Through a media lens – The Crimean Crisis

- A Discourse Analysis of Media Perspectives on the New Crimean Crisis

Media- & Communication Science D
D-Essay 15hp

Author: Andre Baltz
Supervisor: Merja Ellefson
Abstract

Title: Through a media lens – The Crimean Crisis

The aim of this essay is to study how the Crimean Crisis is being portrayed in international newspapers of Frankfurter Allgemeine, The New York Times and Pravda. The time period for the study is the 25th of February until the 30th of April in the spring of 2014. To concretize the aim 3 questions were formulated; how different discourses are formed in the material, how is Russia’s involvement in the conflict and its views portrayed in the newspapers and how does the stereotyping through metaphors, metonymies and binary oppositions help the construction of Russia as “the other” in this conflict. The methods chosen to investigate these questions were Laclau & Mouffes Discourse Analysis combined with linguistic tools such as metaphors and binary oppositions. The theories chosen to support the method was Laclau & Mouffes discourse theory and linguistic theory.

The results have portrayed different perspectives on the discourse of the conflict, each of which also could be representative for the different sides in the conflict. One nodal point, mainly pushed forward by Western actors and Western media, was one of Invasion. Russian actors and eastern media mainly pushed forward another nodal point, one that emphasised protection rather than invasion in the discourse of the conflict in Crimea. Western Media together with Western Actors suggested strong connections to Russia when discussing the military troops active in Crimea whereas Russia initially claimed no part in it, but later developed a nodal point of protectionism when that claim no longer could be defended. Russia has in many instances been portrayed as aggressive or bad which has continued to build upon the picture of Russia as the “bad other” - the binary opposition to the good west. Indications has also been found that conflict, besides national interests, can be based on a different view of democracy where the West implies that the development in Ukraine is a step towards a free democracy, while Russia who values constitutional order rather sees the development as a fascist coup against a legit government.
1. Preface

The subject of this study is the pending conflict in media described as the Crimean Crisis (New York Times, 2014A). Conflicts in general are nothing unusual in the world, but Europe as a region has in later years been quite free of them pending a few exceptions. That is also why the recent developments in Ukraine and specifically the Crimean Peninsula are even more sensitive. First and foremost it threatens the stability of Europe but also because of its geographical position, being closer to Europe and the West in a sense. What also makes it a peculiar situation is Ukraine’s movement closer to EU, which in the long run could mean that they move further away from Russia (New York Times, 2014A). There has not been much bloodshed at the time of writing, but military powers are definitely involved.

A big part of the conflict has taken place in the media, where the cause of the Conflict isn’t really clear and the different actors involved claims that different things have happened in Crimea. Because of this, separate discourses of the events in the Crimean Peninsula could emerge, competing against each other, making a claim on the truth (Samoilenko, 2014:1ff). It is therefore also an interesting area of study to see how the Conflict is projected in the media and how the image of the Conflict is constructed - an image that in the end can affect the individuals taking part of the information.

The rhetoric that has been seen in the media could also help point to an emergence of separate discourses. The rhetoric could in that case also be seen as different views of the reality and also different ways to influence the consumers of that information. How these different realities are being expressed in the media can therefore be an interesting area of study. It is also interesting to see how a country such as Russia is being portrayed in the context of the Conflict, since Russia on and off since World War II has been an opponent of the West and also in opposition to the west. How they are described and to which actions Russian leadership is linked will all affect both the view of Russia and the events in Crimea. This study will therefore search for such instances of rhetoric that puts a narrative on Russia.

It must also be stated, that this study does not make any claims to analyse any sort of overlaying political context, instead it will focus on the context created in the media and more specifically how this context is constructed within the specific material.
2. Aim and Questions

The aim for this study is to identify, analyse and describe the discourses and meanings related to the Crimean Crisis in three international newspapers during the period of the 25th of February to the 30th of April 2014.

1. What different discourses formed in the material?
2. How is Russia’s involvement in the conflict and its views portrayed in the newspapers?
3. Are there indications of Russia being constructed as the other in this conflict?
3. Previous Studies & Theory

Under the first section of 3.1 some previous studies concerning this study will be presented. Much of the studies here will touch on the image of Russia and its relationship with the West. Even if the subject of study is the part of the conflict taken place in the media, this research is key to understand, since it can have an impact on both the perception and the meanings of Russia portrayed in the Media. Under section 3.2 the theory chosen for this study be presented.

3.1. Previous Studies

3.1.1. Perspectives of Russia

Lilia Shevtsova writes in her book Lonely Power (2010) about Russia’s relationship to the West. She points to a change in the stance against the West since Putin has come to power. These changes in the policy and stance against the West have taken an aggressive posture which is resting on what she calls a superpowers dream with a climate of more personalised power than during the Soviet regime. She explains that the aggressive posture Russia is yet again taking towards the west also point towards militant methods and self-affirmation and these are methods of preferred communication used by people in power. She points to a goal where Russia forces the West into submission. She further draws comparisons with China, another state with much personal power that instead tries to co-operate with the West, whereas Russian leaders stress the use of force. She points to a development of a certain form of Russian authoritarianism that exists within the political elite, which is based on the need to push the Western civilization back (Shevtsova, 2010:181f).

Johnny Rodin writes in his article Nordic Perspectives on Russia (2010) about how Russia from a Nordic standpoint is seen as “the other”. The focus of the article is the picture - or the recognition – that the Nordic States have about Russia. Rodin points to certain aspects behind this construction, the main one being related to how Russia conducts its internal national politics.

Rodin uses Alexander Wendt’s (1999) definition of different types of relationship cultures to define what type of relationship the Nordic states have towards Russia. The first being the Hobbiean, which is dominated by hostility and mutual suspicion, where military power is crucial because of the possibility of conflict. The second culture is the Lockiean, which also is influenced by rivalry but contains a mutual respect of each country’s own sovereignty. The last one, the Kantian is embossed by
mutual identities and friendship where problems are considered as mutual and are solved together (Rodin, 2010:122f, Wendt 1999:262-299).

Rodin states that the Hobbiean culture could be appropriate describing the international relations during the Cold War, but that since the dissolution of the Soviet Union other factors that military might have come to influence security (Rodin, 2010:123). Most of Russia’s neighbouring countries along the eastern sea board are now members of the EU or other western pacts like NATO, hence Rodin points to that internal conflicts between these states are not likely any more. Rodin uses Deutsch (1957) term of security community to describe the coagulation of these states.

He further points to that these security community builds on mutual values and identities, diversified contacts and a feeling of mutuality between states (Rodin 2010:123, Adler & Barnett, 1998). What Rodin points to here specific for the creation of Russia as the other is the way the norms within these security communities rub of each other and influences the national politics in each country within the security community. The coherent identity and norms creates a bridge between the national and international. This also, according to Rodin can be connected to what Tomas Risse-Kappen (1995) coins as the democratised peace, where democratised states expectations on other states actions internationally is based on how well they cope with their internal political situation within the own state (Rodin 2010:124).

A state that is considered democratised is also seen as peaceful and is a part of a “we” or a collective, which can then grow on principals such as mutual norms, identity and mutuality. In contrast, an authoritarian state, which on a national level oppresses its own people, is expected to act with aggression on an international level. If the state in question is aggressive in reality is however not relevant, the notions and the expectations is enough to cause issues (see Rodin, 2010:124).

To put the relations towards Russia into context of the Nordic countries Rodin points to that it is rather easy to see that Russia doesn’t fit within the Kantian culture of the Nordic countries nor the one of the Baltic countries. In this sense Russia becomes a significant other because of the difference in the relationship culture between the states. Rodin points to that this creation of the significant other comes to expression
both through Russia’s internal political system but also through constructions in media.

