Muslim League betrayed their motherland and bear the main blame for dividing the Indian nation (Advani 2008: 9/524; Vijay 2008: 15). Criticizing the

leader of the Muslim League and Pakistan's state founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah for claiming that Hindus and Muslims constitute two different nations, Jaswant Singh (2013: 18) notes, "the basic and structural fault in Jinnah's notion remains a rejection of his origins; of being an Indian, having been shaped by the soil of India, tampered in the heat of the Indian experience. Muslims in India were, and are, no doubt subscribers to a different faith but that is all; they were not of any different stock or aliens. Even Jinnah's followers were willingly Indian, in every conceivable manner, for so long as they ruled over parts of India". Similarly, L.K. Advani (2008: 54/168) pointed out the flawed and artificial nature of the Pakistani nation-state:

"The flaw in the Muslim League's demand was further aggravated by its aggression and obstinacy in attaining this demand. [...] The creation of Pakistan in 1947 was the outcome of an aggressive, hare-charged movement inspired by his falsehood – namely, that the Hindus and Muslims of undivided India constituted two distinct nations and hence Muslims needed a separate homeland. But, apart from carrying the burden of this misrepresentation, Pakistan was also an embarrassing advertisement of geographical absurdity. West and East Pakistan were physically separated by a distance of over 1,200 miles, with India sandwiched in between. World history presented no such example of an artificial nation except if it was the colony of some imperial power."

For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the Pakistani state and its hostile policy towards India represent a continuation of the century-old Muslim aggressions. As Anand K. Verma (2011), former chief of the foreign intelligence Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), notes:

"The idea of Pakistan survives on the premise of enmity towards India. This premise came into existence well before Pakistan became a reality. Some in Pakistan believe that the country started incubating the moment the first Muslim stepped on the soil of the subcontinent. That belief originates from the conviction that the Islamic civilisation cannot intermingle with another civilisation because it always seeks to conquer and subjugate. That is how Islam has spread all across the world from a tiny enclave in the desert of Arabia, destroying frontiers, borders, kingdoms, empires, traditions, cultures and civilisations. Jinnah's concept of Pakistan was not based on any theological attachment. He simply wanted a territory where Muslims would not be outnumbered by non Muslims. The Muslim rulers of India could not overwhelm the indigenous culture. Therefore, the Islamic and non Islamic communities lived their lives in a milieu of uneasy coexistence. The British arrived on the scene and could make no impact on the prevailing realities. [...] Ever since, Pakistan has wallowed in its hate for India. Therefore, from day one, its leadership has been looking for ways and means to diminish India and to destroy it, if possible."

For the BJP politician Balbir Punj (2013), the Pakistani nation-state is founded on a religious ideology that "interprets the world in terms of religious obligations of the faithful versus the infidel [...] This macabre thought-process entered the Indian sub-continent with Muhammad bin Qasim from Saudi Arabia ransacking the Hindu kingdom of Punjab and Sind in 712 AD. He wrote to the 'kings of Hind' to surrender and accept Islam. Indians were given two options – submit to Islam peacefully or deal with the consequences. This tradition has since continued unabated". As today's manifestation of this ideology, Pakistan, as the discourse argues, is an intrinsically hostile and aggressive state. Its policies towards India are conditioned by a deep-rooted antipathy, rivalry, and hatred that stem from Pakistan's Islamic roots and the 'idea' of

Pakistan based on the 'Two-Nation-Theory'. This religious ideology places India and Pakistan in an insuperable antagonistic relationship and rules out a peaceful co-existence between both countries (Sood 2007; Chandra 2013; Malik 2013; Parthasarathy 2013b). As antagonist 'other', Pakistan blocks the realization and completeness of India's identity. At the same time, Pakistan is constitutive for this identity formation, since it serves as an important 'shared negativity' against which the discourse seeks to construct a chain of equivalence: Threatened by a ruthless, irredentist and aggressive Pakistan, India must become a strong and uniform nation-state that curtails the centrifugal, sub-national forces and prevents that India's diversity can be exploited by Pakistan and others who seek to weaken or unravel India. This, as the discourse claims, can only be achieved in a culturally homogenous national framework which emphasizes Hindu-ness or Indian-ness instead of sub-national identities, demands and interests. Invoking Pakistan as the threatening 'other', the discourse thus seeks to articulate dissimilar elements around the privileged signifier Hindu-ness/Indian-ness, thereby presenting them as equivalent and subverting the inherent difference that exists, for instance, between the various ethnic and linguist groups, religious sects, castes etc. in India.

The antagonism has different dimensions in the Hyper-nationalist discourse: To begin with, the discourse does not view Pakistan as a "normal state" with its own history, culture and identity, but "an entity that believes it can exist only as an antithesis of India" (Sibal 2010), and it is this enmity towards India that holds the fragile and crisis-ridden Pakistani nation together and explains its fixation on Kashmir (Chellaney 2001; Sood 2007). As a result, "Pakistani territorial claims cannot be dealt with rationally as they are rooted in religion and the 'idea' of Pakistan" (Sibal 2014b). Therefore, unless Pakistan overcomes the flawed 'Two-Nation-Theory' and creates a positive national identity that embodies more than being anti-Indian, there can never be a normalization of relations with India, and Pakistan will seek to challenge or disrupt India's national unity whenever possible. As the Group of Ministers Report on National Security (2001: 9-11), conducted by senior members of the BJP-led NDA government, states:

"Pakistan will continue to pose a threat to India's security in the future also. Its traditional hostility and single-minded aim of destabilizing India, is not focussed just on Kashmir but on a search for parity. This arises out of the two-nation theory, coupled with a desire to exact revenge for the 1971 humiliation over the separation of Bangladesh. [...] Pakistan has been waging a proxy war against India since the 1980s. Since the Kargil War and the military coup of October 12, 1999, Pakistan's support to cross-border terrorism has intensified and is expected to continue in the future. The rapid growth of Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan is also of serious concern to India. [...] Pakistan is pursuing a multi-pronged strategy to destabilize India and annex J&K. Militancy is a direct consequence of the unremitting efforts of Pakistan's covert agencies, particularly its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), to exploit the prevailing discontent and destabilize the established authority by creating an anarchic situation."

Not the least because of these attempts to destabilize India through this “policy of bleeding India by ‘inflicting thousand cuts’” (Advani 2006: 2), the Hyper-nationalist discourse frames Pakistan as a ‘barbaric’ and highly dangerous state, a state that tries to compensate the lack of a national identity through hostility towards India and a nuclear power that is on the brink of collapse due to its internal contradictions and the “monster” of Islamic fundamentalism that it has created and supported to weaken and disrupt India, but that is now increasingly turning against the Pakistani state and could acquire nuclear weapons, making Pakistan the first failing nuclear state (Chellaney 2001/02: 103ff.; Verma [B.] 2008).

The Hyper-nationalist discourse also views Pakistan as the antagonist ‘other’, because it has blocked India’s emergence as a strong, united and independent nation-state after independence. Having been cut out of the Indian body politic, Pakistan has prevented the resurgence of the great, undivided Indian nation that has, according to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, existed in the pre-colonial era. While many of those who (occasionally) draw on the Hyper-nationalist discourse such as the prominent BJP leaders Atal Vajpayee (2003d), L.K. Advani (2008b) or Jaswant Singh (2009) have come to terms with the partition of the Indian subcontinent and some rather fear the collapse of Pakistan due to its large (and radicalized) Muslim population which the Indian nation-state cannot absorb (Karnad 2005: 184; Sood 2009: 251-252), there are also proponents of this discourse that seek to unravel the Pakistani state either to eliminate the security threat it poses to India (Verma [B.] 2008; Chandra 2013a) or to reunite the (ancient) Indian nation. The members of the RSS, for instance, affirm their commitment to the re-unification of India and regeneration of a pure Hindu nation by conducting prayers in front of a map of *Akhanda Bharat* (undivided India, i.e. pre-Partition India including present-day Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) (Hansen 1996: 137). And an editorial in the RSS magazine *Panchjanya* demanded during the 1999 Kargil war:

“the time has come again for India’s Bheema to tear open the breasts of these infidels and purify the soiled tresses of Draupadi with blood. Pakistan will not listen just like that. We have a centuries-old debt to settle with this mindset. It is the same demon that has been throwing a challenge at Durga since the time of Mahammad bin Qasim. Arise Atal Behari! Who knows if fate has destined you to be the author of the final chapter of this long story. For what have we manufactured bombs? For what have we exercised the nuclear option” (quoted in Frontline 2001).

Today Pakistan’s destructive policies threaten to undermine India’s secular and pluralist democracy and great power ambitions in the international system. “India is singularly vulnerable to terrorism”, as Kanwal Sibal (2008) notes, “because of its population composition, internal communal fault lines and porous borders. Then there is a hostile neighbour determined to use the religious card against it, both bilaterally and at the international level, to claim

Kashmir, impede India's ties with the Islamic world and weaken its secular democracy.” Kashmir figures prominently in the discourse, because it is “a Muslim majority state and religious factor will continue to play an important role in political proclivities of the people, their perception of Pakistan and Pakistan’s temptation to exploit religious demography to its advantage” (Doval 2010). By exporting terrorism and provoking communal tensions in India, Pakistan ultimately seeks to disrupt the Indian Union and its secular-pluralist state model through all possible means, thereby proving not only the *raison d’être* of Pakistan’s nationhood but also establishing parity with the archenemy. For this purpose, Pakistan is also dragging ‘external powers’ such as China into the region to counter-balance India and undermine its great power aspirations (Sibal 2011a; Chandra 2013a). Against this backdrop, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse maintains for forging a chain of equivalence, it is all the more important that India becomes a culturally homogenous nation and assimilates all dissenting sub-national forces into the ‘Indian mainstream’.

Similar to the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse also articulates India as a secular, pluralist and peaceful democracy in opposition to an authoritarian, theocratic and militarized Pakistan. Accordingly, while, in India, a flourishing secular democracy has emerged where all different religious communities are respected and enjoy equal rights, Pakistan has become an Islamic state where minorities are discriminated and persecuted and state power lies essentially in the hands of the military (Advani 2001; Sood 2007; Chellaney 2009). Highlighting India’s large Muslim population and that, unlike in Pakistan and other countries, hardly any Muslims in India have joined Islamic fundamentalist groups, L.K. Advani (2005) argues that this can be explained with “the secular, free-market, democratic context of India, heavily influenced by a tradition of non-violence and Hindu tolerance”. The political frontier that the discourse draws between India and Pakistan should not only reaffirm India’s democratic identity, but also India’s superiority towards Pakistan and the inherent peacefulness, progressiveness and tolerance of Hinduism that is contrasted with the backwardness, intolerance and militancy of Islam. This political frontier also extends to the realm of foreign policy: India’s foreign policy, marked by strategic restraint, the advocacy of peaceful coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflicts and the absence of any hegemonistic and territorial ambitions, stands for the discourse in sharp contrast to Pakistan’s hawkish, irredentist and aggressive policies (Singh [Jasw.] 2000; Chandra 2011d).

For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the ‘uncivilized’ and ‘backward’ nature of Pakistan reflects, in particular, in the dominant role of the army in the state and its support of jihad terrorism, making the Pakistani army, in the words of Satish Chandra (2013), “essentially a ji-

hadi outfit in uniform”. Writing after an incident between Indian and Pakistani soldiers at the LoC, Kanwal Sibal (2013d) notes:

“The Pakistanis claim that the highly ‘professional’ army would do no such thing as mutilation. But then, is it normal for a professional army to have ‘jihad’ in its motto, along with ‘faith’ and ‘piety’. Is it a professional army or a religious army of the faithful whose profession is to fight for Islam? As a smaller, more vulnerable country, wracked by extremism and violence, in economic distress, overstretched by its ambitions, militaristic in thinking, adept at cynically exploiting its geopolitical position, capable of extreme obduracy, animated by fear and defiance of India and attitudes distorted by its Islamic vocation that makes it resort to terrorism as an instrument of state policy, Pakistan is not like us.”

Underscoring, the jihad mentality of the Pakistani army, the BJP politician and retired Lt General N.S. Malik (2013) warns:

“As per Pakistan Army thinking Jihadi Islam has been at war with Hindustan since 711 when Mohd Bin Qasim landed in Sind. This has continued unabated since, till it acquired new country of Pakistan, ‘Two Nation Theory’ is very much alive and continues to be the main drive towards hatred of India. As per Pak Army they are determined to continue the war to destroy Hindustan and convert it to Pakistan. Kashmir is the first step in that direction. It is only that India does not understand this and thus takes no serious action to guard itself”.

Unlike the hegemonic Post-Nehruvian discourse, however, the Hyper-nationalist discourse argues that India’s culture of democracy, tolerance and non-violence puts it, at the same time, at a disadvantage towards Pakistan, where the army determines the foreign, security and defence policies and pursues a ruthless *realpolitik*. While the discourse thus distinguishes India from Pakistan by invoking democracy, tolerance and even non-violence – one of the hallmarks of the hegemonic (Post-)Nehruvian discourse –, it also implicitly envies Pakistan. Pakistan has something that India does not have and what the proponents of the Hyper-nationalist discourse deeply desire: It has a martial ethos and is a ruthless practitioner of *realpolitik*. Therefore, the discourse suggests to emulate Pakistan: India must upgrade the role of the military in the policy-making process, become a uniform nation-state that curbs internal dissent with an ‘iron hand’, hinduize Indian politics or pursue a tough and reciprocal policy towards Pakistan (e.g. covert support of separatist movements in Pakistan) (see Verma [B.] 2009: 39ff.; Vijay 2009: 11ff.; RSS 2011; Sibal 2011a; Karnad 2014). As Brahma Chellaney (1999c: 321) notes:

“It has been common for many Indians to be dismissive of Pakistan. But time and again, with the sole exception of 1971, Pakistan has outmanouevred and outfoxed the much larger India. [...] A key requirement of statecraft, as affirmed by ancient strategists Kautilya and Sun Tzu, is to understand one’s enemy well and exploit its internal divisions and weaknesses. Pakistan has done a much better job than India on that front and is thus able to take advantage of Indian weaknesses. The way India was caught with its pants down on Kargil was a national shame. Yet there was hardly any introspection in India. [...] If a failed state can execute a major land grab after systematically undermining Indian security for years, one shudders to think what a successful state would have done to India!”

Thus, instead of pursuing a *moralpolitik* in the naive and misleading conviction that there is no alternative to a dialogue with Pakistan, that India can change Pakistan's inimical designs or that a strong and prosperous Pakistan is in India's interest, India must like Pakistan adopt a *realpolitik* that seeks to insulate India from Pakistan's hostile policies and to create strategic leverage towards Pakistan in order to enforce a change of these policies in the long run. It must come to terms with the reality that Pakistan is, unlike India, an authoritarian and militarized country run by a ruthless leadership that does not subscribe to any codes of conduct or civilized behaviour in the pursuit of its interests and is doing everything in its power to damage India. Appeasement, a dialogue and upholding India's tradition of non-violence will not bring about a change in Pakistan's policies but will be perceived as weakness and only encourage further Pakistani attacks and provocations (Chellaney 2009b; Sibal 2013d; Shukla 2013). Instead of making unilateral concessions and showing goodwill, India must make a normalization of relations *conditional* on an actual change of Pakistan's anti-Indian policies and retaliating Pakistan's provocations. Unless Pakistan does not abandon its fixation on Kashmir and support of terrorists, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse asserts, India has neither an interest in a stable and prosperous Pakistan nor in a structured dialogue with it (Doval 2006; Chandra 2013; Malik 2013; Sood 2013; Parthasarathy 2014).

