

Gendering national identity: a poststructural analysis of the Trump administration and foreign trade policy



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Bachelor thesis in Global Studies

Spring semester 2019

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Abstract

This paper takes its onset in an ongoing trade war between the United States (U.S.) and China. As current president of the U.S., Donald Trump is considered by many to challenge how U.S. foreign affairs are conducted today. For a better understanding of how global politics is conducted, this paper explores a gendered U.S. national identity through poststructuralism, through which foreign policy and identity are theorized as relying upon each other. Poststructuralism challenges the dominant understanding of International Relations, and in how political and analytical perspectives can be investigated. Moreover, the conceptualization of gender in this paper stems from the works of e.g. Judith Butler and Nira-Yuval-Davis. By using the method of discourse analysis, the goal of this paper is to identify articulations of identity constructions and to illustrate how these have gendered implications, and how this relates to foreign (trade) policy. This paper examines official speeches and documents produced by the Trump administration through a discourse analysis and the methodological framework as formulated by Lene Hansen, with an analytical focus on identity constructions and the dichotomy of Self/Other. The findings suggest that the U.S. national identity as constructed under the Trump administration draws upon gendered underpinnings, which are performative reciprocally relational to foreign policy, as showcased through the U.S. China trade war.

***Keywords:** national identity, gender, U.S. foreign policy, U.S. foreign trade policy, poststructuralism, discourse analysis*

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude towards my supervisor, Bryan Mabee, for the guidance and advice he has provided me, as well as encouraging me, along this process. Thank you!

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1. Introduction

Identity is an inescapable dimension of being

Campbell (1992:9)

On January 20th, 2017, president Donald Trump was inaugurated as the 45th president of the United States of America (U.S.). His approach and way of being have seemingly been regarded by many as deviant from presidents before him. He has been deemed “unpresidential” as he has e.g. showcased polarizing and hostile rhetoric at rallies and through speeches, as well as through his personal twitter account. On the subject of foreign policy, Trump is considered by many to be highly unpredictable, a character trait he himself said is to be encouraged (Fuchs, 2017, February 13th). Moreover, the U.S. is considered to be a vital player in producing the current world order. That world order has previously in the U.S. been articulated to be centered around open markets, alliances for safety, multilateral cooperation and overall democratic societies. However, Trump has taken numerous measures to violate these accomplishments. E.g., through initiating trade wars and turning its back on former allies, and adopting a more realist worldview that is harsher, when, in general, American values has been historically grounded in the liberal beliefs that humans are essentially good and rational (Ikenberry, 2017). In the process of making sense of international affairs today, this paper argues that identity is imperative, as identity is to be seen as shaping the interests and motives of nation-states, making identity and foreign policy inseparable. Drawing upon a poststructural framework, guided by theories from Campbell (1992) and Hansen (2013), this paper explores a U.S. gendered national identity as constructed through foreign policy discourse. In foreign policy, constructions of identity relies on Othering, that is, by defining oneself, one by default also defines what one is not. This legitimizes the enactment of foreign policy, as foreign policies rely on the representation of what they seek to address. But what does this have to do with gender? In this paper, gender will be conceptualized as a theme of identity and will outline and highlight different theoretical perspectives on how to analyze gendered underpinnings within the construction of national identity. The purpose of this is to reinforce the importance of gender in identity constructions, and by extension, the understanding of global politics. And as will be argued

throughout this paper, an identity that is performed and maintained through foreign policy. This paper will investigate five foreign policy document and speeches produced by Trump and his administration. By the method of discourse analysis, the aim of this paper is to identify gendered implications of identity as constructed under the Trump administration, and highlight in what way these are connected to foreign (trade) policy, through the case of the U.S. China trade war.

Throughout this paper, I argue that gender is a part of a state's identity which influences foreign policy, therefore, national identity is a crucial aspect of understanding global politics today.

2. Research

2.1 Research problem

Global politics is in many ways a man's world. Men have throughout history played a huge part in how we perceive international affairs, as it is men that have been dominating this arena for years, both as politicians and leaders, and as academics in defining the field of International Relations (IR) (Tickner, 1992:1ff). Globally in 2016, there were 38 States in which women accounted for less than 10 percent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, including 4 chambers with no women at all. In January 2017, only 18.3 percent of government ministers were women, according to UN Women (2017). One could thus argue that there is no coincidence that characteristics commonly connected to masculinity, such as strength, power, autonomy, are also associated with what is considered to be normative behavior in the matter of global politics (Tickner, 1992:3). The stereotypical masculinity which can be found within IR can be labeled as hegemonic masculinity, which is "a socially constructed cultural ideal that, while it does not correspond to the actual personality of the majority of men, sustains patriarchal authority and legitimizes a patriarchal political and social order" (ibid.).