Whilst the west focus on democracy may lay in different kinds of freedom such as free media, free meetings and a free civil society, Russia focuses on constitutional order, stability and harmony in the society. This can explain the view on various revolutions that from a western view is seen as necessary and good, while with Russian eyes as a catastrophe that challenges the stability (see Rodin, 2010:126). Rodin further points to that the media picture is coherent with aggressive image of Russia, which also helps to strengthen the picture of the significant other. To draw parallels to our study at hand both the last points are highly relevant in the case of the Ukrainian instability and the annexation of Crimea. Even if the study at hand for most parts only are considering the Nordic images of Russia it can be just as true for EU and the West since the Nordic countries since long is integrated in the Kantian Culture of the West.

3.1.2. Perspectives on the development in Ukraine
Sergei A Samoilenko published an article in Russian Journal of Communication concerning the developments in Crimea and Ukraine. As the name of the article suggests Samoilenko highlights the many sides of the conflict and how these sides are portrayed in the media. His study shows that the different sides in the conflicts search to legitimate their own claim in the conflict much through the use of mass media. The arguments surrounding legitimacy are also to a large extent build upon the polarized views from foremost Russia, USA and EU. As Russia sees the new government of Ukraine as unconstitutional and consisting of fascists elements, the US and EU sees the same government as a step towards western styled democracy (Samoilenko, 2014:2). Samoilenko points towards a strategy of delegitimization where actors such as Russia or US try to position themselves in power positions towards each other. To develop this thought he points to positions of a moral high ground, where one actor can be able to hold moral superiority to others (Samoilenko, 2014:2f). As concrete examples of this Samoilenko lifts the US rejection of the Crimean election results and Russia’s claim of the new Ukraine government being made up of fascists and bandits. Samoilenko also points towards the importance of a third-party to establish some sort of objective facts and explain misconceptions in order to find a middle ground between the conflicting sides. To highlight this, he points towards the German foreign minister and his thoughts on the G8 meeting as
one place where two-way communication with Russia on the situation in Ukraine could be possible.

Another point of emphasis is the use of propaganda or information in the conflict. Samoilenko points to a study that concludes that 71% of the asked in Russia and former Soviet countries deemed it necessary to enter Crimea to protect the ethnic Russians. The same number in Russia was around 79%. This can then point to the influence the state controlled media holds in Russia and countries that still have strong ties to Russia (Samoilenko, 2014:3). In this propaganda or information some characteristics stand out, especially the use of symbolism and metaphors to enhance the message. For instance meanings like “evil must be punished” and perhaps a more regional one “Sevastopol – the city of Russian Sailor” which points back to historical segments. The use of the word “fascist” to describe parts of the intern government of Ukraine also holds both a huge metaphorical and symbolic power that dates back to the days of WWII.

3.1.3. Mass media in War & Conflict
In the Book Selling war: The Role of the Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts from World War I to the War on Terror (2010) the writers points out that it is possible, anthropologically speaking to suggest that war and violence is a form of communication. They point to the development of mass media as a replacement of old social institutions for information, but also of aspects such as education, ethic and moral. Mass media contributes and affect both economical and political discourses as well as social ones to an extent equivalent of its development and reach.

The effect mass media has on war or potential outbreaks of war have in this sense also become bigger. The possibilities of mass media to portray different kinds of realities have given mass media a central role for war and warfare. The Book is to a large extent build upon the thesis that there exists some kind of duality between the development of warfare and mass media, where the latter through its possibility to implement sociocultural factors in messages can affect the warfare (Seethaler, Josef Karmasin, Matthias Melischek, Gabriele, 2013:x-xi).

To the study at hand of the Crimean Crisis this could come at hand, since much of the conflict has taken the stage of the media. The conflict between different
sociocultural images and views of the conflict has also been central. It can potentially show just how important the widespread media landscape can affect individual and collective views on a conflict or a war.

### 3.2. Theory

**3.2.1 Discourse Analysis - Ernesto Laclau & Chantal Mouffe**

Ernesto Laclau & Chantal Mouffe defines discourse as a coagulation of language and practises. With language they refer to a two-folded system of signs where objects holds a certain sign, but also holds a mental signifier of the same sign (Bergström & Boréus, 2012:364). To concretize we can apply and relevant example for this essay, lets say Russia. There is a sign for Russia but also a mental picture, a signifier of what Russia is. Laclau & Mouffe states that language and practice can’t be separated because language in itself is a practice. The practices of discourse are all associated with the language, because without actions, words a deemed meaningless. This is also why they rather are interested in the conversation itself than social conventions and norms that can have created the specific conversation. It is also important to grasp that Laclau & Mouffe sees everything as discursive and that nothing can hold a meaning outside a discourse. It does not mean that things doesn’t exist outside a discourse, we still physically exist but hold no meaning. To illustrate, lets take a rock as example. The rock consists of various minerals and can in a house be a part of the foundation or in a riot a projectile. But outside these discourses the rock, if it is not put in to context of something, holds no meaning. It also points to that no meaning is ever set in stone or closed for interpretation (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:110).

To make this interpretation Laclau & Mouffe presents a set of tools for the analyst to work with. The tools provide a structure to the discourse through categorization. One of these tools is the *discursive field*, which always surrounds a discourse, any discourse. This field is made up of meanings that doesn’t fit within the specific discourse and is instead put in a field around the discourse where they are awaiting new meanings to challenge the specific existing discourse (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985:111). Within this discursive field we find what Laclau & Mouffe defines as *elements*. If we position ourselves on a level of text, elements are signs that either
does not at the time fit within the specific discourse or are yet to have their value fixated against the specific discourse. They do however exist within the discursive field ready to challenge the existing discourse with new meanings. These elements, when and if they can be fixated are done so against what by Laclau & Mouffe are defined as *nodal points*. Nodal points are central signs in a specific discourse as for instance the USA and USSR is in a discourse of the Cold War. The central meaning of these nodal points for a specific discourse helps them to provide meaning for other signs that are defined against them (Laclau & Mouffe 1985:112). Signs that aren’t as central to the specific discourse as nodal points but still fit within it and can get their meaning fixated are called moments. At last but not least there are *floating signifiers*, signs that are contentious and are especially hard to define. To conclude, all these tools show which signs that are able to be fixated and whilst in this process the tools also provide a demarcation of the specific discourse. It does however not tell us what fits in a discourse or not, it rather just points to the formation of the specific discourse and what or which signs will function as challenging to the specific discourse and its formation.

Since fixation of meaning is key to the analytical process its is also important to highlight how Laclau & Mouffe sees this process. The process is called *articulation*. Articulation is the process when a subject puts out a meaning in the discourse and this articulation helps fixating a meaning to an element (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105). It is however difficult to find how Laclau & Mouffe uses the framework to fixate meaning since they haven’t provided many analysis using the discourse analysis method. The term articulation can be interpret differently, but for all purposes connected to this study, an articulation will be the different meanings provided by the subject positions in the given material.

When it comes to the subject and the specific structuring of individuals, Laclau & Mouffe leans towards Jacques Lacan (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002:42). Where Lacan speaks of the term master signifiers, Laclau & Mouffe speaks of nodal points of identity. For example, Russian can be a master signifier or a nodal point and then depending on context or discourse, hold different kinds of meaning. In creating a identity for the subject, Laclau & Mouffe points to a *Chain of Equivalence* which with discursive construction of Russian will solidify its meaning by comparing Russian to what it not is (Laclau & Mouffe 1985:127ff).
Often when discussing subjects within discourse the notion of Social Antagonism is introduced. It is the term that describes how identities can work to exclude each other. One can for instance hold several identities at the same time, for example can the Crimean Population be Ukrainian by nationality but see them selves as Russian from an ethnicity standpoint. In Crimea then, the demands of re-joining Russia can create an agnostic relationship between the identities and a conflict between the identities plays out, where one in the end trumps the other. Both the Ukrainian and Russian identity has its own discourse, but both belong to each other’s discursive field and when the antagonism strikes the existing identity challenges the existing meaning of the identities (Laclau 1990:17). When antagonism occurs one could say that the different identities, here Ukrainian and Russian, appears, as opposites of each other, if one can’t be Ukrainian, one must be Russian. It is therefore important to consider what role binary oppositions will play here.