Against this backdrop, there is an ambiguity and tension in the Hyper-nationalist discourse that has also impeded its ability to overcome the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse and gain discursive hegemony. The Hyper-nationalist discourse wants to overcome the equation of India with Pakistan and assert India's difference and superiority towards Pakistan, not the least because the fixation on Pakistan undermines India's great power aspirations and distracts India from what should be the true reference point for India's foreign and security policy, namely China (Karnad 2012d). However, the Hyper-nationalist discourse often seeks to assert India's difference towards Pakistan through – implicitly or explicitly – invoking democracy, tolerance, non-violence and *moralpolitik*, which re-affirm logics of the hegemonic foreign policy discourse and make it more difficult for the discourse to seriously challenge the Post-Nehruvian discourse, whereas the emulation of Pakistan runs the risk of undermining the political frontier towards Pakistan and thus India's distinctiveness. This, in turn, would 'reduce' India to Pakistan and threaten the identity of the discourse. What we find here is an interplay of the logics of equivalence and difference that simultaneously hold the discourse and its identity articulations together, but also subvert it and thus create some inherent tensions in the discourse. While the logic of equivalence seeks to institute a clear political frontier between In-

dia and Pakistan, the logic of difference dissolves this chain of equivalence, since the discourse implies that India should emulate Pakistan, what would subvert the difference between India and Pakistan, thereby undermining the articulation of a distinctive and superior Indian identity. In short, by seeking to maintain the difference between India and Pakistan, the discourse undermines the successful institutionalization of its own hegemonic project.

China

In addition to Pakistan, which is closely linked to India's colonial past, the Hyper-nationalist discourse articulates India's national identity also in opposition to China which has emerged as a crucial reference point for India's emergence in Asia and the world. Similar to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse acknowledges China as an ancient civilization and emerging great power and thus as a political entity that, unlike the 'inferior other' Pakistan, matches more with India's own status in the world (Singh [Jasw.] 2000; Advani 2008b: 670f., Sibal 2011b, Anand/Ganguly 2013). As Tarun Vijay (2008: 161-162) notes:

“The two nations have emerged as major players influencing events and authoring the future course of global affairs like never before [...] The Chinese hunger – to gain more knowledge, more military power, more prosperity and a decisive say in global matters – has become the most significant story of our times [...] If the Chinese story is an inspiring one, India's emergence on the world stage on the back of knowledge, technology, prosperity and stability along with an excellent record of multiparty democracy, secular pluralism and a living civilization dating back over 5,000 years is an amazing tale too – and should be of considerable interest for the dragon land. [...] [T]he world moves with the strong and hence the global and geopolitical situation in the neighbourhood will be deeply influenced by Sino-India relations.”

China is both admired and feared. While the Post-Nehruvian discourse, above all, appreciates China's past achievements and recent socio-economic development, the Hyper-nationalist discourse, in particular, recognizes that “China understands power politics better than any other nation” (Menon 2000: 29). China, as Ajit Doval (2010) notes, is not only emerging “as a major economic power but a state that is pursuing a grand strategic plan with clock wise precision and expanding its strategic reach backed by an ambitious militarization programme”. China is a centralist, uniform nation-state with a strong political leadership that has a clear strategic vision and the absolute will and ability to implement this vision. It is a ruthless practitioner of *realpolitik* and fully understands the utility and necessity of supreme military capabilities to defend its national interests and emerge as a world power. As Jaswant Singh (2006: 146) points out:

“It is a historically established fact that China, as a state, whether communists or in its earlier versions, when stable is a practitioner of power. It expands through an extension of the spread of its power. This Chinese state has not, through history, ever demonstrated any romantic humanitarianism, it has never

confusedly used that notion as an instrument of state policy, as for example, Nehru had in his early dealings with China.”

China’s strategically-guided, territorial-minded *realpolitik* and will to power contrast for the Hyper-nationalist discourse sharply with India’s lack of a strategic culture and planning, weak leadership and hesitant, meek and moralist policies (Menon [N.] 2008; Singh [P.] 2013; Karnad 2012d). “The Chinese unlike India’s reactive approach”, as the retired Air Marshal R.S. Bedi (2013) warns, “always think and plan strategies way ahead”. Comparing China’s and India’s strengths and weaknesses, Brahma Chellaney (2010: 20/25/197) notes:

“The real advantage of China over India lies in its very opaque, tightly run system that enables the neo-Leninists regime in Beijing to set long-term policy goals and the work quietly and resolutely to achieve them. [...] China, quite the opposite of India, has been a practitioner of classical balance-of-power politics. [...] China knows what it takes to become a great power. While growing realism in India has yet to overcome tradition of naïve idealism and political divisiveness, zealously erecting the building blocs of comprehensive national power.”

In contrast to India, “China has a definite view of its place in the world – it aims at being the preeminent power” (Shourie 2009) and has understood that this requires comprehensive national power. As a result, China has outperformed India and is economically and militarily far more powerful, even though both countries were once at par. As Kanwal Sibal deplors (2012d: 20),

“India has all the attributes to be in the same league as China, whether it is physical or demographic size, skills or civilizational depth. But China has outstripped India as a rising power, and the gap already existing between us will continue to grow in at least the decade and a half ahead. China is better organized, more purposeful in formulating policies and implementing them, and much less constrained by domestic public opinion. [...] Militarily, China has developed capacities that we will find difficult to match.”

This development poses a severe danger to India, because, for the Hyper-nationalist discourse, China is an inherently expansionist and aggressive power that seeks regional supremacy in Asia and will not accept any peer competitors (Chellaney 1999c: 315; Thapliyal 2010). It will thus use its growing power capabilities to weaken India and ‘sabotage’ its rise in the international system. China is thus framed by the Hyper-nationalist discourse as an antagonist ‘other’ preventing India from attaining its true identity and destiny as a great power in Asia and the world. The discourse thus seeks to create a chain of equivalence by instituting a political frontier between India and China and presenting China as an obstacle that must be overcome before India can gain its rightful place in the world order. “After the Mughals and the British”, as Bharat Verma (2014) notes, “it now appears to be China’s turn to encircle, enslave and make India a surrogate power. Apparently, China firmly believes that two tigers cannot live

on the same mountain”. China is said to suffer from a “Middle Kingdom syndrome” (Kanwal 2011: 19), which prevents it from accepting India’s aspirations in Asia and cultivates a sense of superiority that entitles China to defy the interests or rights of other countries (RSS 2011; Parthasarathy 2013a; Sibal 2012d: 29).

According to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, China’s hostile and belligerent behaviour becomes most apparent in its – largely successful – attempts to contain and encircle India. As the retired brigadier and former director of the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, Gurmeet Kanwal (2000b), explicates:

“While China professes a policy of peace and friendliness towards India, its deeds are clearly aimed at the *strategic encirclement of India* in order to marginalise India in Asia and tie it down to the Indian sub-continent. Concerted Chinese efforts are underway to achieve this aim. For the last several decades, China has been engaged in efforts to create a ring of anti-Indian influences around India through military and economic assistance programmes to neighbouring countries, combined with complementary diplomacy. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka have been assiduously and cleverly cultivated towards this end. Myanmar has been recently added to this list.”

Pakistan constitutes “the core of the Chinese containment strategy against India” (Bakshi 2010: 57). Against this backdrop, Brajesh Mishra (2011) laments: “Today it seems we have no place in the world order. We have two enemies on our borders and both of them are trying very hard to see that we keep ourselves engaged and embroiled in South Asia so that we don’t have any one outside”. In addition, China is said to have tried to bring Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives and Myanmar in its orbit in order to undermine India’s security and influence in South Asia and the Indian Ocean. China provides these countries not only with generous military and development aid, but also utilizes these relations to develop strategic ports and potentially military bases in India’s periphery. As the BJP comments in her 2014 election manifesto: “India’s traditional influence and goodwill in the South Asian neighbourhood has been waning as China carries forward its efforts to encircle India in its own backyard” (BJP 2014a: 39). Similarly, Kanwal Sibal (2013d) notes, “China interferes actively in our region, feeding fears of Indian hegemony amongst our smaller neighbours and preventing India from raising its global profile by consolidating its regional base”.

As in the case of the Pakistani ‘other’, the Hyper-nationalist discourse seeks to simultaneously distance India from China and emulate it. On the one hand, the discourse articulates the Indian democracy in opposition to China’s authoritarian rule and evokes a “strategic rivalry between the world’s largest autocracy and democracy” (Chellaney 2012d: 107). The discourse thus draws a clear political frontier between both countries by emphasizing India’s status as democracy that is inherently peaceful, tolerant and non-expansionist and implying that India

is ultimately a more superior and progressive nation and civilization. China, as the discourse constructs the antagonism in Sino-Indian relations, cannot accept India's success, progress and emergence, since China's "authoritarian regime" type "contradict[s] India's multi-cultural democracy" (Verma [B.] 2012). On the other hand, the discourse also 'envies' and 'admires' the way how a strong Chinese leadership pursues strategically guided policies, a ruthless *realpolitik* that confronts external and internal dissent, and urges India to become more like China. Hence, India's tradition of democracy and non-violence make it weak and put it at disadvantage towards an authoritarian China, but are, at the same time, what tells India and China apart (Karnad 2002a: xx; Menon 2008; Shourie 2009; Advani 2010; Singh/Gera/Dewan 2013: 17-18; Sood 2013).

The Hyper-nationalist discourse's articulation of the China threat is shaped by the conviction that "China cannot be trusted" (Parthasarathy 2012). It imputes China's policies generally an anti-Indian character, resulting in allegations that China seeks to encircle, contain and weaken India. This presupposition can not only be traced back to the traumatic 1962 war with China that symbolizes China's 'betrayal' of India's goodwill and friendship (RSS 2012; Sibal 2012d). Rather, it is represented as an inherent and enduring element of China's strategic culture. Like India, the discourse understands China as an enduring civilizational agent that has certain intrinsic characteristics and a distinctive strategic culture that has persisted until today. The foundation of this strategic culture are Sun Tze's treatises 'The Art of War' and 'Principles of War' written in the 6th century B.C. (Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 170; Menon [N.] 2008). As the retired Colonel Narender Kumar (2010) notes:

"China continues to be driven by Sun Tzu's philosophy. Sun Tzu had said: [...] To subdue the enemy without fighting is the supreme excellence. Those skilled in war subdue the enemy's army without battle. [...] By playing with psychological weaknesses of the opponent, by manoeuvring enemy to precarious position, by inducing feeling of frustration and confusion, a strategist can get the other side to break down mentally before surrendering physically or psychologically. [...] China is doing nothing new but following the 'Art of War' and 'Principles of War' laid down by Sun Tzu. It is waging war on India without field armies. The intent is clear – to subdue India without fighting a war."

Accordingly, China is gradually but persistently subverting the geopolitical status quo in its periphery, including on its border with India, and undermines its adversaries without waging a (formal) war. Following Sun Tze's credo that 'all warfare is based on deception', China is ruthlessly exploiting the weaknesses of its adversaries and camouflaging offence as defence (Roy 2010; Chellaney 2013d). "Duplicity and deceit", as Arun Shourie (2013: 4) warns, "is the essence of traditional Chinese strategic doctrine". Against this backdrop, the growing co-operation between India and China or the talk of friendship and partnership are intended to

lull India into a false sense of security and deceit it into believing that the basic parameters of the Sino-Indian relations have changed, while China is clandestinely following its ‘game plan’ to achieve uncontested regional supremacy and solve the border dispute at a time of its choosing. In doing so, China may also not shy away from teaching India another lesson as it did in 1962 and grab the rest of the disputed territory or cut off the Siliguri corridor, which connects the Indian heartland with the North-eastern states (Kanwal 2000a: 1620-1621; Chellaney 2010b; Doval 2010; Verma [B.] 2011; Singh [P.] 2013).

Given its defeatist, pacifist attitude, internal disunity and lack of strategy, India, as the discourse maintains, is an easy target for China. Instead of countering China’s provocations and aggressions with firmness and resolve, “New Delhi’s customary see-no-evil, do-no-evil policy on China only played into the hands of Beijing, encouraging it to expand its strategic leverage against India” (Chellaney 2010b: 197). A grave strategic disadvantage towards China is, according to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, that India does not stay united, because it has no strong political leadership and is no uniform nation-state. As Bharat Verma (2007b) laments:

“Despite India’s pretensions of an emerging great power, its influence is shrinking -both, internally as well as on its external periphery. Internally, Naxalites and insurgent outfits control more than forty percent of the Indian Territory. Similarly, its borders are volatile with neighbours nibbling into its territory as well influence. [...] The external strength and posture of a nation are dependent on internal cohesion. Are we moving towards a cohesive society and nation? The answer is ‘no’ – the scenario is increasingly looking dismal. Regionalism, linguistic differences, religion and caste differences are being exacerbated for purposes of vote bank politics. The trend is certainly not towards integration and consolidation of the nation – state. The psychological fragmentation and regionalism primarily due to vote bank politics has resulted in overwhelming regional pressures in determining our foreign policy.”

This lack of national security and cohesion can be exploited by China. The Hyper-nationalist articulates the fear that China, in its attempt to weaken and undermine India, seeks to dismember the Indian Union through the support of insurgents in India. After the 1962 war China has already supported the insurgency of the Nagas and Mizos, who are ethnically more like the Chinese, in India’s Northeast region, and the Maoist-inspired peasant insurgency of the Naxalites (Prasad 2009; Katoch 2010: 84-85; Doval 2011b; Kapoor 2012: 667). China is, in other words, a ‘fifth column’ threat, because it can rely on China-friendly dissidents in India and can thus exploit the fault-lines and cleavages within Indian society. These ‘dissidents’ cannot only be found among insurgents, but also within India’s political class and civil society, in particular among communists. According to the retired Maj. Gen. Pushpendra Singh (2013): “China sympathisers in India in the government, media and academia, support Beijing’s moves like CPM’s support to China in 1962!” Likewise, Bharat Verma (2014) deplores that Beijing has repeatedly “unleashed its lobby in India”:

“India will need robust minds and not pacifists, who lose the battle in their minds even before it begins, to work out a counter plan against China and China-Pakistan combine to foil their attempts to illegally occupy our territory with an aim to dismember India. It will require a strong national leadership and induction of military thinking in the foreign office. The propaganda by the pacifists and the Chinese lobby, that since we are militarily not prepared, we need to concede our territory and self-respect, is not true. Nation’s have won with much less with the backing of firm resolve and strong generals, both political and military.”

The Chinese ‘other’ thus serves as a crucial reference point for articulating meanings and identities in the Hyper-nationalist discourse. India must become a strong and uniform nation-state that is driven by strategy and *realpolitik*, because it is confronted with a strong, strategically minded and uniform enemy that is a ruthless practitioner of *realpolitik* and will exploit India’s vulnerabilities and fault-lines. As the BJP politician Arun Shourie (2009) notes, “our over-riding objective must to forge a strong India. [...] It is certainly not enough to be stronger than we were yesterday. We have to be stronger than are those who are out to harm us. [...] We must benchmark ourselves against the strongest rival who is likely to seek to hobble and harm us – in our case, and in our neighbourhood, that is China”. By evoking the China threat, the discourse seeks to construct a chain of equivalence and overcome India’s internal difference and weakness. By using China as a benchmark for India, the discourse, however, undermines, as in the case of the Pakistani ‘other’, the construction of chain of equivalence, because it would largely erase what makes up India’s identity.

7.3 Fantasmatic Logics: Indian Greatness and Exceptionalism

Having discussed the social and political logics articulated in the Hyper-nationalist discourse, we will now shift attention to the fantasmatic logics and thus examine the ideological narratives and myths that underpin the discourse and can explain why actors identify with the discourse, i.e. why they take the content of the social logic of national strength and the political frontiers articulated by the discourse to be real. Fantasmatic narratives and myths are invoked by political subjects to “cover over” the contradictions and ruptures of a discourse and defend it against the discursive exterior that is always threatening to dislocate the discourse (Laclau 1990: 60ff.). By investigating the fantasmatic logics underpinning a discourse, we seek to deconstruct these myths and narratives and expose these contradictions and ruptures. Like the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse draws on and thus re-affirms the two mythical narratives of Indian Greatness and Indian Exceptionalism. This reflects the hegemonic status of the Post-Nehruvian discourse and its successful creation of a collective

foundational imaginary that represents India as a pre-colonial political and cultural agent that has always been the symbol of peaceful co-existence, non-violence, tolerance, spiritual clarity and moral sincerity. However, the Hyper-nationalist discourse fashions these two interrelated narratives, as we will see, in a slightly different way and this has implications for the way how the discourse orders the world.

7.3.1. Indian Greatness

The narrative of Indian Greatness revolves around the theme that India embodies an ancient, great civilization and nation. Like the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse is informed by the fiction that the contemporary India symbolizes the political continuity of a nation and civilization that has existed as a cultural/political agent for several millennia. As the BJP (2014: 1) notes in its election manifesto:

“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. [...] India's contribution to the march of civilization goes back to several thousand years before the Christian era. [...] 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. [...] 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.”

Given this long and rich civilizational heritage, coupled with today India's size, population, resources and geopolitical location, the Hyper-nationalist discourse is convinced of India's innate greatness and that it possesses all the attributes for becoming a great power in the international system (Verma [B.] 2001; Karnad 2002a: xvii; Singh [R.] 2008; Vijay 2009: 36; Doval 2010). As Kanwal Sibal (2013b: 6) notes: “We are among the biggest countries demographically and geographically; we are endowed with considerable natural and human resources; our industrial and technological base is sizable; we are a nuclear weapon state with impressive space capabilities; we are an old civilisation. A country with these attributes cannot but play an important role, not only regionally, but also globally.” Like the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse thus also believes in India's civilizational greatness and its entitlement to be a great power, but attaches greater importance to the materialist base of state power and argues that India must become a uniform nation-state.

The civilizational narrative on which both the Post-Nehruvian and the Hyper-nationalist discourse draw expresses nostalgia for India's Hindu past. While this nostalgia is more implicit

in the Post-Nehruvian discourse which acknowledges the contributions of Islam (and the Muslim rulers), Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism and Christians to the Indian civilization, the Hyper-nationalist discourse maintains that India is fundamentally a Hindu civilization. In particular for the Hindu nationalist sub-discourse, Hindu-ness is the cultural essence of India, the unifying principle that has bounded together India's diverse religious, ethnic, linguist and caste groups for several millennia. Hence, the Hindu civilization is the foundation for the Indian nationhood. Accordingly, *Hindutva* has been the unifying factor in the creation of the ancient Hindu *rashtra*, the world's first and most highly developed nation. This Hindu *rashtra* encompassed a natural geography (the territory between the Himalayas and the Indian Ocean), a common history, a common race (the Hindu race), a distinctive system of beliefs, practices and values, and a common language (Sanskrit). Modern India, as the narrative goes, is thus not a normal nation-state but a civilizational state that embodies an ageless cultural, ethical and spiritual unity (Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 2ff.; Advani 2008b: 864; Singh [R.] 2009; Varanasi 2013).

Both sub-discourses which constitute the Hyper-nationalist discourse turn to India's pre-colonial past (before the advent of Muslim rule over the Indian Subcontinent) and seek to revive the glory and power of the ancient Indian civilization and nation. This desire to re-collect India's glorious pre-colonial past and thus re-assert India's true national identity and destiny presupposes that there has always been a national or cultural consciousness among Indians and India has always existed as a cultural and political agent in world politics.

In fact, however, it was the very absence of a collective consciousness or identity among the Hindus/Indians that motivated early Hindu nationalists such as V.D. Savarkar to construct the ideological fantasy of *Hindutva* as a constitutive concept for the formation of a common identity, a guiding principle to organize and mobilize the Hindus in order to create a homogenous political community which rises up against British colonial rule and enables the erection of a mighty, independent nation-state. Like every ideology, it is based on a set of narratives and myths that create a desire among actors to identify with a discourse and provide the foundation for collective political action. As an inherently conservative discourse, it provides an account of the existing social and political situation, which is contrasted with a mythical, glorified past, when India is said to have experienced a long period of cultural and spiritual purity and flourishing, economic affluence and political and military strength. The present is thus represented as a massive decline towards this glorious past. In addition, it puts forward a model of a desired future that promises not only a revival of this glorious past, but an even superior future state-of-affairs characterized by material and spiritual strength and order – a

fictional narrative that ‘grips’ subjects because it promises the modernization of a society *without* compromising its basic values and traditions.

Finally, the ideology explains how political change and this ideal state-of-affairs can and should be achieved. For this, the discourse, as we have seen in the last section, draws particular political frontiers between the ‘self’ and a set of ‘others’ that block the realization of the self’s true identity and have ‘caused’ India’s current feeble condition and must thus be overcome. This requires, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse asserts through the social logic of national strength, that India must generate a strong national will and become a uniform nation-state as well as overcome its tradition of excessive tolerance and non-violence which has led to the disunity and weakness of India. It has not only deprived Hindus/Indians of the ability to confront their enemies, but has also prevented a clear demarcation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and thus the emergence of a strong national identity. This explains why, for the Hyper-nationalist discourse, “national will is not only an intangible component of national power, but by far the most vital” (Advani 2008b: 611) and why a strong, uniform national culture “is the very foundation of any nation” and for the “emergence of India as a potent economic and military power on the global scene” (Singh [R.] 2006a).

While the Hyper-nationalist discourse claims that it merely seeks to restore India’s true national identity and re-collect India’s ancient wisdom that already contains almost all elements of modernity, it ultimately articulates a chauvinist majoritarian nationalism that wants to suppress or eliminate internal diversity and dissent (e.g. signs of non-Hinduness in India) in order to build, on the a basis of a culturally and ethnically pure community, a uniform, powerful and modern nation-state. However, the ageless, strong and pure Hindu/Indian nation, which the discourse seeks to revive and represents as the ancient foundation for the modern Indian nationalism, is a myth. As was noted in chapter 6, nations and nationalisms generally evolve around myths that construct an origin, a period of (fictional) purity, unity or glory that serves as the enduring foundation of the society and must be recovered. The myth obscures that nations are inherently fluid and contentious entities, “‘imaginary’ constructions” that only exist *if and as long as* people imagine themselves as members of a community and have a common national consciousness that must be constantly reproduced through various rituals (Laclau 1994: 140/210). Hence, the myth of an ageless, strong and pure Hindu/Indian nation does neither capture the true state-of-affairs in ancient India nor did it grow out of an authentic Indian culture, but is a modern invention that gradually emerged in the context of India’s encounters with Muslims and Europeans/Christians which served as significant ‘others’ against which an

Indian or Hindu identity could be discursively formed and through which a common national or religious consciousness came-into-being in India in the first place.

The Hyper-nationalist discourse negates the constitutive role of the 'other' for this identity formation and the way how it uses the modern concepts of nationalism and civilization, which Indian elites were imparted during European colonialism, to construct an Indian nationalism and to prove that India constitutes a nation. Therefore, early Hindu nationalists, like their secular-nationalist counterparts, drew on the notion of India as a civilization, which was initially articulated by the Euro-centric, orientalist discourse in the colonial period, to underscore the oneness and unity of India. As we have seen in chapter 6, the Euro-centric, orientalist discourse constructed the Indian civilization – in what Derrida refers to as a logocentric procedure – along the lines of the 'Western' civilization by understanding, evaluating and creating the 'other' against the background of one's own image and privileging written texts over spoken words. The discourse constructed a single Hinduism as a religious civilization that originated in the Aryan-Vedic high culture and was bound together by a common language (Sanskrit), a body of assumedly relatively coherent ancient texts (the Vedas), shared rituals and norms, and a shared sacred geography (Hansen 1999: 65-66). This discursive construction of Hinduism, as the subaltern studies (see Spivak 1988) have pointed out, privileged and hegemonized the elitist Brahmanic high culture, thereby disempowering India's subaltern cultures and reducing India's cultural and religious diversity into a uniform framework. At the same time, the Euro-centric, orientalist discourse characterized the Indian civilization in a romanticist, spiritual and mythical way by placing it in opposition to the rationality, materialism, utilitarianism and realism of 'Western' modernity. This romanticist, spiritual and mythical India was both admired but also seen as the reason for the decline and backwardness of the Indian civilization (Hoeber Rudolph 2009: 140ff.).

It was in this context, the Hyper-nationalist discourse emerged and formulated a cultural nationalism for constructing an Indian national identity and overcoming British colonial rule.⁷³ The articulation of the Indian civilization as a Hindu civilization is based on an essentialized and cultural stereotypical understanding of civilizations that treats civilizations as culturally homogenous entities and attributes the highest importance to religion in the delineation of different civilizations. This notion of civilization, which can be traced back to the works of racist cultural realists such as Charles Henry Pearson, B.L. Putnam and Lothrop Stoddard and

⁷³ Highlighting the fictional character of the narrative of the ancient Hindu civilization/nation is not to suggest that India does not possess the attributes of a civilization/nation or that the Indian civilization or nationalism are merely a product of European colonialism. Rather, it means to question the notion of an essentialized, ageless and pure Hindu civilization/nation and to point out the non-necessary nature of this national narrative.

more recently Samuel Huntington who coined the ‘clash of civilization’ thesis, negates the various interlinkages, commonalities and interactions between civilizations and their inherently pluralist, impure and hybrid character (Hobson 2012: 279ff.). It reduces civilizations not only to some ‘cultural essentials’ of religion, bloodline and a set of other basic practices, but also represents other civilizations as threatening and cultural fault-lines within a civilization as dangerous – a danger that can only be mitigated through the hegemony of a strong, uniform culture.

Unsurprisingly, the Hyper-nationalist discourse in India has either implicitly or explicitly embraced this reasoning and frequently refers to Samuel Huntington (see BJP [1998] 2000: 66; Menon 2000: 29; Advani 2008b: 863-864; Menon/Kumar 2010: 44) to underscore: first, that India, as the concept of *Hindutva* claims, has always been and will remain fundamentally Hindu in a national and civilizational sense and must, therefore, assert its Hindu identity; second, that the Indian civilization is in a continuous struggle with other civilizations, in particular with the Islamic and the Sinic civilization, because these civilizations are said to have certain intrinsic characteristics and enduring ‘cultural essentials’ that make them a threat. For instance, while the Islamic civilization is said to be prone to religious intolerance and expansionism, the Chinese are, as we have seen, represented and essentialized as highly strategically-minded, power-driven and sly – driven by a strategic culture that has been based on deceit since the times of Sun Tze. Accordingly, while Chinese leaders smile, shake hands and talk of a friendship with India, they are plotting to disrupt and weaken India to achieve regional dominance.

The Hyper-nationalist discourse applies the same essentialized and cultural stereotypical understanding of civilizations to India by depicting the Indian civilization as inherently tolerant and peaceful, but also as weak, defeatist and disunited. The discourse creates thus a reductionist, deterministic and static account of world politics: Since ancient times, civilizations/nations have been struggling for power and influence and only those who have the will to power and are able defend themselves will survive. Therefore, India must return to the ancient Vedic texts and Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* which have captured this ‘truism’ already more than 2300 years ago and provide clear strategic guidelines for contemporary India. Hence, the Hyper-nationalist discourse turns to India’s glorious past before it fell prey to foreign invasions and domination and identifies a “Hindu hyperrealist strategic thought originating in the Vedas – the four great books and repositories of the wisdom of the Indic civilization” as the remedy for overcoming India’s strategic culture deficit, moralistic foreign policy and its lack of will to power (Karnad 2014: 202). According to Karnad (2002a: xxv/64), these classical

texts represent “an aggressive ultra-realist religion and culture” and “conceptualize a Hindu machtpolitik that is at once intolerant of any opposition, driven to realise the goal of supremacy for the nation and State by means fair and foul, and is breathtaking in its amorality”. Similarly, Arun Prakash (2009) notes:

“If we go back far enough in our history we find that ancient Vedic literature was the medium for conveying politico-military strategies and the options available to a strategic leader for conducting affairs of State, including diplomacy and war. Around the 4th century BCE, we find a masterly treatise focusing on not just economic policy but also statecraft and military strategy. This was the *Arthashastra*; written for the guidance of kings and rulers, by Kautilya the Prime Minister of the great Mauryan Empire. As a guide for strategic leaders, the *Arthashastra* is a remarkable document rooted in realistic or practical considerations, or *realpolitik*, as opposed to idealistic notions. [...] There is a theory that in the early part of the first millennium BCE, India’s socio-cultural milieu underwent progressive transformation by movements, which propagated spiritualism, asceticism and *ahimsa* or non-violence. [...] India, thus, stagnated intellectually, and consequently lost strategic focus; a situation, which prevails till today. Ironically, a direct result of this was a long era of domination by foreign invaders, which further eroded our self-respect and engendered a deep sense of diffidence and timidity.”

Thus, Hinduism and the pre-colonial past are seen as the foundation and context for devising India’s contemporary strategic thought and practices (Singh [Jasw.] 1999: 4-5), whereas the neglect of the ‘Hindu machtpolitik’ resulted in the domination of India by foreign invaders who hardly made any contribution to India’s strategic culture but even contributed to its further decline. As Kanwal Sibal (2013e) notes,

“the Muslim conquerors ruled large parts of India for centuries. Just as the Hindu princes showed little strategic sense in dealing with the Muslim invaders, the Afghans could not strategically ward off the Mughal threat. The Muslim rulers failed to properly assess the European sea-borne threat. The way the rulers of that period allowed an English trading company to steadily conquer large swathes of Indian territory speaks volumes about the lack of any strategic culture in the India of that period. Independent India could imbibe virtually nothing in terms of strategic culture from centuries of Muslim rule”

The Hyper-nationalist discourse regularly invokes Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* to make sense of India’s international relations (see Chellaney 1999b: 530; Arora 2006: 281; Bakshi 2011: 23; Singh [A.K.] 2011, Gandhi 2013; Singh/Gera/Dewan 2013: 236). As the BJP (1995: 1), for instance, explained in its ‘Foreign Policy Agenda for the Future’: “‘Power is the only means to ensure friendly relations with other nations’, says Kautilya in his *ARTHASHASTRA*. This fundamental precept must guide Bharatiya Janata Party in its foreign policy”. Likewise, External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha (2002a) noted:

“Those who decry the absence of a tradition of strategic thought in India would do well to go through a 2300 year old Indian treatise called *Arthashastra*. Its author, Kautilya, probably ancient India’s greatest strategic thinker, had enunciated six forms of state policy called the Circle of States. He declared that peace, war, neutrality, show of force, alliance and making peace with one and waging war with another are the six forms of state policy. A close examination would indicate that nothing much has really changed over the last 2000 years and that inter-state relations are still based very much on the six fold

policy enunciated by Kautilya. We live in an era of strategic uncertainties where conflict between nations is still a fact of life.”

The discourse’s references to the *Arthashastra* or other ancient texts and the conviction that India’s foreign policy is or should be driven by anything that was written by Kautilya or in the Vedas is part of and re-affirms the fantasmatic narrative of India as an eternal political and cultural entity that was united and powerful, when it followed its true and pure Hindu ethos and pursued a ‘Hindu realpolitik’, which is not only the original foundation of India’s strategic culture, but also of the realist tradition of thought in international relations in general. Hence, the demand for pursuing a policy of *realpolitik* and balance of power is not a call for following foreign concepts and theories brought by the European colonizers, but can be represented as a purification of India through hinduization and a return to the ancient Indian civilization which already contains all elements of modernity. “The study of Kautilya's Arthashastra”, as G. Parthasarathy (2003) thus notes, “is more important for our students of diplomacy and military-strategic issues than the works of Clausewitz and Metternich. Nations lose their independence, self-confidence and self-respect not by importing foreign technology, goods and services, but by mortgaging their minds to foreign doctrines and concepts”. In other words, India’s pathway to greatness is already enshrined in India’s ancient wisdom and civilizational excellence, but this traditional knowledge has largely been forgotten in contemporary India.

The construction of a pure Hindu civilization and culture negates or ignores the various *external* influences that shaped the emergence and development of the Indian civilization and nationalism. Like every other civilization and nationalism in the world, the Indian civilization and nationalism are discursive formations shaped by persistent contestations and contradictions generated from within and from without. In other words, the peaceful and violent encounters with ‘strangers’ (‘others’) have been constitutive for the gradual formation of the notion of an Indian civilization and nationalism by bringing various kinds of knowledge, people, values and practices to the Indian Subcontinent and, even more importantly, by creating among the Indians/Hindus a sense of themselves as members of a distinct culture, religion or nation, which always requires that there is an ‘other’ against which one can define oneself. The Aryan-Vedic high culture which is commonly regarded as the origin and golden age of the Indian civilization was, for instance, not an indigenous creation, but is closely linked to the entry of the Aryans on the Indian Subcontinent. The Aryans are said to have laid the foundation for Hinduism and its distinctive social order of hierarchical stratification. While the Hindu nationalists assert that the Aryans were the original inhabitants of India and thus in-

digenous to India, it is a widely accepted historical fact that the Aryans were a Central Asian tribe who either invaded or settled down in the northern part of the Indian Subcontinent. The mythos of the indigenous Aryans is of fundamental significance to the Hindu nationalists because they are predominantly the descendants of the Aryans and thus need to separate themselves from other ‘foreign’ invaders such as the Arabs and Europeans, not the least to put themselves on par with the Dravidians (the original inhabitants of South India) and other indigenous peoples who claim to be the original residents of India (Commuri 2010: 60; Doninger 2010: 24f./89ff.).