3.2.2. Stereotypes & Binary Oppositions

Gilman stats that stereotypes and the creations of stereotypes is dependent on the process of creating the individual. The process begins when we are infants and becomes more complex as a person grows and can distinguish the self and the world from each other. To cope with this change and the stress and anxiety of losing control, humans will adjust the mental image of objects so that they appear good even if they in fact are bad. Gilman also points out that a split in the personality occurs as the individual grow into a good self and a bad self, this process continues as the individuals develops and it become more adapt to spot the finer lines of good and bad (Gillman, 1985:16ff).

The split causes the bad side to be associated with certain mental representations of bad and the good with the equivalent of good representations. This helps the individual to cope with contradictions within the self. These contradictions is build upon the image that the world is shared in to a “us and a “them” who is good or bad. Stereotypes are therefore mental pictures of the world, which the individual lives in. They provide a space between the own self and the other. Since both are really within the self, there is no clear line between the self and the object; therefore an illusionary line is drawn so that the two never have to collide. This line as Gilman states it shifts and responds to stress within the individual, so that a reconfiguration of good and bad of a certain thing can be possible and hence will the stereotypes also shift.
Gilman further states that the more negative a stereotype is, there more positive is the counterweight (Gillman, 1985:16ff).

Binary Oppositions is the term of the tool that explains how opposites in the society work. The language can be seen as structured around these binary oppositions. For example are woman/man, east/west, democratically/totalitarian and others binary oppositions. The point is that the term woman is given its meaning through the contrast it has against the opposition man, the contrast between these to is what produces the meaning.

Some binary opposition are more complex such as east and west, at least in a political context where there are almost an infinitive amount of oppositions loaded within the terms, which all helps to form the relationship of opposition. Through deconstruction it is possible to show that these binary oppositions does not have a symbiotic relationship, some opposition can hold a position of dominance of others. All binary oppositions are reliant of each other, but some of course more then others. In the case of democracy, West has always been dominant over East and the “rest” and man has always been dominant over woman. In this sense its possible to see how the binary oppositions is able to influence the social structures in our societies (Eriksson, Eriksson Baaz & Thörn, 1999:18).

News Media, and media in general have a big role to provide understanding about the society in which they exist, but not just as an informational space but also as a cultural. Through culture, movies or other shows the members of society take part of are embedded general codes such as friend/enemy, good/bad and so forth. Media carries and portrays these binary codes to its viewers through narratives. News media plays a rather less fictional and more direct role, a platform for authority over specific topics or events. The Binary codes or oppositions are central here to provide contrasts between the conflicting actors. The news media then provides the same cultural platform as the media in general where through for example binary oppositions or codes identities can be constructed. It is however not as simple as it sounds, there are structures on a semiotic level through which information is given and received. These structures are combined with temporal or narrative ones in which the actors position themselves in real time (Curran, Liebes, 1998:29f).
3.2.3. Metaphors and Metonymy

Metaphors and Metonymy are tools often used in linguistic analysis. They both to some extent work illustrative to provide the reader or recipient of a material or text with help to better and easier receive the intended message. There are usually two types of Metaphors, those who are lexicalized within the language of the recipient and do not need further explaining, but also metaphors that aren’t lexicalized that would need some further considerations from the recipient before it is interpreted (Dahllöf, 2009:149). In this study the use of the former, lexicalized metaphors will be the main area of concern, where a lot of the persons or matters that are portrayed in the material can be enhanced by the use of metaphors or compared to historical instances with the help of certain metaphors. It’s often termed as paraphrasing which means in what way a certain action is expressed to bring a action or event closer than it really is. The weight lies in the strength of the comparison and how the comparing is able to express the intended meaning (Dahllöf, 2009:149). The metaphors and metonymy are also key components in the creation of both binary oppositions and stereotypes through its compartmental and illustrating strengths.

Metonymy has its relations to metaphors, but do not quite operate in the same manner. Metonymy rather turns towards relations such as closeness or being a part of something whole etc. For example how the name Great Britain has been used to name England specific when it really stands for the Union between the countries in the Britannic Peninsula. The same example can be made of Kremlin, which is the government building, but often holds the meaning of the political elite of Russia (see Dahllöf, 2009:152f). Metonymies are often lexicalized and frequently used in texts to walk around a repetition of the same word but also for the underlying meaning a word like Kremlin can hold, instead of using for example the Russian parliament. These underlying meanings and in which context they are used, are an interesting variable to investigate in considerations of representation.
4. Material & Method
In this section the material and methods chosen for this study will be presented. Under 4.1 the material and the process of gathering it will be explained. Under 4.2 the method and how it is used in this specific study will be discussed.

4.1. Material

4.1.1. Sources
The material for this study is collected from 3 international newspapers. The newspapers in question are New York Times based in the US, Frankfurter Allgemeine based in Germany and Pravda based in Russia. For Pravda the English version of the newspaper have been selected due to language considerations. The decision to select newspapers from different countries where based on the will to give a more nuanced picture of the events in question. Since both Russia and the US are two big players in this conflict and they have a history of opposing each other the choice of those to seemed clear. The choice of a German newspaper was based on that it is a second language for the writer of this study and that mixing in a second language could add both credibility and validity to the study. All newspapers have large editions but differ on many other points. Pravda is a state owned newspaper and have long function as platform for politicians in Russia to express their views (Reuters, 2014A). It must be stated that the view and knowledge of the newspaper from me as analyst is that the paper to a great extent isn’t independent and that much of what is being written in the papers are not examined very critically by its own writers. FAZ is the largest newspaper in Germany on Foreign News and has a wide spread, within in Germany it is mostly read by the population surrounding the Frankfurt area (Frankfurter Allgemeine, 2014A). NYT is one of the most influential newspapers in the US with a large spread and is wildly considered as one of the world’s best and most influential newspapers (New York Times, 2014B).

4.1.2. Collection of Material
The articles in this study are collected from respective web edition of the newspapers. The timeline for the articles are from the outbreak of the Crimean Crisis at 25th of February to the 30th of April. The timeframe was based on the start of the Crisis and the Start of this study. All the articles concerning the crisis have been selected and then have 6 articles from each newspaper randomly been drawn out to analyse. Each article were given a number and where then drawn out of a boule. The selection for 6
articles from each newspaper was based on the time considerations for the study and more than 18 articles would be hard to process during the limited amount of time for this study. The articles consist of regular articles, leaders and debate articles.

4.2. Method
The main method for investigation will be a discourse analysis inspired by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. The reasoning behind this specific choice of method is the ability of discourse analysis to provide structure and overview of a given subject. It does however not provide the same depth as for example other discourse analysis such as CDA with its tools of linguistics. This will on the other hand be compensated with tools for investigating metaphors, metonyms and binary oppositions.

The discourse analysis focuses to determine on who is saying what in a specific context of a specific topic. To determine this, discourse analysis looks on how a specific discourse is constituted by analysing its constituting parts. These parts consist of the different tales, locations, people and objects that together form the specific discourse. It is when these different parts are connected that the discourse is formed and an analyst can deter the meaning of the discourse (Börjesson & Palmblad, 2007:12). The perspective provided by Laclau & Mouffe also emphasises that there is only within discourse that objects can hold a meaning and therefore they see everything as discursive. This also means that objects or happenings can hold different meanings in different contexts. In the example concerning this study, the military movement of Russian troops holds a meaning of invasion in a western discourse of the Crimean Crisis. On the other hand it holds a meaning of protection from a Russian discourse concerning the same military movements (see Hall, 2013:29f). The discourse analysis does therefore not claim to reflect reality or mirroring it, it's just interested in investigating how objects or happenings obtain meaning within a specific discourse.