This invention of an ethnic and religious golden age going back to the Vedic era, when India as a *pure* Hindu civilizational state is said to have experienced a time period of materialist, spiritual and cultural flourishing and strength, is the cornerstone of the Hyper-nationalist discourse, because it proves to its proponents not only India’s innate greatness, but also its nationhood status. As the Hindu nationalist leader M.S. Golwalkar (1939: 94) noted during India’s independence struggle:

“Here is our vast country, Hindusthan, the land of the Hindus, their home country, hereditary territory, a definite geographical unity, delimited naturally by the sublime Himalayas on the North and the limitless ocean on the other three sides, an ideal piece of land, deserving in every respect to be called a Country, fulfilling all that the word should imply in the Nation idea. Living in this Country since pre-historic times, is the ancient Race – the Hindu Race, united together by common traditions, by memories of common, glory and disaster, by similar historical* political, social, religious and other experiences, living and evolving, under the same influences, a common culture, a common mother language, common customs, common aspirations. This great Hindu Race professes its illustrious Hindu Religion, the only Religion in the world worthy of being so denominated.”

While the Hyper-nationalist discourse celebrates India’s glorious ancient (Hindu) past and represents India as an ageless nation, it is fundamentally a modernist discourse that appropriates a modern understanding of nationalism based on 19th Century European nationalisms and uses it to construct a Hindu nation and its history by searching – mainly through the prism of the Euro-centric, orientalist discourse – in India’s past for the necessary elements of this Hindu nation (e.g. bounded territory, race, culture), which could serve as building blocs for a modern Indian nation-state after independence and substantiate the state’s cultural unity and sovereignty (Chatterjee 1995: 126; Devare 2009).

The main problem with this narrative is that it assumes a cultural or national consciousness among Hindus/Indians in the pre-colonial era. However, there is very little historical evidence that Hindus/Indians saw themselves as a collective group and the attacks of ‘foreign’ invaders as an attack against this collective body. In other words, the consciousness of being a Hindu or Indian as a part of a religious, cultural or national community and thus as a marker of a

self-identity was absent in ancient India, which was splintered into different castes, religious sects, regions, linguist groups, tribes and other affiliations that served as the main sources of identification. In particular, it was extremely uncommon that people in ancient India defined themselves by allegiances to a religion, not the least given the extreme diversity of religious beliefs, faiths, values and rituals. This, as we have seen in chapter 6, began to change only with the entry of ‘other’ religions on the Indian Subcontinent. “Notions of Hinduism as a unified religion, Hindu culture as a distinct cultural zone, and ‘Hindu’ as a well-bounded cultural category”, as Thomas Blom Hansen (1999: 65) thus points out, “are largely products of scholarly and administrative interventions by orientalist scholars, missionaries, and colonial administrations in the Indian subcontinent since the seventeenth century.”

Similarly, as we have seen in chapter 6, there existed no enduring Indian political entity on the Indian Subcontinent in pre-modern times. While the Hyper-nationalist discourse ascribes to the geo-cultural space of the Indian Subcontinent a kind of continuous agency – the status of an Indian political entity – by treating the greater empires as ‘agents’ or ‘representatives’ of the Indian nation and, at other times, the smaller kingdoms and princedoms as a collection of states of an Indian nation and suggesting that these different entities interacted as an Indian actor with the outside world through commerce, trade or diplomacy (see Karnad 2002a; Advani 2008: 665; Malik 2010), there is little historical evidence that there existed much efforts toward or feelings of Indian political unity.

Against this backdrop, it is problematic to use, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse does, India’s cultural unity, which is said to have survived even several thousand years of ‘foreign’ rule, as the proof for the existence of an Indian nationalism or an age-less Indian nation: the alleged cultural unity of India, i.e. the belief in Hinduism as a unified religion, a distinct Hindu/Indian cultural zone and the Indian Subcontinent as a well-bounded geo-cultural or national space are modern phenomena. Again, this is not to suggest that this space had no distinctive and sophisticated cultural and social traits. On the contrary, it surely did and these basic cultural and social patterns are to a great extent still recognizable in contemporary India. However, these cultural and social traits were – and are to a certain extent still – characterized by an extensive diversity and did not give rise to a common national or religious consciousness in the pre-colonial period. Nations are no objective entities whose existence can simply derived from a bounded geography or distinct cultural commonalities, but imagined entities that are, as all objects of ideology, sustained by an identification with a common national community and thus only come into being if people believe in it and have a common national consciousness that must be constantly reproduced through various symbolic practices.

This fictional ideology of ‘Indian Greatness’ based on a pre-modern cultural nationalism, which represents India as an ageless national and civilizational entity with a pure culture, is the prerequisite for the formation of the Hyper-nationalist discourse. It explains why the discourse articulates the social logic of national strength and political logics that define and affirm a Hindu/Indian ‘self’ in opposition to a set of temporal and spatial-political ‘others’ (Colonialism, Pakistan and China). For instance, the discursive representation of China as an expansionist power that seeks to encircle and contain India in South Asia is influenced by the way how the discourse articulates the notion of the Indian Subcontinent as a confined geopolitical and civilizational space with India as the natural hegemon in its centre and Tibet as a buffer between the Indian and Chinese civilizations. As a result, the Chinese inroads into South Asia are represented as an intrusion into India’s natural sphere of influence that was once the *Akhand Bharat* (undivided India) (Shourie 2009; Vijay 2009: 210ff.; Singh [Jasw.] 2013: 10/41ff; Karnad 2014: 220). The fictional ideology of ‘Indian Greatness’ is also the foundation for the prominent narrative that the strong and powerful Indian civilization/nation declined and fell prey to several ‘foreign’ invasions and conquests because the Hindus/Indians were (1) disunited, (2) acquired – mainly from Buddhism, Jainism and later Gandhianism – a defensive, pacifist, defeatist and forgiving mind-set and thus lost their ability to generate power and the willingness to use it, and (3) were confronted with strong and unified enemies that exploited the divisions and fault-lines within Indian society. Therefore, as the Hyper-nationalist discourse concludes, India must become a strong, uniform and powerful nation-state that contains a culturally and ethnically pure political community which is willing and capable of defending the nation against external aggressions and thus to uphold its rightful place in a competitive international system.

7.3.2 Indian Exceptionalism

The mythical narrative of ‘Indian Exceptionalism’ is closely interlinked with the narrative of ‘Indian Greatness’. Similar to the Post-Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse underscores the uniqueness and exceptional attributes of India and the special role it plays in world politics. It asserts that the Indian nation-state emerged from the world’s most ancient, highly developed civilization, which had a substantial influence on the world, and is today the world’s largest democracy and the living proof for the peaceful co-existence of different religious, ethnical and linguist communities. The Indian experience and the wisdom of the Indian civilization are believed to have universal significance and could pave the way for global peace and justice. The ‘Indian Exceptionalism’ in the world, however, results, as the *Hindutva*

sub-discourse asserts in particular, exclusively from India's Hindu ethos. Accordingly, a peaceful and just global order can only emerge if the world adopts the Hindu way of life and India, as the embodiment of the Hindu civilization, becomes a central pillar in this order. At the same time, the Hyper-nationalist discourse endows the notion of an 'Indian Exceptionalism' also with a negative meaning by invoking the myth that India is exceptional in its disregard of national security, strategy and defence and the only state pursuing an 'idealist' and 'pacifist' foreign policy in an inherently 'realist' world. Articulated by the ultrarealist sub-discourse in particular, this notion of an 'Indian Exceptionalism' holds that India's has all the necessary attributes to play a pre-eminent role in global politics and is the only country that can counter the rise of an expansionist and hegemonistic China in Asia, provided that India overcomes its 'idealism' and pursues a 'realist' grand strategy backed by supreme military capabilities.

As noted in chapter 6, narratives of exceptionalism play a significant role in any nation and emanate from the absence of a final or universal ground for articulating meanings and identities. The myth of exceptionalism seeks to conceal or fill this emptiness by attributing the nation some intrinsic essences, thereby enabling a discourse to forge a chain of equivalence which integrates dissimilar elements into a common national community and makes it possible that several actors identify with this national community. Due to the lack of any stable foundations and essences, every nation is in constant need of reproducing itself and thus of recreating the myths it is founded upon. Hence, myths are constitutive of national identities, since they symbolize the seemingly immaculate chain of equivalence around which the national community was originally institutionalized (Laclau 1990: 141/144).

The fantasy of 'Indian Exceptionalism' revolves around the theme that India as an ancient and great civilization has not only been exceptional with respect to the level of progress and its outstanding achievements in the fields of philosophy, science, literature, art, technology and trade, but also offers the unique example of a great civilization that has never invaded other countries and built an 'Indian Empire'. Though it was once the world's most developed and powerful civilization whose influence spread across Asia and beyond, India, as the discourse maintains, has, unlike other civilizations, never sought to dominate or exploit other peoples but made its influence and power felt only through the benign expansion of its cultural, religious, scientific and technological wisdom. Accordingly, the worldwide civilizational reach of India was the outcome of the spiritual superiority and benevolence of Hinduism (BJP 1998: 1; Chellaney 1999a: 152; Pant 2006: 95; Advani 2008: 665f.; Vijay 2009b; Doval 2011a; Ganguly 2012). An early proponent of this view was Swami Vivekananda who played a

foundational role for the emergence of Hindu nationalism in India and continues to be a crucial reference point for contemporary Hindu nationalists. As Vivekananda noted in his speech at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893: “I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. [...] I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth” (quoted in Vijay 2008: 42).

Highlighting these exceptional virtues of Hinduism, BJP president Rajnath Singh (2013) said:

“Hindutva is a way of life due to which all the religions in the world exist. [...] India is the only country in the world where not only all the religions but all their sects are found. [...] Due to this way of life India is the only country in the known history of the world which has never carried out invasions on other countries and tried to include them in India. India is the only country in the world which never went for invasion. It is the way of life which does not inspire a person to conquer the world but to conquer the heart of the people.”

The Hindu way of life has thus enshrined that India has always practiced tolerance, non-aggression and peaceful coexistence in its internal and external affairs. The notion of Hinduism’s spiritual superiority and benevolence is based on a particular construction of the Indian civilization through the prism of the Eurocentric orientalist discourse. The Indian nationalists, in particular, took notice of the great spiritual qualities attributed to classical Hinduism and sought to integrate these qualities, which are believed to distinguish India from the ‘materialist’ and ‘rational’ West, into their project of nationalist and spiritual renewal and re-awakening. This notion of India as an ageless civilization and “the most ennobling experience in spiritual co-existence”, where “[f]rom ancient times almost all religions practiced in different parts of the world, have existed peacefully in India and will continue to do so” (BJP 2014: 1), is based on a set of myths.

As we have seen in Chapter 6, the ancient as well as the modern India has, like almost every other civilization or state, experienced periods of extreme violence but also of relative peace and creative assimilation. While non-violence has indeed become a cultural ideal for Hindus/Indians and has been extensively debated in ancient and modern India, it does not reflect an actual condition of non-violence but emerged from the very reality of pervasive violence and the desire to overcome it. Ironically, the Hindu nationalists in particular are often blamed for sparking communal violence and its more militant outfits have committed acts of extreme violence such as the Gujarat riots in 2002, where a militant Hindu mob killed up to 2,000 Muslims, set fire to their houses and shops, raped Muslim women and burned Muslim children alive without the state government run by the BJP taking decisive action to prevent the violence (Jaffrelot 2011: 376ff). That the Hyper-nationalist discourse, and in particular the

Hindutva sub-discourse, notwithstanding, articulates and re-affirms the notion of India/Hinduism as non-violent and tolerant exposes the operating of a particular fantasy, namely that Hindus are essentially tolerant and peaceful and could never do any evil, simply because they are Hindus (see Organiser 2000; Singh [Jasw.] 2001; Singh [R.] 2008; Vijay 2008: 42/65f.; Chandra 2011a). It is this sedimented myth that has gripped the subjects of the discourse. Accordingly, whenever Hindus resort to violence, this is represented as an anomaly and a response to a conspiracy, injustice or aggression committed by non-Hindus (see Vajpayee 2003d; Advani 2008: 751ff.).

This myth also underpins the assertion that India has always practiced non-violence, tolerance and peaceful co-existence in its external relations and thus never invaded or colonized any other countries. It presupposes that India has always existed as some kind of political or cultural agent in the world. As we have seen, however, the awareness that Indians/Hindus constitute a religious, cultural or political community is a modern phenomenon that emerged in the 18th century. The Indian Subcontinent was originally split into several autonomous kingdoms and did not constitute a unified political entity – the very short phases of greater political unity were hardly attempts to create a common nation or union but brought about by the *imperialist* expansion of one powerful dynasty. At the same time, the religion or culture which is today subsumed under the label of Hinduism was in ancient and medieval times a very diverse mixture of beliefs and practices splintered into numerous sects, thereby exacerbating its ‘export’ to other countries. Nevertheless, the extensive cultural and religious influence that the Indian civilization, according to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, had in the world and that is visible, for instance, in Southeast Asia, where certain cultural and religious traits can be found which originated on the Indian Subcontinent, indicate that Indian kingdoms or religious sects actively sought to spread their cultural and religious practices (Commuri 2010. 49f.).

The Hyper-nationalist discourse, like the Post-Nehruvian discourse, ‘sells’ this religious and cultural expansion as a benevolent sharing of wisdom: “India never went out”, as Yashwant Sinha (2003i) points out, “with its sword to these countries. We never went out as conquerors or as colonizers. We went out with our civilizational values, with our culture with our religion and in friendship and in amity. That is in the historical character of the Indian nation”. Ironically, this articulation, simultaneously, uses the notion of the European ‘civilizing mission’, which underlay European colonialism and India fiercely resisted, to make sense of ancient India’s engagement with the world but also seeks to distance India from these very practices by highlighting the benign and peaceful character of this engagement. However, it is not clear whether the recipients of the Indian wisdom also saw this spread of Indian/Hindu cultural and

religious practices in benign terms or rather as a threat to their own religious and cultural traditions in the same way as contemporary Hindu nationalists, for instance, fear the Western ‘cultural imperialism’ which reflects in the spread of ‘Western’ brands, lifestyles or Christian missionary work in India.

From the spiritual superiority and benevolence allegedly inherent in the Indian civilization, the Hyper-nationalist discourse derives a universal aspiration. It is the conviction that the Indian civilization has primarily through the power and wisdom of Hindu thought, spirituality and culture made a fundamental contribution to the development of human civilization as a whole by articulating for the first time the ‘modern’ notion of universalism and a common humanity that paved the way for the United Nations or human rights. According to the Hyper-nationalist discourse, this notion can be traced back to the ancient Indian concept of ‘*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*’ (‘the whole world is one family’) which can be found in the Atharva Veda dating back to 3000 B.C. and embodies the enduring commitment of India and Hinduism to tolerance, pluralism and peaceful co-existence (BJP 1998: 1; Vijay 2008: 7/10).⁷⁴ It is the foundation of India’s accommodative and composite culture that has ensured not only that different religious, ethnic and linguist communities have lived together in peace, harmony and unity in India for several millennia, but also that India and Hinduism have never tried to spread their beliefs, values and practices by force (Vajpayee 2003d; Singh [Jasw.] 2006: 86ff.). For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, the Hindu way of life thus holds universal significance and shows the way how peace, harmony and justice, or ‘unity in diversity’, can be established between nations and religions. Underscoring the global relevance of *Hindutva*, the RSS senior leader B.R. Idate (1996) noted:

“It has been our firm faith that the only solution for all the ills not only of this country but of the whole of mankind lies rooted in the Hindu philosophy. [...] This belief in the ultimate victory of Hindu thought is based not on blind faith but on a deep inner awareness that Hindu philosophy is based on laws which are not just Hindu laws but universal laws applicable to all. This philosophy is called Hindu philosophy only because these laws were discovered by ancient Hindu sages. In reality, this philosophy is a Universal philosophy.”

Accordingly, the solution for overcoming the seemingly endless ideological, geopolitical and civilizational struggles and divisions in the world lies in the global spread and adoption of the

⁷⁴As we have seen, the Post-Nehruvian discourse also draws on the notion of ‘*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*’ to articulate the social logic of ‘international unity in diversity’ which is believed to be the foundation for India’s unique role and significance in the world. This commonality can be attributed to the fact that both the (Post-)Nehruvian and the Hyper-nationalist discourses invoke a particular construction of the Indian civilization that represents India as an assimilative, highly spiritual, tolerant and non-violent civilization. While the Post-Nehruvian discourse concedes the ‘foreign’ invaders and the minorities in India a contribution to the emergence and evolution of this civilizational ethos, the *Hindutva* sub-discourse derives it exclusively from India’s Hinduist heritage and asserts that it has preceded the arrival of non-Hindus in India.

Hindu way of life and the re-emergence of India at the world stage (Vijay 2009: 3-6). As the embodiment of these ideals, India is entitled to play a supreme role in the international system that is in accordance with its greatness and exceptional virtues. Summarizing the guidelines for its foreign policy, the BJP (2014: 40) noted in its election manifesto:

“We will build a strong, self-reliant and self-confident India, regaining its rightful place in the comity of nations. In this, we will be firstly guided by our centuries old tradition of ‘वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्’ [‘the whole world is one family’]. At the same time, our foreign policy will be based on best National interests. We will create a web of allies to mutually further our interests. We will leverage all our resources and people to play a greater role on the international high table. [...] There is a need to integrate our soft power avenues into our external interchange, particularly, harnessing and focusing on the spiritual, cultural and philosophical dimensions of it. India has always played a major role in world affairs, offering a lot to the World. This has been its tradition since time immemorial. The magnetic power of India has always been in its ancient wisdom and heritage, elucidating principles like harmony and equity.”

Similarly, highlighting the indispensable role of India in the international system and that “Truth, Peace and Non-violence form the central tenets of the ‘Idea of India’”, Narendra Modi (2014) points out:

“The ‘Idea of India’ in fact does not let this ethos of brotherhood and friendship be limited by India’s boundaries as well, espousing the principle of ‘वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्’ – or the whole world being one single family. The 21st century once again beckons India to its role of being the guiding light to the world. The ‘Idea of India’ demands the actualization of Swami Vivekananda’s dream of ‘जगद्गुरुभारत’ [‘India as the master of the world’]. Of a confident and sure India, engaging with the global community on its own terms and principles. [...] Let us devote ourselves to the cause of nation building with the mantra of ‘India First’! Let us together build a nation that once again redefines the story of mankind!”

The Hyper-nationalist discourse, particularly the *Hindutva* sub-discourse, thus embraces and re-affirms key logics of the hegemonic Post-Nehruvian discourse such as ‘non-violence’ and ‘international unity in diversity’ and the underlying fantasmatic narrative of an ‘Indian Exceptionalism’. The discourse, however, also seeks to distinguish itself from the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse by highlighting the allegedly Hinduist foundation of these logics and the importance of national strength for regaining India’s rightful place in the comity of nations and creating a ‘Hindu’ world order. Contrary to what the notions of ‘the whole world is one family’ and peaceful co-existence might suggest, this order does not stipulate equality for all but is based on a relatively strict hierarchy that ranks states on the basis of their material, cultural and spiritual capabilities and allocates them specific rights and responsibilities. While India, as an ancient and great civilizational-state, is naturally a key pillar in this order with pre-eminent rights and responsibilities, the other states are, like the non-Hindu minorities in India, expected to recognize the grandeur of India and *Hindutva* as the framework for the realization of pluralism, peace and justice. However, India cannot, as the discourse points out, only base its

demands and aspirations on some lofty ideals but must also attain “military supremacy” to enhance its role in global affairs because “[t]he world respects the powerful and a confident nation” (Vijay 2009: 9). “Peaceful co-existence of all countries in the world”, as the RSS (2003) states, “has been the basic cultural characteristic of Bharat. We are aware that only a strong and vibrant Bharat could sustain its unique position in the world. The ABKM⁷⁵ is of the opinion that Bharat's emergence as a nuclear power has enhanced its prestige. Yet, present global situation demands that Bharat become stronger and more powerful”.

Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse shows a greater determination to transform India into a “military superpower” (Singh [R.] 2008) than the Post-Nehruvian discourse, it remains ambiguous about the use of military power to implement its vision of an Indo-centric world order. While the ultrarealist sub-discourse is more inclined to use or threaten with the use of force, the *Hindutva* sub-discourse hardly seeks to assert a ‘Hindu’ world order with India in its centre by military force. Rather, the discourse, as we have seen, regards military power primarily as status symbols to upheave India into the great power club and believes that the moral and spiritual wisdom and superiority of the Hindu way of life will lead to its global diffusion (Singh [R.] 2013). This symbolism can be attributed to the way how the *Hindutva* sub-discourse draws on an articulation of India as a spiritual and non-materialistic entity that places it in opposition to the overly rational and materialistic ‘West’. India’s and Hinduism’s main contributions to the world order lie thus primarily in the spiritual realm that provides an alternative to the destructive tendencies of ‘Western’ modernity and its materialism. Under-scoring the ancient wisdom and superiority of the Indian civilization, *The Organiser* (1998) for instance noted in an editorial right after India’s nuclear tests in May 1998: “India has a culture for non-use of force, for peace. The West is yet to evolve this kind of culture.” And BJP president Nitin Gadaki (2010) noted:

“The global domination by the West – particularly by the United States of America – is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. [...] Western countries are waking up to the unsustainability of high-cost, wasteful and excessively consumerist lifestyles – not to speak of the unsustainable levels of military spending to maintain their global hegemony. [...] No major problem affecting the world – climate change, global economic slowdown, restructuring of the global financial architecture, or how to tackle the scourge of international terrorism – can now be discussed without seeking India’s participation and cooperation.”

Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse frames the ‘Indian Exceptionalism’ generally in a positive way and regards it as India’s main contribution to the world order, it also highlights the downside of this exceptionalism, namely that India is also exceptional in its disregard of

⁷⁵ The ABKM (*Akhil Bhartiya Karyakarini Mandal*) is the executive council of the RSS.

national security, strategy and defence. This fantasy is, in particular, articulated by the ultrarealist sub-discourse and maintains that (almost) all states in the international system pursue a foreign policy that is driven by the imperatives of *realpolitik* and the balance-of-power, while India adheres to ‘idealism’ and ‘moralism’ in its foreign policy despite having the most dangerous security environment of all states in the international system (Chellaney 1999a: 145ff.; Karnad 2014a: 200ff.). As Bharat Verma (2014), for example, noted: “China never overlooks the primary objective of building military muscle. Frankly, no other country does except India”. This articulation of India as a timid ‘lamb-state’ in a world full of ruthless ‘wolves’ is a sedimented myth that is taken to be true without questioning. Based on a crude understanding of the realist school in IR, it merely assumes that all states are only driven by their national interests (as defined by realism) and have no moral concerns, strive for military power or have elaborated national security strategies and are thus never taken by surprise. That there are ample examples for countries that, for instance, did not build a ‘military muscle’ despite having far greater economic capabilities than India (e.g. Germany and Japan after the end of the cold war) or were taken by surprise when attacked despite having national security strategies (e.g. the United States by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the 9/11 terrorist attack) does not concern the proponents of the discourse.

Likewise, they seem to ignore that the Indian ‘lamb state’ has not only the third largest armed forces in the world and belongs to a very small group of countries which possesses nuclear weapons, long-range ballistic missiles and aircraft carriers, but also did not shy away from projecting military power, for example, to disrupt Pakistan in 1971, to prevent extra-regional interference in the Sri Lanka conflict or in more recent years through its naval engagement in Indo-Pacific region. By representing India’s foreign policy as excessively moralistic and idealistic, the ultrarealist sub-discourse has thus contributed to the further sedimentation of the myth of ‘Indian Exceptionalism’. Ironically, the proponents of the ultrarealist discourse have, at the same time, even embraced the positive connotation of an ‘Indian Exceptionalism’ and are thus gripped by the myth that India is the symbol of non-violence, tolerance and peaceful co-existence. As Brahma Chellaney (2009a) notes for instance, “India – the world’s most-assimilative civilization – can now truly play the role of a bridge between the East and the West, including a link between the competing demands of the developed and developing worlds”.

7.4 Summary

The Hyper-nationalist discourse represents the international system as an inherently competitive and conflictive arena characterized by geopolitical, civilizational and ideological struggles – a state-of-affairs that can, if at all, be mitigated or overcome through *Hindutva*'s universal wisdom and message of compassion, spiritual peace and tolerance for other viewpoints and the rise of India on the global horizon. Though India fulfils all the necessary materialist and non-materialist prerequisites for becoming a great power and was once the world's most powerful, prosperous and advanced civilization before it fell prey to colonialism, it could not re-gain its past status after its independence and has largely been marginalized in the world order, because it pursued 'idealistic' and 'moralistic' foreign and security policies and neglected the crucial importance of building a powerful and uniform nation-state that deals from a position of strength and a clear strategic vision with internal and external enemies.

Reversing this trend and making India strong is the main objective of the Hyper-nationalist discourse. While the ultrarealist sub-discourse emphasizes military power, the Hindu nationalist sub-discourse, though conceding the importance of the material foundation of state power, ultimately attaches greater importance to the cultural dimension of state power and regards a strong national will and unity embodied by the concept of *Hindutva* as the fundamental source of power. However, it would be a mistake to treat the 'Indian realism' and Hindu nationalism, as several scholars did (see Cohen 2002, Sagar 2009, Bajpai 2014), as two distinctive 'world-views' or 'schools of thought' mainly on the basis that the latter is driven by culture and ideology, while the former is not. As we have seen, both sub-discourses turn to the glory and power of the Indian civilization in the Vedic age and regard the ancient Hindu thought as the main source for India's strategic culture and grand strategy in the contemporary international system. And both discourses are shaped by a conservative-nationalist ideological fantasy, which finds expression in a more pessimistic worldview, a desire to preserve or recollect past traditions and an aspiration to build a strong, uniform nation-state.

The chapter has argued that the Hyper-nationalist discourse has so far failed to construct a broad, inclusive and coherent hegemonic project and to gain discursive hegemony, even though it shaped the transformation of the dislocated Nehruvian foreign policy discourse (e.g. accentuation of India's great power ambitions, the shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment and the re-calibration of relations with key states such as the United States). By analysing the foreign policy of the BJP, which is the main political force that draws on and invokes the Hyper-nationalist discourse and promised substantial changes in India's foreign and security policies before coming to power in 1998, the chapter could show when and how

the discourse shortly surfaced in India's foreign policy, but could not sediment and replace the Nehruvian discourse.

The chapter could expose some of the inherent tensions, or even the schizophrenic nature of the Hyper-nationalist discourse which also impedes its ability to gain discursive hegemony: The Hyper-nationalist discourse criticizes Islam and Christianity for being monolithic, but aspires to create a monolithic Hinduism. It glorifies India's religious, linguist and ethnic diversity and unique virtues, but seeks to repress this very diversity and make India a traditional nation-state. It casts Pakistan and China as inherently aggressive and ruthless states, but wants to endow India with the same qualities. It cherishes India's democracy and despises the authoritarian, repressive rule of these two regimes, but wishes to crush internal dissent in India with an 'iron fist'. It criticizes China and the United States for their 'hegemonistic designs', but claims South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region as India's natural sphere of influence. It deplores other countries' 'unsustainable levels of military spending', but seeks to make India a military superpower. It upholds tolerance and non-violence as the hallmarks of the Indian/Hindu civilization, but also sees these traits as the main reason for its weakness. It seeks to induct rationality, realism and strategic thought into India's foreign and security policies, but invokes superstitious beliefs and the naive conviction that the solution to all of India's current problems can be found in the ancient Vedic texts and Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.

8. Conclusion

This study examined the world order concepts in India's foreign policy discourse. It shed light on the way how competing discourses endow world order with meaning and seek to fixate India's identity within this order. It was argued that foreign policy and world order have been crucial sites for the (re-)production of India's identity by drawing a political frontier between the 'inside' and 'outside' and placing India into a system of differences that constitutes 'what India is'. At the same time, the study showed how India's foreign policy discourses seek to defuse this difference by articulating a particular representation of political order as universal and defining India as an exceptional agent in the world that has demonstrated how diversity and difference can be managed peacefully and thus how a peaceful, just and stable world order could be achieved.

Drawing on the poststructuralist discourse theory developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe and their various followers, the study understood discourse as the ontological horizon in the sense of being coterminous with social reality. Discourses are relational and differential systems of signification that confer meaning to the social world. This meaning-generating is conferred primarily, but not only through language which becomes thus the point of departure for studying the construction of meaning. Discourses are contingent constructions in the sense that meanings and identities of social elements can always be constructed in different ways. The elements, which we encounter in the social world, have thus no pre-given and fixed essence or characteristics, but acquire their meanings and identities only through their relation and difference to other elements. Given the absence of any stable foundations and the exclusion of certain other options, discourses can fix meanings and identities only partially and are both dependent on and vulnerable to a 'discursive exterior' that threatens to dislocate the articulations of meaning, but is also the precondition for discursive articulations in the first place. This discursive, anti-essentialist ontology transcends the artificial dichotomies between the 'material' and 'ideational' or 'realism' and 'idealism' prevalent in the mainstream IR theories by understanding both realms as constituted by discourse in the sense that the relevance, potentials and constraints of ideas and material capabilities are both the product of relational and differential systems of signification that confer meaning to them in the first place. The rejection of the thought/reality dichotomy does not imply that a material world does not exist, but that we cannot conceptualize or access this material reality outside of our attempts to make sense of it.

Laclau and Mouffe's poststructuralist re-conceptualization of hegemony allows to understand hegemony as a discursive struggle for the fixation of particular meanings or a particular meaning system and to comprehend the emergence, constitution, institutionalization and transformation of social orders. The main objective of discourse analysis is to apprehend the processes of fixing meanings and to elaborate how certain fixations of meaning could prevail as the 'natural' or 'normal' understanding of the world and thus achieve a hegemonic status. Accordingly, this study examined what meaning competing discourses in India confer to world order and if a particular discourse has become a hegemonic articulation. For comprehending this struggle for discourse hegemony and identity formation, the study additionally incorporated insights of postcolonialism, above all the concepts of hybridity and mimicry, which can shed light on the way how the colonial encounter shaped the identities of both the colonizers and colonized and generated hybrid identities that transcend the confines of one socio-cultural space. This overarching ontological framework was put into practice by drawing on the logics-approach devised by Jason Glynos and David Howarth. Their distinction of social, political and fantasmatic logics allows us to grasp what world order means and implies in a discourse (social dimension), how these understandings of world order are constituted, contested and changed (political dimension) and why actors are gripped by a (hegemonic) discourse and thus take it to be 'real', 'desirable' or 'natural' (fantasmatic dimension).

The background of this study have been the discourses of 'global power shifts' and 'post-Western' IR. While the discourse of 'global power shifts' argues that we are currently witnessing a fundamental transformation in world politics through the rise of 'new' powers that challenge the structure of the international system and its underlying 'Western'-liberal order, the discourse of 'post-Western' IR attacks the discipline of international relations for its parochialism and ethnocentrism and demands to 're-write' the discipline by decentring the 'West' and moving to a 'post-Western' IR. This study has merged and re-conceptualized both phenomena as an expression of the dislocation of the 'Western' discursive hegemony in world politics. The 'Western' discursive hegemony implies that the 'West' as a particular historical subject (with particular interests, demands and experiences etc.) is upheaved to a position from where it can assert a particular representation of world politics as having universal significance and thus symbolizing 'reality'. In this sense, the 'West' hegemonically controls the signifier world order and could thus partially fill the void of a universality with a particularity. In the process of dislocation, the particularity of this order and its inherent contradictions and exclusions are exposed, because the hegemonic discourse is increasingly struggling to fix meanings and reproduce a dominant horizon or frame of intelligibility. What is subsumed

under the labels of ‘global power shifts’ and ‘post-Western IR’ has thus been understood in this study as a shift of representational power that challenges ‘Western’ (discursive) hegemony in the political and academic domain. This shift in representational power enables ‘new’ agents to assert particular representations of the world as universal and thus to fix a different meaning to the signifier world order.