The discursive approach focuses on how meaning are constituted through the language and how they with help form the language structures and portrays the meanings of reality. In this sense language becomes a central area of study cause of its ability to portray, create and share the perceived reality. In the case of Laclau & Mouffe the linguistic focus lies primarily on deconstruction and structural linguistics (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002:24).
The main model of work, as concluded is the Laclau & Mouffes discourse analysis. As mentioned in the preface to this chapter some additional tools will also be needed. Since the aim and questions presented not only are concerned with discourses but also with the representation of individuals and stereotypes, tools like binary oppositions, metaphors and metonyms can help to establish this representation. Binary oppositions will also be useful in identify competitive discourses since the occurrence of opposite views has been predominant in the media concerning the Crimean Crisis. The decision to compliment the discourse analysis of Laclau & Mouffe with various tools were therefore necessary to be able to fully answer the questions being asked to the material. The material itself will be considered as an articulation, which will be helpful to fixate the meaning within the discourses.

The study will therefore be in two parts, where the first will be to categorize and define the different discourses provided by the different sides of Crimean Crisis that exists within the material by the help of Laclau & Mouffes Discourse Analysis. The second part will be an analysis concerning how Russia is perceived and portrayed as the other. That means which role stereotypes, binary oppositions, metaphors and metonymies plays in the constitution of this image.

Since Ferdinand de Saussure in part influences the discourse analysis of Laclau & Mouffe, the object of analysis, the language, is seen as a system of signs. De Saussure further sees language as a system of reference where every sign has a signifier (Bergström & Boréus 2012:365). Signs like East, West, Annexation, Invasion, Protection and others all holds a mental picture, a signifier, which is connected to its respective sign. No meaning is totally fixed and can always be pushed aside for new meanings or a restructuring of the concept, which all would influence the constitution of the discourse (Bergström & Boréus 2012:365).

4.2.5. Discussion of Method
The hurdles in the test runs of the model have been the categorization of different discourses. No matter how far one goes, there is always another discourse surrounding the next one. Therefore much of the time has been to try and define discourses that would fit the questions and aim of this study. The decision was therefore to narrow it down to a set of nodal points or views that were dominant in the material.
As much as it is a problem of limiting the material, it is also one of the strengths of the discourse analysis to circle and narrowing down specifics. By analysing the material form a discursive point of view it is possible to see which parts belongs in this or that discourse. The discourse analysis also helps a lot in that sense that it is of a semi-linguistic character and is able to see how different words constitute different views and discourses, which in the long run are portrayed to the media audiences.

There is however some real difficulties with discourse analysis. Especially Laclau & Mouffe does not give the analyst a great deal of means for practical implementation of its tools. It is more a frame of reference and the analyst is left with many questions in how to proceed, which can cause some subjectivity in the use of the tools. This also raises questions of validation, and how the analyst can be able to validate the work conducted. One way around this dilemma is to openly describe how the different tools provided by Laclau & Mouffe are used in this specific study, which by any means are the intention. Further there are some deeper issues of subjectivity where things as mental pictures, interpretations and meanings all are subjective. They are individual in that sense that they vary from individual to individual. It is therefore hard to talk about a total objectivity even though this is the aim. Therefore this study will be consequent in the account of why certain conclusions have been drawn.

This lack of means for practical implantation must in any case also be seen as one of the main reasons why it has been chosen as a work model for this study. The use of the model is left open for conversation and is therefore also a lot freer in a sense when it is compared to other analytical models such as Faircloughs CDA. This freedom, used in an appropriate scientifically manner provides both openings for other tools and toughs to compliment the method of Laclau & Mouffe and at the same time it provides a challenge to the analyst.
5. Analysis

5.1. The Discourse Formation of the Crimea Crisis
When going through the material at hand it is quite clear that a homogenous view of the events in Ukraine does not exist. There is however some dominate points in the material, first and foremost pointing to two possible scenarios or views of the Conflict taken place in Crimea. In this study they have been categorised as Invasion or Protection.

5.1.1. The Nodal Point of Invasion
As the headline suggests this segment will consider what the material points to as an invasion of the Ukrainian Peninsula Crimea by Russia. The analysis will be provided through segments of text taken from the material at hand.

Within a week, Russian special operations troops had seized control of strategic locations across Crimea, while the regional authorities moved to declare independence and schedule a referendum on joining Russia that was held on Sunday.

(Myers & Barry, nytimes.com, 2014-03-18)

His remarks were the closest any Russian official has come to acknowledging the deployment of troops in what Ukrainian and other foreign leaders have said was the de facto invasion of Crimea by 6,000 to 15,000 additional Russian troops. The forces, according to reports, continue to arrive by ferry and helicopter across the Kerch Strait, at the peninsula’s closest point to southern Russia.

(Myers, nytimes.com, 2014-03-04)

Russia did not want a war against our “brothers in arms” in Ukraine, he said, only days after Russian special operation troops spread across the Crimean Peninsula in southern Ukraine and effectively seized control.

(Myers, nytimes.com, 2014-03-04)

The different segments of text above are all collected from the New York Times. They all share a narrative containing some form of Russian troops entering Crimea. They all present a notion of military troops to the equation of the event taken place in Crimea. With this notion it’s then possible to fixate military troops towards the
conflict as a moment, effectively adding a notion of military to the conflict (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105). If one look to the specific use of certain signs, the use of special operations troops seems baffling. Special Operation troops can hardly be interpreted as regular soldiers in a national army, it rather points to that these troops has a specific purpose, in other words it seems to be a special purpose behind the use of these troops. Without shifting the focus to much to the special troops they somehow lifts a notion of great planning or at least effort, which would be fairly logical since both is needed for a fast and successful invasion. The point being that the use of the sign special operation troops together with the quotations of the western leaders and Ukraine, would all strongly point to the fixation of the sign invasion as a nodal point when discussing the recent events taken place in Crimea (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:112). The use of the sign effectively in context of seizing control also further pushes this notion forward. We can’t however overlook the importance of the western leaders as subject positions weld a great deal of influence, both nationally and internationally. With this influence they are more likely to granted access to the discourse and articulate their opinion (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:127ff). These quotations in the first segment of the analysis have all quite clearly pointed to an invasion, so lets look at some examples that aren’t so clear.

Masked men with guns seized government buildings in the capital of Ukraine’s Crimea region on Thursday, barricading themselves inside and raising the Russian flag after mysterious overnight raids that appeared to be the work of militant Russian nationalists who want this volatile Black Sea region ruled from Moscow.

(Higgins & Erlanger, nytimes.com, 2014-02-27)

Die OSZE hat weiterhin Beweise dafür, dass das russische Militär für die Straßenblockaden auf der Krim verantwortlich ist. Das teilte eine Beobachtermission der OSZE in Wien mit. Die internationale Expertengruppe sei insgesamt fünfmal an verschiedenen Kontrollpunkten von stark Bewaffneten am Zugang zur ukrainischen Halbinsel abgehalten worden.

(Faz-.net, 2014-03-12)

While President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, making his first public statements on the developments in Crimea, denied the involvement of Russian troops here, many of the vehicles transporting soldiers on the peninsula have Russian military license plates. Unofficial vehicle checkpoints have also been established throughout Crimea, often with the red, blue and white Russian flag flying over
the barricades, though their purpose was not clear. The people operating the checkpoints say they are providing security

(Herszenhorn, nytimes.com, 2014-03-04)

It is possible to draw some conclusions from the text above even if it directly doesn’t point to an invasion. It narrates that masked men with guns sized government buildings in Crimea and the raised the Russian flag. By using the analogy of raising the Russian flag, this action taken by the masked men also points towards Russia. It is then also possible to fixate these men to the moment of soldiers (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:112). Further, the flag here can be interpreted as a metonymy for Russia (see Dahllöf 2009:152f). This then further adds to the image that Russia is connected with men, guns and the seizing of government buildings in Ukrainian soil, which would point to an aggressive stance that could support the fixation of sign invasion as nodal point to the Conflict in Crimea (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985:112). The latter segment is comment of a statement made by the OSCE, the Organisation of Security and Co-Operation in Europe. They state that evidence exists of Russian military as responsible for putting up street blockades in Crimea. It further states that the international control group of experts in the area set to investigate the events in Crimea had been denied access to Crimea at strongly armed control points along the border. This second statement then claims to have evidence that Russian military troops have been active on Ukrainian soil, which they by laws and conventions should not be allowed to. A logical reasoning would then firmly strengthen the fixation of invasion as a nodal point, since Russian troops, without permission has entered Ukrainian soil (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985:112). By reading the material it is also clear that the acting Ukrainian government has given OSCE permission to enter Ukraine and investigate what is happening in Crimea, since OSCE according to the article at hand isn’t granted access to Crimea, a part of Ukraine, logic would point to that Ukraine no longer is in control over it. If Ukrainian troops doesn’t control the area and Western observers isn’t granted access at this stage, it would logically deter that Russian subjects are in control over the area. It points to what Laclau and Mouffe points to as a an exclusion of subjects, thus its known that they aren’t western nor Ukrainian, so they must therefore belong to the other side in the conflict, hence Russian (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985:127ff).