Against this backdrop, this study investigated how foreign policy discourses in India, which is constituted by the discourse of ‘global power shifts’ as one of the key agents of this transformation and thus in the debate and struggle over world order, conceptualize world order and India’s role in it. In doing so, this study went beyond the theoretically very thin literature on ‘global power shifts’, which is dominated by realist IR theory or a combination of realism and liberalism, and offered a different reading of the formation and implications of what is understood as a fundamental transformation in contemporary global politics. In addition, the study provided the first comprehensive, theoretically guided analysis of Indian world order concepts. It intervened into the debate about Indian thinking on international relations (see Bajpai 2003, 2014; Sagar 2009; Ollapally/Rajagopalan 2012) by introducing a novel theoretical framework to analyse India’s foreign policy thinking and practices and overcome the ‘materialist’/‘ideational’ dichotomy that informs and constrains these studies. At the same time, it questioned the empirical results of the existing studies and their delineation of – what these studies frame as – India’s ‘strategic visions’, ‘worldviews’ or ‘schools of thought’.

All these studies argue that a ‘liberal’ or ‘pragmatic’ worldview has emerged as a powerful, or even the most influential, school of thought in India’s foreign policy debate. However, there is no political party in India that has fully embraced this ‘worldview’ and its main proponents are almost exclusively located outside the political establishment. This argument corresponds to a certain extent with a common assertion found in contemporary studies on Indian foreign policy which argue that India has shifted from Nehruvian ‘idealism’ or ‘moralism’ to a foreign policy driven by ‘pragmatism’ or ‘realism’ in the post-cold war era.

This study also took the end of the cold war as a point of departure, but provided a different reading of the apparent changes, ruptures and continuities in India’s contemporary foreign policy. In contrast to the widespread claim that India’s foreign policy has moved from Nehruvian ‘idealism’ to ‘realism’ or ‘pragmatism’, it re-conceptualized the so-called turning point in India’s foreign policy after the end of the cold war as a dislocation of the hegemonic Nehruvian discourse. This disruption symbolized an Indian ‘identity crisis’ and a (intensified) struggle for discursive hegemony. A dislocatory moment disrupts not only the existent discursive order, but also constituted a failed structural identity in the sense that actors can no

longer (entirely) identify with the subject positions provided by the discourse, throwing their identities into a crisis and prompting them to act in order to re-construct subject positions and thus the interpretative framework through which the transformation and the 'new context'⁷⁶ can be understood. Post-Nehruvianism, as this study argued, gradually emerged from this dislocatory moment in India's foreign policy discourse and successfully transformed the traditional Nehruvian discourse by reinterpreting and adapting it to the changed structural circumstances of the post-cold war world. In other words, the erstwhile hegemonic discourse was not replaced by another discourse (such as the Hyper-nationalist discourse), but changed and modified largely within its own discursive parameters.

Against this backdrop, what is framed by contemporary studies on India's post-cold war foreign policy as a shift from Nehruvian 'idealism' to 'realism' or 'pragmatism' is here understood as the successful modification and adaptation of a hegemonic discourse. Post-Nehruvianism draws on and re-affirms but also goes beyond and partially contests the Nehruvian foreign policy discourse. This duality also allowed us to understand and explicate the apparent ruptures, changes and continuities in India's contemporary foreign policy discourse. The Post-Nehruvian discourse indeed recurrently articulates a greater 'realism' or 'pragmatism' as cornerstones of India's 'new' outlook to the world in order to signify the transformation of the hegemonic project. This, however, does not mean that India has simply shifted from Nehruvian 'idealism' to 'realism' and 'pragmatism' or that India's contemporary foreign policy can be adequately understood or explained with realist IR theory. 'Realism' and 'pragmatism' are, by contrast, empty signifiers in the discourse, because they suggest a 'rational', 'balanced' and 'practical' foreign policy, but whose exact meaning remains rather nebulous whereby they can unite different social forces in the hegemonic project. What is considered 'realistic', 'pragmatic' or 'common sense' at a given point of time is always the product of a successful hegemonic articulation. In other words, in the course of the transformation of the hegemonic discourse, it was re-defined what it means to pursue a 'pragmatic' or 'realistic' foreign policy. But this has neither made India's foreign policy more 'pragmatic' or 'realistic', as the scathing critique of the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse on India's contemporary foreign policy has illustrated, nor implies that India has simply given up its 'moral' or 'ideological' concerns. In fact, by looking into major events in India's post-cold war foreign policy discourse such as the nuclear tests in 1998 or the U.S.-Indo nuclear agreement, we could carve out to what extent parameters of the Nehruvian discourse such as for-

⁷⁶ As was argued throughout this study, this 'new structural context' is no 'objective' condition, but endowed with meaning and thus (re-)produced through discourse(s). The significance of what cannot be (fully) symbolized by an existent discourse is exactly what is at stake in moments of dislocation.

foreign policy autonomy, non-violence or moral leadership claims still shape India's foreign policy discourse.

Post-Nehruvianism, however, has also moved away from the 'traditional' Nehruvian discourse in two respects: first, it incorporated the globalization discourse and recognizes the need for opening and liberalizing India's economy. Though the rather socialist, state-directed economic policy has largely been given up, the discourse still displays elements of the 'traditional' Nehruvian discourse such as self-reliance (*swadeshi*) and thus a certain ambivalence with regard to India's response to the so-called 'imperatives' of globalization and the exact direction of India's economic policy. Second, the Non-Aligned Movement has lost its central role in India's foreign policy and is today rather seen as one political grouping among many. Third and crucially, non-alignment, the original nodal point of the Nehruvian discourse, was re-interpreted and re-fashioned as multi-alignment in the Post-Nehruvian discourse. It means that India pursues a multidirectional foreign policy and seeks to establish good, stable and mutually beneficial relations with all key actors, while avoiding strategic entanglements and one-sided dependencies which could impede and thus threaten the deep-seated desire and demand for the autonomy and independence of India's decision making.

The Post-Nehruvian discourse is based on five interrelated social logics which signify the main pillars or elements of world order: state sovereignty, enlightened self-interest, non-violence, non-discrimination and international unity in diversity. The political logics capture the formation and institutionalization of the hegemonic discourse and the meanings and identities it has articulated. The Post-Nehruvian discourse invokes a set of 'others' that serve as 'shared negativities' for constructing a chain of equivalence: the temporal 'others' embodied by 'Western' colonialism and the cold war and the spatial-political 'others' represented by Pakistan and China. The fantasmatic logics, which capture the ideological and mythical dimension of the Post-Nehruvian discourse, are the narratives of 'Indian Greatness' and 'Indian Exceptionalism'. These two narratives constitute a collective foundational imaginary that frame India not only as the symbol of tolerance, non-violence, pluralism and moral righteousness, but also as an enduring, pre-colonial unity and agent in the world. As social imaginaries, they have managed to 'cover over' the contradictions and ruptures of the discourse and incorporate a wide range of social interests and demands, thereby becoming the horizon that renders the social world intelligible.

The hegemonic (Post-)Nehruvian discourse is contested by the Hyper-nationalist discourse. As the main counter-hegemonic discourse in India, the Hyper-nationalist discourse emerged and developed parallel to the mainstream Nehruvian discourse and gained in importance in

the moment of the dislocation of the Nehruvian discourse. Though the Hyper-nationalist discourse did not manage to gain discursive hegemony in this dislocatory moment, it contributed to the transformation of the Nehruvian discourse and left its mark on the transformed hegemonic discourse. It consists of two overlapping sub-discourses, the *Hindutva* and ultrarealist discourses, which converge in the social logic of national strength (*shakti*). The Hyper-nationalist discourse represents India's foreign policy as overly idealistic and moralistic, deploring a lack of strategic thought, a nonchalant dealing with the country's national security and a disregard of power. The discourse recalls the glory and power of the Indian civilization in the Vedic age and seeks to recover the "Hindu machtpolitik" (Karnad 2002a) that is laid down in the ancient Hindu texts. For the Hyper-nationalist discourse, it is essential that India becomes a powerful and uniform nation-state that deals from a position of strength with internal and external enemies. While the ultrarealist discourse, however, places greater emphasis on military power, the Hindu nationalist discourse, though conceding the importance of the material foundation of state power, ultimately attaches greater importance to the cultural dimension of state power, i.e. a strong national will, awareness and unity realized by the assertion of a uniform culture (*Hindutva*).

The study argued that the Hyper-nationalist discourse has so far not been able to erect an inclusive alternative hegemonic project that could contest the mainstream foreign policy discourse in India. This can be attributed, inter alia, to the lack of an alternative nodal point around which a hegemonic discourse could be organized. Instead of directly challenging non-alignment, the nodal point of the Nehruvian discourse, the Hyper-nationalist discourse has merely sought to fix a different meaning to non-alignment by demanding a more balanced relationship with the great powers combined with the accumulation of national strength to bolster India's strategic autonomy. In this sense, the Hyper-nationalist contributed to the transformation of the dislocated Nehruvian discourse and the shift from traditional non-alignment to multi-alignment. The Hyper-nationalist discourse also articulates largely the same temporal and spatial-political 'others' as the (Post-)Nehruvian discourse, but the colonial 'other' include here also the Muslim rulers over the Indian Subcontinent and the relationship with the two spatial-political 'others' (Pakistan and China) is characterized by a higher degree of antagonism. Similarly, a variation of the mythical narratives of 'Indian Greatness' and 'Indian Exceptionalism' underpins the Hyper-nationalist discourse. Both the Post-Nehruvian and the Hyper-nationalist discourse are gripped by the myth that India is an ancient and enduring cultural and political agent and the epitome of tolerance, pluralism and non-violence in the world. While this nostalgia for India's pre-colonial (Hindu) past is more im-

plicit in the Post-Nehruvian discourse and the discourse acknowledges, for example, the contributions of Islam and the Muslim rulers or Buddhism to the Indian civilization and its main traits, the Hyper-nationalist discourse, in particular the Hindu nationalist sub-discourse, asserts that India is fundamentally a Hindu civilization. Accordingly, Hindu-ness is the cultural essence of India and the reason for India's tolerant, pluralist and non-violent ethos. Not the least because this alleged cultural essence and distinctiveness is also India's biggest weakness, the Hyper-nationalist discourse has not been able to gain discursive hegemony.

Limitations and Future Research

An interesting point of departure for future research could be to study the resilience of the Post-Nehruvian discourse under the Modi government and thus to examine whether the discourse was further institutionalized, modified or challenged under this government. Apart from analysing India's foreign policy discourse beyond this study's period of investigation, future research could look in greater detail into the formation and evolution of India's competing foreign policy discourses in the pre- and post-independence periods and thus address one of the shortcomings of this study: While this study claimed that the Nehruvian discourse has been the hegemonic foreign policy discourse in India between independence and the end of the cold war, it has not carried out a proper discourse analysis to prove this argument and shed light on how this discourse was formed and institutionalized in detail. Such an analysis would have gone beyond the scope of this study, but could generate important insights into the formation and evolution of the discourse and its constitution of India's identity in the world. The claim that Nehruvianism constituted the hegemonic discourse in India was in this study based on the dominant narrative of Indian foreign policy that we find in the literature. This narrative was taken as a point of departure in the present study and re-framed through the theoretical prism of poststructuralist discourse theory. In doing so, this study could provide some tentative insights into the emergence, constitution and evolution of the Nehruvian discourse, but no comprehensive discussion of the discourse. Likewise, the emergence, constitution and evolution of the counter-hegemonic Hyper-nationalist discourse, whose origins can be traced back to the colonial period, could be investigated in greater detail.

Moreover, it would be of interest to investigate, in greater detail, the interplay of the different social, political and fantasmatic logics identified in this study in concrete policy processes or areas to illuminate, for instance, how these logics have shaped the formulation and implementation of these policies or influenced India's positioning in international negotiations. Though this study has looked into some policy areas and explicated India's behaviour through the

grammar of the respective logic, it has not carried out an extensive ‘case study’ and could thus only briefly illustrate the workings of these logics and the way how they have informed India’s foreign policy practices.

Another shortcoming of this study concerns the scope of discourses and textual material that was analysed. This study only examined the hegemonic and the main counter-hegemonic discourse in India. It neglected other counter-hegemonic discourses such as the communist discourse. This was justified with the relative marginalization of these discourses in the field of discursivity and thus in the struggle for discursive hegemony. An analysis of these discourses, however, would complement an account of India’s world order concepts and provide a different reading of the world order and India’s role in it. Likewise, broadening the analysis beyond the ‘political’ discourse to public, media and academic discourses would be of value. Though this study has at least incorporated texts by government advisers, it has not studied how international relations is framed in India’s academic discourse. Similarly, future research could examine how world order is represented and thus made meaningful in religious and philosophical texts in India.

Despite these shortcomings, this study has provided a novel theoretical framework to understand and explain how a country that is located outside the ‘Western’ core conceptualizes world order by drawing on Indian textual sources and investigating how these texts make the world meaningful. By going beyond the standard theoretical narratives of Indian foreign policy, which draw predominantly on mainstream IR theories, this study sought to develop a theoretical framework that allows us to illuminate the apparent changes, continuities, ruptures, contradictions and unique features of India’s foreign policy in a more comprehensive way. In doing so, this study has tried to address what India’s National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon (2013b) described as the main challenge and shortcoming of the discipline of international relations in India and beyond:

“The dominant discourse in IR studies, journalism and the world as a whole today is a Western metropolitan one. [...] India’s non-alignment, chosen levels of engagement, the balance between multilateralism and bilateralism, and the demands we place upon our negotiators are all unique. Which brings me to the last issue that I would like to raise. If India’s practice and style of foreign policy is so recognisably and so uniquely Indian why is there not an Indian theory to explain it?”

This study hopes to have offered a theoretical framework which can help to explain these foreign policy practices and critically reflect upon assertions that these practices are inherently unique or exceptional by studying the underpinning political and fantasmatic logics that have made these practices possible in the first place.

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German Summary / Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht die Weltordnungsmodelle im außenpolitischen Diskurs Indiens und wie diese die indische Außenpolitik seit Ende des Kalten Krieges geprägt haben. Ausgangspunkt der Arbeit ist ein starkes – im Diskurs der internationalen Beziehungen (IB) artikuliertes – Bewusstsein für globale Machtverschiebungen im internationalen System. War der IB-Diskurs nach Ende des Kalten Krieges noch geprägt von der weitverbreiteten Überzeugung, dass der ideologische und geopolitische Konkurrenzkampf zwischen den Großmächten vorbei sei und der Triumph der liberalen Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft allmählich zur Herausbildung eines liberalen Global Governance Systems und Frieden, Stabilität und Kooperation führen würde⁷⁷, wird heute von einer tiefen Krise oder gar dem Ende der westlich-liberalen Weltordnung gesprochen (vgl. Jacques 2009, Sørensen 2011, Morgan 2013, Acharya 2014b, Stuenkel 2016). Die wirtschaftlichen, politischen und militärischen Schwerpunktverschiebungen von West nach Ost werden oftmals als eine der Hauptursachen dieser Krise ausgemacht. Während demnach sogenannte aufstrebende Mächte wie China, Indien und Russland mit neuem Selbstbewusstsein und stetig wachsenden Machtressourcen auf der Weltbühne auftreten, haben die USA und ihre westlichen Partner nach den militärischen Interventionen in Afghanistan und Irak sowie der jüngsten Wirtschafts- und Finanzkrise ihre globale Führungsrolle zunehmend verloren. Die Machtverschiebungen im internationalen System werden daher als Herausforderung oder gar Bedrohung für die gegenwärtig westlich-dominierte Weltordnung und ihre Werte wie Rechtsstaatlichkeit, Menschenrechte oder Demokratie angesehen (vgl. Cox 2007, Kupchan 2012, Layne 2012).