The third segment also contains a subject position, a position from which it is easy to access the discourse. This time it is Russian President Vladimir Putin who claims
that Russia had no involvement in Crimea and that Russian troops had not taken part in the events there. In a vacuum this would affect the fixation of meaning concerning the invasion. There are however certain aspects of the segment that in many ways neutralise Putin’s articulation, where the writer straight after Putin’s articulation on his own articulates strong Russian ties to the Conflict in Crimea. The writer articulates that many of the military vehicles have Russian plates and a top of the many security checkpoints throughout Crimea hangs the Russian flag. It is therefore hard to fixate the events in Crimea through Putin’s articulation, the event rather manifests as an element in this specific case, still waiting for a fixation of meaning (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111f). The writers articulation after Putin’s statement could also point to the reach media has in influence the image of reality that are portrayed to the public. This could then actually highlight how the media is able to influence conflicts and wars (see Seethaler, Karasin & Melischek, 2013:x-xi).

U.S. ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, said: "This resolution affirms only one issue - our commitment to the sovereignty and political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Adopting the document, we expressed a clear fundamental support to the preservation of the borders of this country."

(Pravda.ru, 2014-03-28)

After going through the material published in Pravda, there are not many clear cut entries that support the view of Invasion, there are however some articulations quoted from Western politicians or actors that introduces the notion, often used to in the sense that they can be contradicted or picked a part later in the text. There are a few rare instances throughout the material of Pravda where notions of Invasion are left untouched. Therefore it is hard to fixate invasion in the part of the material coming out of Pravda, invasion rather manifests like a flowing significant, central to the conflict but heavily twisted (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111f).

5.1.2. The Annexation of Crimea
As now established, there are indications of Russian military troops entering Crimea and seizing key government buildings. In many of the discussions in media there have also been talk about the term annexation. The sign in itself rather refers to a coagulation of two states or areas, where one often is dominant over the other. However, the term came to expression in World War II where for example Soviet
annexed states such as Estonia and Lithuania amongst others. The sign is therefore also loaded with meanings, often including a vast majority of military strength (www.ne.se). Below are a few examples of how this sign comes to expression.

Bundeskansler Merkel sharply criticised Moscow “what happened in Crimea is an Annexation, which one can’t allow Russia to go through with”.

(Writers translation, Faz.net, 2014-03-11)

The heads of Government for the 7 leading industrial states (G-7) warned Russia about an Annexation of Crimea. In a collective statement they threatened Russia with further consequences if Moscow did not respect Ukraine’s sovereign.

(Writers translation, Faz.net, 2014-03-12)

The first segment explains how the subject position of Bundeskansler Angela Merkel has criticised Moscow for its actions against Ukraine. Moscow can in this instance be seen as a metonymy or metaphor for the political elite of Russia, since it is their decisions she is criticising rather then the whole nation (see Dahllöf 2009:149). The metaphor helps to pinpoint where the issue lies, it not Russia, rather is the political elite of Russia that causes these problems. The second segment of text also contains a statement from strong subject positions. In this case it is the seven heads of state of the G-7 countries, some of the most influential countries in the world. They all from their position warn Russia about going through with the annexation and if Russia does go through with it, it will have consequences. So this second segment of text is not a direct as the first one by Merkel, but it do put forward the notion of an annexation and that what has happened is the start of an annexation. As far as fixation towards a discourse of invasion, the term annexation touches on the edges but if one were to argue the notion of deconstruction, the meanings behind the word annexation, as seen in the definition above, would point to the fixation of invasion as nodal point in the Conflict (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105).
5.1.3. The Nodal Point of Protection

This segment tends to investigate the view portrayed in media that Russia’s presence in Crimea is due to some kind of protectionism of Russian interest and ethnic Russians.

Two days earlier Prime Minister Dmitri A. Medvedev said the turmoil posed “a real threat to our interests and to our citizens’ lives and health.”

(Higgins & Erlanger, nytimes.com, 2014-02-27)

Mr. Putin did not declare a new Cold War, but he bluntly challenged the post-Soviet order that had more or less held for nearly a quarter-century, and made it clear that Russia was prepared to defend itself from any further encroachment or interference in areas it considers part of its core security, including Russia itself.

(Myers & Barry, nytimes.com, 2014-03-18)

“The only thing we had to do, and we did it, was to enhance the defense of our military facilities because they were constantly receiving threats and we were aware of the armed nationalists moving in,” Mr. Putin said, referring to Russia’s longstanding bases affiliated with the Black Sea Fleet, which has its headquarters in the port of Sevastopol in the Crimea region of Ukraine.

(Myers, nytimes.com, 2014-03-18)

The four segments above do all to some extent contain articulations that intend that what has happen in Crimea is done out of necessity to protect Russian interests. They do on contrary to invasion point to protectionism. The first segment contains an articulation by Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev where he suggests that the turmoil in Ukraine poised a threat to both Russian interest and lives. The actions taken by Russia should then by Russia itself be seen as steps of protections rather than aggression and invasion, therefore should also the fixation of the meaning concerning the Conflict in Crimea point to protection as nodal point rather than measures of invasion as a nodal point (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111f). The second segment, which also contains an articulation by Putin from the same speech, continues to strengthen the view that it is a question of protection from any further encroachment or areas Russia consider part of its core security. It is interesting to consider that the delimitation here is indeed arbitrary and also points to a view that
Russia considers at least Crimea but also in parts Ukraine as a part of its core security. To draw the analogy a bit further, the Conflict taken place in Crimea can therefore not hold invasion as a nodal point, since it's a part of what Russia considers its core, they are in this case merely protecting its core and interests, therefore the fixation of the Conflict in Crimea also would point to protection as a nodal point rather than the nodal point Invasion (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111f).

The third segment strengthens this notion, it suggests that they, Russia, almost where forced to protect there interests. Putin’s articulation contains a suggestion that they “had to” protect their interest, which suggest that they had no choice in that matter, since he claims that they had received threats towards their military bases in Crimea. It then strongly suggests that the action taken was done out of protectionist measures and that it was not a question of aggression or invasion, perhaps just in fear of getting their military bases isolated in a country that would take steps towards the EU and the West. The fixation of meaning concerning the Conflict in Crimea would therefore according to this statement fixate protection as nodal point (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111f).

5.1.4. Protection of The Self and The Buffer State

The UN definition of Responsibility to Protect also stipulates that States have a responsibility to "encourage and assist" in fulfilling responsibility in protection of those threatened and at risk. Russia has arguably done as requested by its former State and neighbour and as laid out by the UN. Yes, of course there is self interest, with NATO encroaching ever closer and the country's Black Sea Fleet based in Crimea and NATO countries, the US and UK planning military exercises with Ukraine - but Russia's actions have been a model of peaceable, threat free strategy.

(Bancroft-Hinchey, Pravda.ru, 2014-03-21)

He could not be seen, by the largely Russian population in the eastern Ukraine (Crimea), as leaving them to fend for themselves. But moving out of check, and avoiding checkmate, the Russian president surely knew that the western press corps would be able to label him as the aggressor instead of the reactor.

(Hart, Pravda.ru, 2014-03-31)
The "coloured revolutions" in Europe and the Arab world were simply more of the same by other means, Putin stated, but in: "Ukraine the West crossed a red line", with Russia's wish for dialogue and compromise ignored.

The red line was in that: "The coup-imposed authorities in Kiev voiced their desire to join NATO, and such a move would pose an imminent threat to Russia."

(Bancroft-Hinchey, Pravda.ru, 2014-03-21)

These are segments of text from the Pravda newspaper's online edition that also, but not surprisingly, tends to lean towards a view of necessity of protection in Crimea. In the first article the writer also attempts some sort of self-reflection by adding the notion that there lies a Russian self-interest in Crimea, due to the Russian fleets bases located there. What's interesting here is that the writer interprets the UN badger of responsibility to protect as a key component and a guide from which Russia later have acted. The articulation from the writer could then be interpret as Russia has only acted to protect and not at all to with aggression or motives of invasion. Russian then has only followed and acted according to the guidelines provided by the UN and are therefore not guilty of an invasion of any sorts, Russia have rather preformed acts of protection. This articulation can therefore help to fixate to protection as nodal point than invasion (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111f). What's rather interesting in the expression of self-interest or rather some sort of self-preservation that also has forced Russia to act, through the threat of West and NATO closing in on Russian buffer states like Ukraine. It here does seem like Russia did not only follow the standards set by the UN, they also manage to protect themselves against the West.

The second segment rather glorifies Putin actions concerning the event in Crimea. It claims that Putin could not just leave the population of Crimea unprotected fending for themselves, he needed to act to protect these people further strengthening the fixation of protection as nodal point in the Conflict (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105). The segment also contains a metaphorical use of the game chess, where the writer articulates that by standing by and doing nothing, the Russians would not have been able to stop the expansion of NATO and West on Russia’s doorstep. So by making these moves in Crimea, not only have Russia moved out of the positions of check but
also avoiding checkmate. This use of chess as a metaphor also adds a more dramatic narrative, where it rather seems like Russia would have to act to avoid extinction. The metaphor then brings what could be considered a threat that isn’t so dramatic to new heights (see Dahllöf. 2009:149).

The third segment states Russia has the need of Ukraine as a buffer state for protection against the West and organisations as NATO. By securing the Crimean Peninsula their geo-military situation is better with access to the black sea and by eventually keeping Ukraine within its grasp would further add to the ability to defend themselves. This, mixed with the arguments of protecting the ethnic Russians and the Russian speaking population of Ukraine would indeed point to that from a Russian perspective at least there is a view that the event taken place in Crimea is means of protection rather than an invasion. The analogy of Kiev joining the NATO can also work excluding, where by expressing this meaning, it does not only say that Kiev want’s to join NATO it also sais that the new political climate in Kiev does not in fact belong to the East, Kiev is therefore defined through what it isn’t, the East (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985:127ff).

5.2. The Image of Russia in the Crimea Crisis through a western media lens
This segment focuses on how Russia is being portrayed in the material. This will help to establish Russia’s position within the discourse but also provide an insight in on how Russia as the other is constructed in the western media in a context of the Crimea Crisis.

The events came a day after thousands of protesters in Simferopol, the capital of Ukraine’s Crimea region and a tinderbox of ethnic, religious and political divisions, clashed in the tumultuous struggle for Ukraine that drove the president from power last weekend and that has pushed Russia and the West into a face-off reminiscent of the Cold War.

(Higgins & Erlanger, nytimes.com, 2014-02-27)

Mr. Putin, as he has before, denounced the uprising as a coup carried out by “Russophobes and neo-Nazis” and abetted by foreigners, saying it justified Russia’s efforts to protect Crimea’s population.
Eight hundred miles away, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia ordered a surprise military exercise of ground and air forces on Ukraine’s doorstep on Wednesday, adding to the tensions with Europe and the United States and underscoring his intention to keep Ukraine in Moscow’s orbit.

Above is an example on how the writers are drawing parallels with the Cold War, in this case it can be interpret metaphorically, where the writers compare the tension between Russia and West as something that existed during the Cold War. By such comparison another light sheds on the conflict, it is just not a question of Ukraine versus Russia; it is the West versus Russia. It could then affect the positioning of the two parts in the Media, where their take position held during the cold war, excluding all other possible position (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:127ff). This can point to what Rodin calls Security Communities, where Ukraine since gotten rid of Yanukovych has closed in on the ways of democratized peace and are therefore not seen as an authorial or a violent state (see Rodin 2010:124). Through this example its clear that Ukraine is closer to the West and that Russia is the other part in the conflict. The use of this particular metaphor also makes it easier for the reader to differ between which side Ukraine belongs to. The second quotation is also descriptive of the relationship between Russia and EU and the US, here creating tension. Another interesting aspect of the second quotation is the metaphorical and metonymy content in the last sentence. First Moscow, for all intentions here used as a metonymy for Russia, but also for power, since the government of Russia is based here. The concept of power within Moscow as a metonymy is later establish by the metaphorical use of Orbit, where the writers refers to Moscow as a central point around which Ukraine orbits (see Dahllöf, 2009:152f).
The rush of events in Crimea, which is home to Russia’s Black Sea Fleet, accelerated the forces tugging at Ukraine since the ouster last weekend of President Viktor F. Yanukovych. The events also deepened a dangerous rift between Ukraine’s new leadership and the Kremlin, which has refused to recognize the new government and now appears to have given shelter to the ousted president and added a new element of uncertainty to Russia’s relations with the West.

(Higgins, nytimes.com, 2014-02-27)

Russia’s action can be explained and put in context through what Rodin describes as the Russian view of democracy, where instances such as constitutional order and stability are key points. Revolutions or uprisings such as the one in Ukraine are therefore more seen as a threat and something bad from a Russian perspective whilst it from a perspective of the West, where focus lies on different kinds of freedoms is indeed seen as something good (see Rodin 2010:126). This then also brings the binary oppositions in play, where the metonymy Kremlin, that points to the elite political power of Russia is opposing what West deems as good in a context of democracy. It is in the eyes of Kremlin not seen as a favourable development due to its character of instability and constitutional un-order and therefore it cannot be seen as good from their perspective. The both sides therefore stand in opposition to each other, both in a view of democracy and also in this specific conflict (see Gillman, 1985:16ff).

The segment can then be interpreted as Russia, somewhat stereotypically acts and reasons in opposite to the West. By linking Russia’s actions with the sign dangerous as descriptive for what it does towards Russia’s relationship with Ukraine, there is also an intention of Russia being bad, or doing something bad since it is considered dangerous and could effect these relations. It can then be linked to the mental representations of good and bad and them, effectively linking the bad to them and differing Russia and us (see Gillman, 1985:16ff).

On Saturday Lawrow said in an interview with national television that Kremlin didn’t have the slightest intention to cross the Ukrainian border with its troops. On the other hand he did confirm Russia’s obligation to protect ethnic Russians in other States.

(Writers Translation, Ross & Schuller, faz.net, 2014-03-30)
Angela Merkel, according to participants in a meeting with the Unionsfraktion accused Russia of having robbed the Ukrainian peninsula. “One could speak about an Annexation”, the Bundeskansler continued to say on the Tuesday afternoon in Berlin. One cannot let the Russian leadership go through with it.

(Writers translation, Faz.net, 2014-03-11)

The quotation above is indeed part of the journalistic texts but also contains articulations from subject positions, two political leaders, the foreign minister of Russia Sergei Lawrow and the German Bundeskansler Angela Merkel. A conflict lies between both articulations, where one speaks of a form of protectionism and the other of annexation. It is also suggested with the use of the sign geraubt, robbed, that the actions preformed by Russia are criminal. In this context geraubt can be interpret as a metaphor that points to these criminal actions (see Dahllöf, 2009:149).