Gleichzeitig gibt es heute ein gestiegenes Bewusstsein für die möglichen Auswirkungen dieser Machtverschiebungen auf die Ebene der Wissens- und Theorieproduktion in dem Sinne, dass die Entwicklung und Natur der existierenden Theorien und Konzepte der Disziplin der internationalen Beziehungen auch ein Ergebnis der existierenden Machtverteilung im internationalen System sind, d.h. die gegenwärtigen IB-Theorien und Konzepte spiegeln überwiegend ‚westliche‘ Erfahrungen, Bedingungen, Werte und Interessen wider. Dies hat der Disziplin den Vorwurf eines ‚westlichen‘ Zentrismus eingebracht und Forderungen nach einer stärkeren Berücksichtigung nicht-‚westlicher‘ Ideen, Erfahrungen und Theorien laut werden lassen (vgl. Tickner 2003, Nayak/Selbin 2010, Lizée 2011, Shilliam 2011, Hobson 2012, Tickner/Blaney 2012).

⁷⁷ Die wohl prominenteste Artikulation dieser Überzeugung stammt von Francis Fukuyama (1992), der die These des ‚Endes der Geschichte‘ prägte.

Vor diesem Hintergrund wird in dieser Arbeit das Phänomen, welches allgemein hin unter dem Begriff ‚globale Machtverschiebungen‘ subsumiert wird, aus der theoretischen Perspektive der poststrukturalistischen Diskurstheorie und des Postkolonialismus beleuchtet und neu konzeptualisiert als eine Verschiebung von Repräsentationsmacht, welche die ‚westliche‘ (diskursive) Hegemonie im politischen und wissenschaftlichen Diskurs der internationalen Beziehungen untergräbt und herausfordert. Wenn wir globale Machtverschiebungen und Weltordnung als diskursive Phänomene verstehen, erkennen wir an, dass es Diskurse sind, welche die Eigenschaften oder Effekte dieser Phänomene überhaupt erst materialisieren, indem sie ihnen eine bestimmte Bedeutung verleihen und einen bestimmten Bedeutungshorizont schaffen. Demzufolge symbolisieren die globalen Machtverschiebungen einen hegemonialen Kampf um die Fixierung von Bedeutungen, indem sie existierende Identitäten ins Wanken bringen (oder dislozieren), Widersprüche oder Spannungen in den vorherrschenden Weltordnungsentwürfen aufdecken und ‚neuen‘ Akteuren die Möglichkeit geben, partikuläre Repräsentationen der Welt als universell darzustellen.

Dies ruft die Frage hervor welche Perspektive auf die Weltpolitik jene Staaten haben, welche als Träger der globalen Machtverschiebungen angesehen werden. Die vorliegende Arbeit hat daher, die dominanten Weltordnungsmodelle im außenpolitischen Diskurs Indiens rekonstruiert und untersucht, wie diese interpretativen Bezugssysteme die indische Außenpolitik nach Ende des Kalten Krieges gestaltet haben: Wie konzipiert der außenpolitische Diskurs Weltordnung und Indiens Rolle in dieser Ordnung? Welche unterschiedlichen Weltordnungskonzepte lassen sich im Diskurs identifizieren und was ist ihr politischer und ideologischer Hintergrund? Hat ein bestimmtes Weltordnungsmodell einen hegemonialen Status erreicht im Diskurs und gegebenenfalls wie konnte diese diskursive Dominanz erreicht werden?

Indien wird heute weithin als aufstrebende Macht und wichtiger Akteur in Asien und dem globalen System angesehen (vgl. Cohen 2001, Mohan 2004, Pant 2008, Ogden 2014). Es herrscht jedoch wenig Einigkeit darüber, welche Gestaltungs- und Ordnungsvorstellungen Indien in der internationalen Politik hat. So wird Indien wegen seiner demokratischen Regierungsform oft als natürlicher Partner der USA und des Westens im Allgemeinen gesehen (vgl. Burns 2007, Zakaria 2008, Fontaine/Kilman 2013); andererseits wird aber auch Indiens Streben nach außenpolitischer Autonomie betont (vgl. Mattoo 2005, Sikri 2009, Narang/Staniland 2012, Khilnani et al. 2012) und auf Indiens Rolle in sogenannten anti-hegemonialen Koalitionen wie etwa der Blockfreienbewegung oder der BRICS-Gruppe (Brasilien-Russland-Indien-China-Südafrika) verwiesen (vgl. Koshy 2006, Narlikar 2006, Dubey 2013), welche die vorherrschende Ungleichheit, Ungerechtigkeit und den ‚westlichen‘ Imperialismus in der Welt-

politik anprangern und Indien oftmals in Konflikt mit dem USA und der Europäischen Union in internationalen Organisationen bringen. Den politischen EntscheidungsträgerInnen Indiens wird überdies nachgesagt, in moralpolitischen Kategorien zu denken und sich nicht mit den Realitäten der internationalen Politik zu arrangieren (vgl. Pant 2008), aber gleichzeitig zählt Indien zu den größten Militärmächten der Welt mit einer stetig wachsenden konventionellen und nuklearen Streitmacht. In diesem Zusammenhang werden der indischen Außenpolitik oftmals auch eine allgemeine Konzeptlosigkeit und das Fehlen einer *Grand Strategy* unterstellt (vgl. Mazumdar 2011, Metha 2009, Pant 2009).

Vorliegende Untersuchungen (vgl. Bajpai 2003, 2014, Sagar 2009, Ollapally/Rajagopalan 2012), die sich mit dem indischen Denken zu den internationalen Beziehungen beschäftigen, identifizieren zahlreiche, unterschiedliche Weltbilder, Weltordnungskonzeptionen, strategische Visionen oder Denkschulen, angefangen bei ‚Gandhianismus‘ und ‚Moralismus‘ über ‚Nehruvianismus‘ und ‚Neoliberalismus‘ zu Hindutva und Hyperrealismus. Obgleich diese Studien wichtige Erkenntnisse liefern, tendieren sie doch dazu, Indiens außenpolitisches Denken auf einer sehr allgemeinen Ebene zu untersuchen, ohne dabei einen elaborierten theoretischen und analytischen Rahmen für die vorgebrachten Argumente zu liefern. Kanti Bajpai, dessen Untersuchungen zu Indiens strategischer Kultur oft zitiert werden, erklärt beispielsweise nicht, wie er zu der Schlussfolgerung gekommen ist, dass es drei dominante strategische Denkschulen in Indien gibt – ‚Nehruvianismus‘, ‚Neoliberalismus‘ und ‚Hyperrealismus‘ – welche die indische Außenpolitik anleiten. Folglich wissen wir weder was eigentlich überhaupt eine dominante Denkschule ausmacht noch wie oder warum diese Dominanz erreicht werden konnte. Wie auch Rahul Sagar, greift Bajpai zudem vor allem auf klassische Texte von Nehru, Gandhi und der hindunationalistischen Denker Savarkar und Golwalkar für seine Argumentation zurück, ohne jedoch nachzuweisen, dass dieses klassische Denken die politischen EntscheidungsträgerInnen von heute überhaupt beeinflusst (etwa durch eine Analyse indischer Parlamentsdebatten oder durch Interviews mit EntscheidungsträgerInnen). Daher erscheinen die Denkschulen, die von Bajpai und Sagar skizziert werden, eher statisch und berücksichtigen nicht die Möglichkeit evolutionären Wandels.

Problematisch ist auch die mitunter unbedachte Verschmelzung von Ideen und politischer Praxis: Bajpais Versuch, einen kausalen Zusammenhang zwischen Kultur und politischer Praxis herzustellen, indem er einfach nach Überschneidungen zwischen ideellen, in öffentlichen Debatten geäußerten Präferenzen und konkreten außenpolitischen Entscheidungen sucht, bleibt tautologisch, zumal hier Kultur (verstanden als ein Ensemble von Ideen) als Quelle sowie Ausdruck von politischen Strukturen und Entscheidungen verstanden wird. Sagar hin-

gegen argumentiert, dass diese unterschiedlichen Visionen einfach “represent ideas about politics that wax and wane with circumstances” (Sagar 2009: 802), d.h. sie spiegeln schlicht die Rahmenbedingungen und Veränderungen im politischen, wirtschaftlichen und strategischen Umfeld wider. Diese eindimensionale Sichtweise ignoriert, dass die ‚materielle‘ und ‚ideelle‘ Dimension eng miteinander verflochten sind und – wie in dieser Arbeit gezeigt wurde – nur über Diskurse überhaupt erst bestimmte Bedeutungen erlangen.

Überdies tendieren alle Studien zu Indiens außenpolitischem Denken dazu, einen größeren Schwerpunkt auf Indiens strategische Community zu legen, d.h. WissenschaftlerInnen, JournalistInnen und in Ruhestand getretene RegierungsmitarbeiterInnen oder Militärangehörige, als auf Indiens tatsächliche EntscheidungsträgerInnen. Dies suggeriert, dass die AutorInnen annehmen, dass die strategische Community einen erheblichen Einfluss auf außenpolitische Entscheidungsprozesse hat. Gleichwohl hat die Forschung zu dieser Thematik gezeigt, dass dieser Einfluss tatsächlich sehr begrenzt ist – eine Einschätzung, die auch viele EntscheidungsträgerInnen teilen (vgl. Markey 2009, Mohan 2009, Sikri 2009, Chatterjee-Miller 2014, Mattoo/Medcalf 2015). Indem sie die strategische Community gegenüber den EntscheidungsträgerInnen privilegieren, entwerfen diese Studien ein eher verzerrtes Bild des außenpolitischen Denkens in Indien. Zum Beispiel argumentieren Bajpai, Sagar und Ollapally/Rajagopalan alle, dass ein ‚liberales‘ Weltbild, welches durch eine ‚pragmatische‘ Sichtweise auf die internationalen Beziehungen gekennzeichnet sei, zu einer mächtigen, wenn gar nicht einflussreichsten, Denkschule in Indiens außenpolitischer Debatte avanciert sei. Interessanterweise gibt es jedoch keine politische Partei in Indien, die dieses Weltbild vollständig unterstützt und seine wichtigsten VertreterInnen sind fast ausnahmslos außerhalb des politischen Establishments angesiedelt. Dies entspricht in gewisser Weise einer häufig in der Literatur zur gegenwärtigen indischen Außenpolitik geäußerten Behauptung, dass Indien vom ‚nehruvianischen Idealismus‘ zu einer Außenpolitik im Zeichen des ‚Realismus‘ oder ‚Pragmatismus‘ gewechselt sei (vgl. Mohan 2004, Kapur 2006, Ganguly/Pardesi 2009, Ganguly 2010, Malone 2012). Gleichwohl liefern diese Studien weder eine theoretisch angeleitete Erörterung dieser sehr breiten und unspezifischen Termini noch untersuchen sie ihre konkrete Bedeutung im indischen Kontext.

Die vorliegende Arbeit hat versucht, diese Unzulänglichkeiten zu überwinden und eine differenzierte Darstellung zu Indiens außenpolitischem Denken und außenpolitischer Praxis seit Ende des Kalten Krieges zu liefern. Hierfür wurde ein diskursanalytischer Ansatz gewählt, welcher untersucht wie Strukturen, Akteure, Prozesse und Themenfelder der globalen Politik mit Bedeutung versehen werden und so überhaupt erst produziert werden: Erstens, anstatt die

universelle Anwendbarkeit und Validität ‚westlicher‘ Konzepte und Theorien a priori voraussetzen, untersucht diese Studie wie indische EntscheidungsträgerInnen die Welt und zentrale IB-Konzepte wie etwa Macht, Weltordnung oder Frieden über Diskurse ordnen und Sinn verleihen. Im Unterschied zu vielen Untersuchungen hat diese Studie somit nicht einfach Indiens Positionierung zu globalen Themen und Fragen hinsichtlich der Befolgung ‚westlicher‘ Normen beleuchtet, sondern Indiens Rolle als potenzielle Gestaltungsmacht untersucht, welche möglicherweise andere Normen und Ideen formuliert und propagiert. Zweitens hat die vorliegende Studie nicht einfach deskriptiv geschildert, wie Indiens EntscheidungsträgerInnen die Welt ordnen, sondern auch erklärt wie und warum bestimmte Weltordnungsmodelle sich herausbilden und dominant werden konnten.

Drittens, das Verstehen von Außenpolitik, Weltordnung und globalen Machtverschiebungen als diskursive Phänomene hat es uns erlaubt, die künstliche Abgrenzung zwischen der ‚materiellen‘ und ‚ideellen‘ Dimension der internationalen Beziehungen, wie sie in realistischen, liberalen und konstruktivistischen Untersuchungen zu finden ist, zu überwinden. Anstatt etwa zwischen ideellen Präferenzen und außenpolitischen Praktiken zu unterscheiden, hat diese Studie sowohl das ‚materielle‘ als auch das ‚ideelle‘ als diskursiv konstruiert verstanden, d.h. weder materielle Erscheinungen (z.B. militärische Macht) noch ideelle Erscheinungen (z.B. Ideen, Normen und Identitäten) können außerhalb diskursiver Bedeutungssysteme verstanden werden. Dies ermöglicht es uns nicht nur das Verhältnis zwischen dem Diskurs der globalen Machtverschiebungen und der Debatte um den ‚westlichen‘ Zentrismus der IB-Disziplin nachzuvollziehen, sondern auch wie Weltordnungen überhaupt erst entstehen und welche Implikationen der machtpolitische Aufstieg ‚neuer‘ Mächte für die Weltordnung im 21. Jahrhundert hat.

Viertens hat die vorliegende Arbeit eine neuartige Lesart indischer Außenpolitik vorgelegt, welche die weitverbreitete Behauptung, dass die indische Außenpolitik sich vom nehruvianischen ‚Idealismus‘ in Richtung ‚Realismus‘ oder ‚Pragmatismus‘ verschoben hätte, kritisch hinterfragt und aufzeigt, dass die Veränderungen und Kontinuitäten in der indischen Außenpolitik seit Ende des Kalten Krieges besser vor dem Hintergrund eines intensivierten Kampfes um diskursive Hegemonie verstanden werden können. Dieser diskursive Kampf ist verknüpft mit der Zerrüttung (oder Dislokation) des zuvor hegemonialen Nehruvianischen Diskurses. Die Dislokation konstituierte eine indische Identitätskrise und die graduelle Transformation des hegemonialen Diskurses zum Post-Nehruvianischen Diskurs. In anderen Worten, die Veränderungen in Indiens Außenpolitik in der jüngeren Vergangenheit haben weitestgehend im Rahmen des hegemonialen Nehruvianischen Diskurses stattgefunden, welcher In-

diens Außenpolitik nach der Unabhängigkeit maßgeblich prägte und erfolgreich neu interpretiert und an den ‚neuen strukturellen Kontext‘⁷⁸ adaptiert wurde und damit auch gegen den hyper-nationalistischen Diskurs – dem einflussreichsten gegenhegemonialen Diskurs in Indien – verteidigt wurde.

Diskurs, Hegemonie und Postkolonialismus

Für die Untersuchung der indischen Weltordnungskonzepte hat die vorliegende Arbeit ‚Weltordnung‘, ‚Außenpolitik‘ und damit verknüpfte Konzepte wie ‚staatliche Souveränität‘ oder ‚Sicherheit‘ nicht als gegebene Entitäten, sondern als diskursive Formationen behandelt. Den theoretischen Rahmen dieser Arbeit bilden die poststrukturalistische Diskurstheorie, auch bekannt als *Essex School of Discourse Theory*, und der Postkolonialismus. Demzufolge ist die vorliegende Arbeit einer diskursiven, anti-essentialistischen Ontologie verschrieben und versteht die soziale Realität als diskursiv konstruiert, d.h. die Objekte und Subjekte in der sozialen Welt haben keine vorgegebenen, festen Bedeutungen oder Identitäten. Die von Ernesto Laclau und Chantal Mouffe entwickelte poststrukturalistische Diskurstheorie versteht Diskurse als die “structured totality of articulatory practices”, welche die Bedeutungen und Identitäten von Subjekten und Objekten konstituiert. Eine Artikulation “establishes a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 105). Diskurse sind mithin relationale und differenziale Bedeutungssysteme, in denen kontingente Elemente (z.B. Interessen und Forderungen) miteinander verknüpft und modifiziert werden, so dass sie eine (neue) Bedeutung erhalten. Diese Artikulationen finden im Feld der Diskursivität statt, was den theoretischen Horizont bildet, in dem Objekte konstituiert werden können. In diesem Sinne sind alle Objekte diskursive Objekte, da ihre Bedeutung und Identität erst im relationalen und differenzialen Signifikanzsystem konstituiert wird, indem ein Objekt seine Bedeutung dadurch erhält, dass es in eine negative Beziehung zu einem anderen Objekt gestellt wird (Howarth/Stavrakakis 2000: 3).

Diese diskursive, anti-essentialistische Ontologie impliziert nicht, dass die soziale Realität einfach auf Sprache reduziert werden könnte oder materielle Faktoren keine Relevanz hätten. Es bedeutet vielmehr, dass wir keinen direkten, ungefilterten Zugang zu dieser Realität haben, sondern nur über Diskurse, die dieser Welt für uns Bedeutung verleihen, d.h. die Realität ist kein einfach gegebener Referenzpunkt gegen den wir beispielsweise unsere Theorien oder

⁷⁸ Wie in der Studie deutlich wurde, ist dieser ‚neue strukturelle Kontext‘ keine ‚objektive‘ Bedingung, sondern mit Bedeutung versehen und damit (re)produziert durch Diskurse.

Konzepte testen könnten. In diesem Sinne erlangen auch materielle Ressourcen (z.B. militärische Macht) ihre Bedeutung und Relevanz erst durch Diskurse (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 105ff.). Der Kern der Diskurstheorie ist Laclau und Mouffes poststrukturalistische Neuformulierung des Konzepts der Hegemonie. Im Unterschied zu den materialistischen und deterministischen Hegemonie-Modellen realistischer, liberaler oder marxistischer Ansätze⁷⁹, wird Hegemonie hier als diskursiver Kampf um die Fixierung von bestimmten Bedeutungen oder Bedeutungssystemen verstanden. Konkurrierende Diskurse stehen für unterschiedliche Repräsentationen und Verständnisse sozialer Wirklichkeit. Das Hauptziel einer Diskursanalyse ist es, den Prozess der Bedeutungsfixierung nachzuvollziehen und herauszufinden, wie sich bestimmte Bedeutungsfixierungen oder -systeme als ‚natürliche‘ oder ‚normale‘ Verständnisse der Welt durchsetzen und somit einen hegemonialen Status erreichen konnten (Jørgensen/Phillips 2002: 37). Wenn eine bestimmte Partikularität (von Subjekten, Interessen oder Forderungen) als universell dargestellt wird in dem Sinne, dass sich die gleiche ‚Realität‘ in den Praktiken aller relevanten Akteure widerspiegelt, dann können wir von einer hegemonialen Konstellation sprechen (Laclau/Mouffe 1985: 127ff.; Nabers 2015: 142-143). Hegemonie ist hier somit nicht gleichzusetzen mit der Dominanz eines bestimmten Staates oder Gruppe von Staaten, sondern der Hegemonie eines Diskurses, welcher eine partikuläre Repräsentation sozialer Wirklichkeit und partikuläre Subjekte (durch die Generierung von hierarchischen Subjektpositionen) auf einen hegemonialen und somit scheinbar universellen Status hievt.

Der Postkolonialismus (vgl. Gandhi 1998, Chakrabarty 2000, Shilliam 2011, Seth 2013a) kann zusätzliche Einsichten in diese hegemoniale Operation liefern und Aufschluss darüber geben, wie sich die ‚westliche‘ diskursive Hegemonie in der Welt herausbilden konnte. Die postkoloniale Theorie untersucht vor dem Hintergrund des Kolonialismus und Imperialismus den Zusammenhang zwischen geokulturellen Räumen, Wissenssystemen und der Wissensproduktion, und kritisiert den Eurozentrismus in Sozial- und Geisteswissenschaften, vor allem die parochiale Annahme, dass ‚westliches‘ Wissen überlegen, fortschrittlich und universell anwendbar sei. Durch das Schaffen von Bewusstsein für die Ko-Konstituierung des ‚Selbst‘ (Kolonisator) und dem ‚Anderen‘ (Kolonialisierte) und wie das ‚Selbst‘ einzig dadurch privilegiert wird, indem es seine Abhängigkeit vom unterdrückten ‚Anderen‘ leugnet, kann der Postkolonialismus Aufschluss darüber geben, wie das koloniale Aufeinandertreffen die Identitäten der Kolonisatoren und Kolonialisierte geprägt hat. Dies wird durch die postkolonialen Konzepte der Hybridität und des Mimicry (Bhabha 1994) erfasst, welche uns helfen können zu verstehen, wie postkoloniale Gesellschaften wie etwa Indien die Diskurse der frü-

⁷⁹ Vgl. Gilpin 1981, Mastanduno 1999, Wallerstein 2004, Lentner 2010, Ikenberry 2011, Prys/Robel 2011.

heren Unterdrücker sowohl übernommen und reproduziert haben, aber auch falsch angewendet, umgedeutet und pervertiert haben, wodurch sie die (post-)koloniale Herrschaft angefochten und untergraben und neue – hybride – Identitäten geschaffen haben, welche die Grenzen eines bestimmten sozio-kulturellen Raumes transzendieren.

Quellen und Zeitrahmen der Untersuchung

Der Datensatz der Untersuchung besteht aus Regierungs- und Parteidokumenten, Reden, Statements und anderweitigen Publikationen indischer PolitikerInnen, DiplomatenInnen, Militärs und GeheimdienstmitarbeiterInnen sowie Parlamentsdebatten. Zudem wurden Reden und Veröffentlichungen von RegierungsberaterInnen in die Diskursanalyse aufgenommen. Im Ganzen hat die Studie ca. 11.000 Dokumente berücksichtigt.

Der Untersuchungszeitraum der Arbeit beginnt mit dem Ende des Kalten Krieges und endet im Frühjahr 2014, wenn die Kongress-geführte Koalitionsregierung von der hindu-nationalistischen *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) abgelöst wurde. Dieser Zeitraum bietet sich an, da in dieser Studie Indien als einer der Träger der globalen Machtverschiebungen im internationalen System und damit eine der Gestaltungsmächte in der Weltordnung untersucht werden soll. Der Diskurs der globalen Machtverschiebungen, welcher Indien als aufstrebende Macht und damit privilegierten Akteur im Ausfechten einer neuen Weltordnung konstituiert, ist in diesem Zeitraum entstanden. Zudem wird das Ende des Kalten Krieges in der Literatur als eine Zäsur in der indischen Außenpolitik und einer Hinwendung zum außenpolitischen ‚Realismus‘ oder ‚Pragmatismus‘ eingestuft. Eines der Ziele dieser Arbeit war es, diese Lesart indischer Außenpolitik kritisch zu hinterfragen und eine nuancierte Darstellung der indischen Außenpolitik seit Ende des Kalten Krieges vorzulegen.

Argumentationsgang der Arbeit und Überblick über die Kapitel

Im Anschluss an die Einleitung werden im 2. Kapitel der Arbeit *Discourse, Hegemony and Postcoloniality* die ontologischen Annahmen der Arbeit dargestellt. Das Kapitel diskutiert die zentralen Einsichten und Konzepte der poststrukturalistischen Diskurstheorie. Im Besonderen werden die unterschiedlichen Stufen und Dimensionen des Kampfes um diskursive Hegemonie erläutert und wie und warum ein bestimmter Diskurs einen hegemonialen Status erreichen und wieder verlieren kann. Zudem wird aufgezeigt, wie die postkoloniale Theorie und ihre Konzepte der Hybridität und des Mimicry sich komplementär in die poststrukturalistische Diskurstheorie einfügen lassen und wichtige Erkenntnisse über die Formation, Herausforderung und Transformation hegemonialer Diskurse liefern können.

Das 3. Kapitel der Arbeit *Global Power Shifts and World Order: The Contestation of 'Western' Discursive Hegemony* wendet diesen theoretischen Rahmen auf die Phänomene ‚globalen Machtverschiebungen‘ und ‚Weltordnung‘ an. Es zeigt, dass Weltordnungen als das Ergebnis eines erfolgreichen Kampfes um diskursive Hegemonie verstanden werden können, welche es vermocht hat, eine partikulare Repräsentation der Wirklichkeit der Weltpolitik und partikulare Subjekte als privilegierte Akteure in der Weltpolitik als universal darzustellen, wodurch diese Partikularität sowie die Kontingenz aller sozialen Beziehungen verschleiert werden. Das Kapitel argumentiert, dass der ‚Westen‘ die diskursive Hegemonie im vorherrschenden Diskurs der internationalen Beziehungen erlangt hat in dem Sinne, dass der ‚Westen‘ als partikulares, historisches Subjekt mit partikularen Erfahrungen, Werten, Interessen usw. es geschafft hat, einer partikularen Repräsentation der Weltpolitik universelle Signifikanz zu verleihen und als die ‚Realität‘ darzustellen. Vor diesem Hintergrund wird in dem Kapitel das Phänomen der globalen Machtverschiebungen neu konzeptualisiert als eine Verschiebung von Repräsentationsmacht, welche die ‚westliche‘ (diskursive) Hegemonie im politischen und wissenschaftlichen Diskurs der internationalen Beziehungen untergräbt und herausfordert. Im Kapitel wird ein idealtypisches Modell entworfen, das die Entwicklung und Implikationen dieser Verschiebung von Repräsentationsmacht beleuchtet und verständlich machen soll.

Das 4. Kapitel der Arbeit *Studying India's Foreign Policy Discourse: Analytical Strategy and Data Corpus* erläutert die analytische Vorgehensweise und den Datensatz für die Untersuchung der Weltordnungsmodelle im außenpolitischen Diskurs Indiens. Es führt das Konzept der *Logics of Critical Explanation* ein, das von Jason Glynos und David Howarth (2007) entwickelt wurde, um die poststrukturalistische Diskurstheorie in die Praxis zu übersetzen. Das Konzept unterscheidet zwischen sozialen, politischen und fantasmatischen Logiken, welche die unterschiedlichen ontologischen Dimensionen sozialer Beziehungen erfassen sollen. Soziale Logiken erfassen die sedimentierten Praktiken und Institutionen einer sozialen Ordnung und somit was Akteure beispielsweise als die Eckpfeiler einer Weltordnung verstehen. Politische Logiken erfassen, wie die Praktiken und Institutionen einer Ordnung geschaffen werden und zwar in Abgrenzung zu einem ‚Anderen‘, welcher als (negativer) Referenzpunkt für die Generierung von Identitäten fungiert. Fantasmatische Logiken geben Aufschluss darüber, warum Subjekte Diskurse für die Realität halten und sich mit diesen identifizieren, indem die Mythen und fiktionalen Erzählungen, welche die inhärenten Spannungen und Widersprüche von Diskursen verschleiern, entlarvt werden.

Das 5. Kapitel *The Evolution and Dislocation of the Nehruvian Foreign Policy Discourse* erörtert die Eckpunkte der indischen Außenpolitik nach der Unabhängigkeit im Jahr 1947. Die indische Außenpolitik wurde vor allem vom Staatsgründer Jawaharlal Nehru maßgeblich gestaltet. Wir können – in der Terminologie dieser Studie – von einem hegemonialen Nehruvianischen Diskurs sprechen, welcher die indische Außenpolitik von der Unabhängigkeit bis zum Ende des Kalten Krieges bestimmte. Wie jedes hegemoniale Projekt ist der Nehruvianische Diskurs um einen Knotenpunkt organisiert, einem privilegierten und idealweiser ‚leeren‘ Signifikanten, welcher auf einem allgemeinen, gesellschaftlich geteilten und geschätzten Konzept beruht, dessen Bedeutung nie vollständig fixiert werden kann, so dass es die Integration unterschiedlicher und gar gegensätzlicher Interessen, Präferenzen und Forderungen erlaubt. Dieser Knotenpunkt war die Blockfreiheit (*Non-alignment*). Das Kapitel legt dar, wie der Nehruvianische Diskurs im Zuge des Endes des Kalten Krieges disloziert und damit zerrüttet wurde. Der Dislokationsmoment untergrub nicht nur die existierende diskursive Ordnung, sondern symbolisierte auch eine Identitätskrise, insofern dass Akteure sich nicht mehr vollständig mit den Subjektpositionen, welche vom Diskurs bereitgestellt werden, identifizieren konnten und dazu gedrängt wurden, diese Subjektpositionen zu rekonstruieren und damit einen neuen Deutungsrahmen herzustellen.

Das 6. Kapitel *Post-Nehruvianism: India's Hegemonic Foreign Policy Discourse in the Post-Cold War Era* diskutiert das Ergebnis des diskursiven Kampfes um einen neuen Deutungsrahmen, durch den die ‚neuen‘ Rahmenbedingungen verstanden werden können. Der Post-Nehruvianische Diskurs hat sich graduell als Reaktion auf den Dislokationsmoment im außenpolitischen Diskurs Indiens entwickelt und den traditionellen Nehruvianischen Diskurs erfolgreich transformiert. Das Kapitel zeigt die Kontinuitäten und Veränderungen im hegemonialen Diskurs auf. Etwa wie der Diskurs den Knotenpunkt von *Non-alignment* auf *Multi-alignment* verschob. Der Schwerpunkt des Kapitels bildet eine ausführliche Diskussion der sozialen Logiken des Post-Nehruvianischen Diskurses – staatliche Souveränität, das ‚aufgeklärte‘ nationale Interesse, Gewaltlosigkeit, Nicht-Diskriminierung und Internationale Einheit in Vielfalt –, den politischen Logiken, auf deren Grundlage Bedeutungen und Identitäten durch negative Relationen (Kolonialismus, der Kalte Krieg, Pakistan und China) geformt werden und die fantasmatischen Logiken – namentlich die mythischen Erzählungen *Indian Greatness* und *Indian Exceptionalism*.

Das 7. Kapitel *The Hyper-Nationalist Discourse: Making India Strong* beleuchtet den wichtigsten gegenhegemonialen Diskurs in Indien. Der hyper-nationalistische Diskurs setzt sich aus zwei Unterdiskursen zusammen: dem hindu-nationalistischen und dem offensiv-

realistischen Diskurs. Ihr gemeinsamer Nenner ist die soziale Logik der nationalen Stärke. Der hyper-nationalistische Diskurs repräsentiert Indiens Außenpolitik als übermäßig idealistisch und moralistisch, wobei insbesondere die Abwesenheit strategischen Denkens, eine Vernachlässigung nationaler Sicherheit und ein mangelndes Bewusstsein für Macht beklagt werden. Während der offensiv-realistische Diskurs nationale Stärke vor allem mit militärischer Macht gleichsetzt, hat der hindu-nationalistische Diskurs ein breiteres Verständnis von nationaler Stärke, das auch militärische und ökonomische Macht umfasst, vor allem aber einen starken nationalen Willen und nationale Einheit, die durch eine homogene nationale Kultur geschaffen werden sollen. Das Kapitel zeigt auf, inwieweit der hyper-nationalistische Diskurs die Transformation des Post-Nehruvianischen Diskurs mitgeprägt hat, letztlich jedoch einzig zu einer Substantiierung und Beschleunigung des Transformationsprozesses des Nehruvianischen Diskurses beigetragen hat anstatt selbst die diskursive Hegemonie im Moment der Dislokation zu erreichen.

In der Schlussfolgerung werden die wichtigsten Erkenntnisse der Arbeit zusammengefasst und über die Stabilität und Beständigkeit des hegemonialen Post-Nehruvianischen Diskurses reflektiert vor dem Hintergrund der Machtübernahme der BJP-Regierung unter Narendra Modi, der bei den letzten nationalen Wahlen überraschend die absolute Mehrheit erlangte. Das Kapitel kommt zu dem Schluss, dass der Post-Nehruvianische Diskurs über eine hohe Belastbarkeit und Integrationskraft verfügt und daher kaum vom hyper-nationalistischen Diskurs verdrängt werden könnte. Eine *Modifizierung* des Post-Nehruvianischen Diskurses ist jedoch durchaus möglich.

Lebenslauf

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