By using the robbing metaphor, its also possible to connect it to a discourse of Invasion, in the sense that Russia has invaded and stolen Crimea from Ukraine, effectively strengthening the fixation of Invasion (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105).

When considering Russia’s actions as criminal, it is also important to consider how it affects the image of Russia in western media. Since Germany can be considered to be an integrated part of the West, a West that historically stands against Russia, a part of the East, one can consider the role of binary oppositions. Since Angela Merkel implies that Russia’s actions are criminal, the actions of the West can therefore be understood as legal (see Eriksson, Baaz & Thörn, 1999:18). As criminal actions often are considered bad since the break against both a legal and a moral system of laws the perpetrator can also be considered bad. If Russia’s actions are considered criminal, it could then also point to that they are bad and those who stand against Russia, can therefore be considered the opposite, good. It effects the construction of the stereotype of Russia as the bad them and at the same time makes the West or those who oppose Russia as good (see Gillman, 1985:16ff). Another meaning inserted in the word of this criminal nature is the aggression, and as Rodin points out, this is not an uncommon picture of Russia in news media (see Rodin, 2010:126). The portraying of Russia as aggressive is also a part of the image of Russia as the significant other, its behaviour; the aggressiveness is the opposite of the ways of democratised peace nations of the West (see Rodin, 2010:126).

He denounced what he called the global domination of one superpower and its allies that emerged. “They cheated us again and again, made decisions behind
our back, presenting us with completed facts,” he said. “That’s the way it was with the expansion of NATO in the East, with the deployment of military infrastructure at our borders. They always told us the same thing: ‘Well, this doesn’t involve you.’ ”

(Myers & Barry, nytimes.com, 2014-03-18)

While his actions, which the United States, Europe and Ukraine do not recognize, provoked renewed denunciations and threats of tougher sanctions and diplomatic isolation, it remained unclear how far the West was willing to go to punish Mr. Putin. The leaders of what had been the Group of 8 nations announced they would meet next week as the Group of 7, excluding Russia from a club Russia once desperately craved to join.

(Myers & Barry, nytimes.com, 2014-03-18)

The articulation by Putin puts it quite clear that he feels that they, the West, cheated us, Russia with military expansion in the East. The military expansion in this case can in part be explained by the culture of the relation West and Russia holds against each other much of it reminiscence of the Cold War but with an expansion of security communities such as the NATO throughout the East (see Rodin, 2010:122f, also see Wendt 1999:262-299). The second segment describes what actions the West should take against Putin, how they as a collective should punish his actions. The question is how far they are willing to take this punishment. It can then be interpret as Russia; through the extension of Putin has done something wrong or ill advised and the West must therefore punish Russia. Russia and Putin would then assume a position below the West in the worldly hierarchy. This points to what Eriksson, Baaz and Thörn (1999) explains as an instance where the binary oppositions of east/west also has an affect on the social structure of the world, where the west is placed above the east (Eriksson, Baaz & Thörn 1999:18).
5.4. Image of Russia in the Crimea Crisis through an eastern media lens

When going through the material, there are indeed some interesting aspects of how Russia’s actions are being portrayed. This segment then intends to nuance that view with an analysis of how Russia I being portrayed in the eastern media, or in this case the national Russian media and how Russia is seen as the other in context of the Crimea Crisis.

This past week delivered a speech at a rapid-fire, 90-minute summit in Brussels where he said that Russia stood "alone" on the Ukraine crisis and that "the world is safer and more just when Europe and America stand as one."

The president's message was clear, American and German (NATO) policymakers intend to isolate Russia and steer the world toward a new Cold War era. It was not by accident that the German press, this past week, ratcheted up its anti-Russian rhetoric timed to coincide with Obama's arrival and speech.

(Hart, Pravda.ru, 2014-03-31)

The first segment of text contains an articulation from US President Obama, where he points to that in the Ukraine Crisis, Russia stands alone. Obama is also quoted to saying that the world is safer and more just if the EU and US stand as one. In this case the writer makes it clear that they consists of the EU, NATO and the US and that Russia is isolated and stands alone. This can also be connected to what Rodin points to as the formation of security communities which holds a common culture which Russia here clearly isn’t a part of (see Rodin 2010:123, also see Adler & Barnett, 1998). The segment also points to another instance, one of moral. The writer suggests that the West indeed tends to steer the world to a new Cold War era and that the German press does it’s best to push this notion through an anti-Russian rhetoric in the media. On moral this would point to an attempt to place Russia on a high ground compared to the West, which in part also can affect the views of the Russian public on the matter due to the influence Russian national media holds nationally and within its sphere (see Samoilenko, 2014:3).
On the thirteenth anniversary of the illegal invasion of Iraq and the total destruction of it's "sovereignty and territorial integrity", by America and Britain, Prime Minister David Cameron has scuttled off to Brussels for a meeting of European Union Ministers to agree a "robust response" to Russia - who has fired not a shot, invaded no one and threatened nothing except to respond that if sanctions were imposed on Russia they might consider a trading response. Fair enough, surely?

(Bancroft-Hinchey, Pravda.ru, 2014-03-21)

The segment above further pushes the moral issue, where by using analogies of actions taken by the US and Britain would point to a lack of judgment and moral. These actors with questionable moral that has preformed an illegal invasion in Iraq are now about to lecture Russia on how to act in the context of Crimea. It is also made clear in the segment that Russia has not fired a shot nor invaded anyone still faces the moral scrutiny and a robust response of these actors. It then clearly points to a lacking moral and double standards and that Russia here attains the moral high ground (see Samoilenko, 2014:3). Another consideration worth mentioning is the connection the writer does between the US, Britain and EU as a collective standing against and opposing Russia, contemplating a way to punish Russia for its actions and they one thing Russia is contemplating to do in response is a trading response, further adding to the image Russia as an actor with the moral high ground.

Meanwhile, in the Crimea this week, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, with a delegation of Cabinet Ministers, paid a surprise visit promising funds for improved power supplies, water lines, education, health care, infrastructure, salaries and pensions for the elderly. Shortly before when much of the power supplied by Ukraine was mysteriously cut, Russia immediately supplied mega-sized generators - some which had been formerly deployed as power back-up for the Sochi Olympics.

(Bancroft-Hinchey, Pravda.ru, 2014-04-06)

Above is a segment that in short describes the kindness and dedication and moral responsibility that Russia is taking in Crimea. Prime minister Dmitry Medvedev did according to the segment pay a surprise visit where he promised funds to improve both the social system and infrastructure of Crimea. As if it wasn’t enough, Russia also immediately provided mega-sized generators to battle the mysterious cut of power supplied by Ukraine. This articulation from the writer does point to a great
moral responsibility and kindness from Russia to Crimean, effectively connecting and fixating these characteristics to Russia as helper and protector (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105). As the metaphor of cutting the power is combined with Ukraine, even if its not spoken plainly it can be interpreted as if Ukraine just left Crimea without electrical power and that Russia immediately restored it. The metaphor combined with the meaning then clearly points to that Russia holds the moral high ground against Ukraine (see Samoilenko, 2014:3). Also, by introducing the notion of that Ukraine are leaving Crimea behind, it further strengthens the strong public opinion in Russia of the need for Russia to enter Crimea to protect the ethnic Russians (see Samoilenko, 2014:3).

"When preparing for this meeting, I visited several regional groups in the UN. Many countries complained that they were subjected to enormous pressure from Western powers to ensure that they vote to support the resolution. Probably, this pressure tactic, which our Western colleagues use, has produced a result, and some countries voted reluctantly. They told us about it, complaining of the pressure that they experienced. Nevertheless, I think the result is quite good for us. We have won certain moral and political victory," said the Russian envoy to the UN.

(Pravda.ru, 2014-03-28)

The segment contains an articulation by Russia’s permanent representative in UN, Vitaly Churkin. He states that West got its will through due to the amount of pressure they put on states to vote for the resolution. By taking this notion in to account Churkin sees that result as quite good form Russia, he speaks of a moral and political victory, where is not plainly suggested but indeed indented that West acted both un-political and un-morally to push the resolution through, this fixate help to fixate West as a holder of these characteristics (see Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:105). As Samoilenko points to in his study, the need for a third-party view to bring objectivity is needed to clarify what really has happened in Crimea (see Samoilenko, 2014:3). Here it can then be interpreted as if Churkin tends to point out that through means that are morally questionable and perhaps un-political, the West has laid their hands on this objectivity and claimed it theirs through this pressure. In the articulation there are also indications of how Russia is put against the Western powers and their influence. Through the influence, the West is able to push its agenda and put Russia in a corner, in a way creates an image of Russia as the other, the nation that stands
against the power of the West. The sign powers does in this case function as a metaphor, which describes the influence and ability to set the agenda and above all its reach, how it can influence areas which by the Russians are seen as their own (see Dahllöf 2009:149). The power of the West is in this case as we discussed above not seen as something positive, rather that it enables the West to act immoral and get away with it.

The West is puzzled by the changing public opinion in the world. Israel was among the first to draw attention to the threat of spreading fascism in Ukraine. The Israeli lobby is an important global force, especially in the United States and France. There are growing concerns in Germany, and Merkel calls Putin almost every day, which causes criticism in the Bundestag. Increasingly more countries recognize the legitimacy of Russia’s actions in Crimea, including China, India, Afghanistan and several African countries.

(Lulko, Pravda.ru, 2014-03-25)

Above is an interesting segment that adds new perspectives in the image of Russia in eastern media. So far the West and Russia has been opposing one another through out the material, but here we see how to subject positions from east and west are linked together. The positions are Bundeskansler Merkel and President Putin, where the article states that Merkel calls Putin almost every day. This does not only point to a closer relationship than what before has been seen in the material, it also points to a point, where Merkel of the West seeks help or advice from Putin of the East to counter the spreading fascism in Ukraine. The segment does in this case help to and create a reality where Russia is the frontrunner in the fight against fascism. There are indications of the emergence of these kinds of parties in Ukraine, so its not an empty statement, but it can also be a strategy used by the Media to portray this as the main problem and by doing so justifying their presence in Crimea. By highlighting how dangerous it would be both moral and ethical to let this fascist expansion go on, the media both pushes an agenda of education but also one of justification and legitimation about Russia’s actions in Crimea (see Seethaler, Karmasin & Melischek, 2013:x-xi).
6. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to identify, analyse and portray the dominating discourses and meanings related to the Crimean Crisis in international newspapers. From this aim 3 questions were concretized, how are different discourses formed in the material, how Russia’s involvement and its views were portrayed and are there indications of Russia being constructed as the other in this conflict? The result of these questions will be introduced and discussed below, one under each headline.

6.1. The Nodal Points of the Crimea Crisis

There are a number of views and meanings surrounding the conflict taken place in Crimea. But to highlight the creation, they were narrowed down to two. One nodal point, heavily supported by the Western Media where much of the material points towards what here are being defined as an invasion. This formation was much build upon the presence of Russian military troops in Crimea. Built in to this view of invasion was also the notion of annexation, which also suggests military power playing a part in the conflict. There has also been one view, mainly portrayed in eastern media of protection, where Russia’s presence in Crimea is seen as necessary to protect its interests and the ethno-Russian and Russian-speaking Population from threats. These threats have either been NATO and West expansion in Ukraine potentially losing it as a buffer state, effectively decreasing Russia’s national security and the growing fascism within Ukraine that would be a threat to the Russian Population of Ukraine.

The nodal points are in conflict with each other, twisting over the definitions that should be asserted to the Conflict in Crimea. The meanings with in each nodal point have been wide and stretched over a series of areas. On both sides its possible to find both political and democratic arguments on how the conflict should be perceived. Where Russia claims the need for protection against a raising fascist wave in Ukraine grasping for power, West has argued that the regime shift in Ukraine are one step towards democracy and so on. Much of the misconceptions and arguments could be boiled down to how the media image of democracy is portrayed in the countries. As Rodin points to, main concepts of democracy from a Russian perspective consist of constitutional order, stability and harmony, which they deem, has been upheaved in Ukraine (see Rodin, 2010:124). At the same time, the Wests view of democracy lies in the different kinds of freedoms such as freedom of meeting and freedom of expression. These expressions of freedom could be argued to have played a big part...
in the shift of power in Ukraine after the long protests. In this instance the different views of democracy can be reflected in the nodal points portrayed here.

6.2. Russia’s involvement and views in the Crimea Crisis
Russia’s involvement and views has, as a natural reaction to the different discourses discussed above also been heavily twisted. Russia’s involvement, depending in which part of the material one looks has been quite the opposite at times. In the material there are an on going struggle of attaining the moral high ground in questions circulating the Conflict in Crimea. Russia is often attaining the moral high ground in the Crisis in the material coming from the eastern media but there are also indications of articulations coming from Russian representatives in the western media that present this view, where they position themselves morally above the West. In Eastern Media, examples or parallels to West actions in countries like Iraq or Syria are often introduced to put Russia’s actions in comparison. It is important for both sides to attain this high ground, when done so Samoilenko states that the possibility to legitimize own actions and to delegitimize the opponent’s actions is possible (see Samoilenko, 2014:2). To conclude, in all the material, Russia is somehow involved in what is taken place in Crimea, sometimes through means of military intervention and sometimes as a protector or a helper of countrymen in need.

6.3. Russia as The Other in the Crimea Crisis
It exists a form of other in material. In almost every instance this other has been connected to Russia. The area of study has been a conflict where a “us and them” often manifests. There have also in this conflict been openings to see how the other was constructed. As the different nodal points clearly divide the sides in the conflict they also points towards the existence of “us and them”. It can be compared to what Rodin points to as different relationship cultures, where the West often to some extent holds a homogenous culture they share with each other whereas Russia does not share this culture and are therefore not included in the us of the West (see Rodin, 2009:124).

When analysing binary oppositions the biggest instance has been the creation of the image of Russia as bad, thus excluding them from us who must be the opposite, the
good. It the material it has mainly been done through projections of actions Russia has taken in Crimea. It does to a large extent correspond with the Western view of invasion, where the use of military force to retain land from another country is considered a bad act. Within these accusations of invasion there are also signs that suggests that Russia’s behaviour is aggressive and disrespectful of international laws further strengthen the construction of Russia as the other, not a part of us, the democratic and peaceful West. It can also be compared to Shetsova’s thoughts of Russia trying to reclaim its position as superpower, attempting to force the West into submission through an aggressive stance in the foreign politics (see Shetsova, 2010:182).
7. Bibliography

Literature:


Hall, Stuart (2013) ”The work of representation”. I Hall, Stuart, Evans, Jessica & Nixon, Sean (red.) Representation. Milton Keynes: The Open University


Seethaler, Josef Karmasin, Matthias Melischek, Gabriele (2013): *Selling war: The Role of the Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts from World War I to the War on Terror*. Bristol: Intellect Ltd.


**Electronic documents:**

Frankfurter Allgemeine (2014A)  
[http://verlag.faz.net/unternehmen/ueber-uns/](http://verlag.faz.net/unternehmen/ueber-uns/)  
Retrieved 2014-05-26

Frankfurter Allgemeine (2014B)  
Retrieved 2014-04-16

Nationalencyklopedin (2014A)  
[http://www.ne.se.proxy.ub.umu.se/enkel/annexion](http://www.ne.se.proxy.ub.umu.se/enkel/annexion)  
Retrieved 2014-05-25

New York Times (2014A)  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/03/opinion/crimea-the-tinderbox.html?_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/03/opinion/crimea-the-tinderbox.html?_r=1)  
Retrieved 2014-03-24

New York Times (2014A)  
[http://www.nytco.com/who-we-are/](http://www.nytco.com/who-we-are/)  
Retrieved 2014-05-26
Reuters (2014A)
http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/04/russia-pravda-idUSL5E8G41L820120504
Retrieved 2014-05-26