Jindy Pettman argues that "it should be possible to write the body into a discipline that tracks power relations and practices which impact so directly and often so devastatingly on actual bodies" (1992:105). This statement captures why gender is important to global politics and ought to be seen as integrated into how world politics is organized. Gender is

also to be seen as a logic “which is produced by and productive of the ways in which we understand and perform global politics” (Shepherd, 2015:26).

The predominant theories of IR today, realism and liberalism have, in my opinion, limitations in regards to a theory of gender. Feminists argue that realism is essentially upholding a patriarchal view on war and security and that the nation-state remains the main actor. When the focus is redirected from the individual, feminists argue, it basically results in adapting a gender-less view, as the *female/feminine* individual gets invisible, and by extension, feminist discourse gets excluded. Liberalism, on the other hand, does emphasize the individual, in the sense that the individual is rational and seek to find consensus in the international arena, rather than warfare. Various liberal values such as free trade, economic interdependence are considered important tools for maintaining that. It is critiqued on feminist grounds that the economic theories that liberalism is anchored in, does not account for the economic inequalities between genders which resides therein (Ruiz, 2005).

Poststructuralism, on the other hand, I believe offers an unbiased conceptualization of global politics today, as through its understanding of the world as subjectively constructed and its understanding of how power operates and resides in language. The U.S. is considered one of the most powerful and influential states today, what can be understood from their foreign policy pursues by investigating a gendered national identity?

2.2 Purpose

In light of what is discussed above, the aim of this study is to illustrate how the U.S. perform a gendered national identity through discourse and in what ways this influence and shapes foreign (trade) policy. Hence, the center of my research agenda is to showcase the relationship between a gendered, national identity and foreign policy. By exposing gendered implications of national identity, one may be able to grasp how gender hierarchies operate.

The motivation of this study is to contribute to the research on gender in the field of IR, as well as highlight the relevance of national identity for the understanding of global politics.

2.3 Research questions

- How is a U.S. national identity constructed through foreign policy documents and discourse under the Trump administration?

- In what way does this identity have gendered underpinnings?
- How can the articulations of identity be related to concrete issues of foreign (trade) policy?

2.4 Previous research

In the field of IR, the importance of identity in research varies. Realism, which is considered by many to be the dominating IR-theory, pays little attention to the individual, as mentioned above. The most relevant actor is the nation-state which is sovereign. Realists do not deny that there exist individuals and institutions within states but their power is limited, thus, a state's identity is often irrelevant (Antunes & Camisao, 2017:15). This static view of the state can be criticised on the grounds that empirically, there can be challenges on the inside of a state in the same way as there can be from the outside, as well as on normative grounds, as the view rejects states to act upon collective global problems such as human rights abuses in other sovereign states or to environmental issues (Dunne & Schmidt, 2001:154ff). The meaning of central words within realism, such as anarchy, often has a taken for granted-status, however, as a poststructural would argue, there can be no universal truths, and there are pre-existing assumptions of what "truth" is within those very words, hence, the meaning of words is *produced*, rather than something that is objectively existing (Mc Morrow, 2000:56). I.e., the way anarchy or self-help is depicted according to realists, are socially constructed and thus could be subjected to change depending on, e.g. context. Such a context is what a study on identity could be able to provide. Where the realist emphasizes the state as the main actor, liberalism pays more attention to the individual, and in the matter of international politics, relies on tools which are widely based on a liberal set of values (Dunne, 2001:176).

Constructivism on the other hand explicitly theorizes about identity. Most notably, in relation to the end of the Cold War, whose ending some argue the traditional theories of realism and liberalism could not explain. From a constructivist standpoint, ontology is socially constructed, hence, the agency of individuals are considered significant to a theorization of how international politics is conducted because they are contributing to the construction of the social world. Constructivist scholar Alexander Wendt exemplifies this in how states act towards other states depending on whether the other state is considered a

friend or foe. The U.S. would act differently towards North Korea than Britain, because of their relationship, rather than their material capabilities; both North Korea and Britain have access to nuclear weapons. Still, North Korea is considered a bigger threat to the U.S. than the United Kingdom, because North Korea is seemingly more aggressive and hostile towards the U.S. This suggests that nuclear weapons do not have a meaning unless taking into account in which social context it operates. Identities are also considered to be of importance to a constructivist, which they argue is socially constructed and interchangeable (Theys, 2017:36ff). Thus, there are similarities between constructivism and poststructuralism, nevertheless, they are two different theories, and the differentiation between them will be further discussed under the theoretical framework.

Following these notes on the limitations of the predominant theories of IR, I argue that poststructuralism is central for the studies of IR, because adopting a poststructural standpoint, allows for identity to come to the forefront of the analysis. And as will be illustrated throughout this paper, identity is connected to foreign policy, and how a state interacts on the international arena could thus differentiate depending on that particular state identity. Furthermore, it can give insight and explanations to why a state pursues a particular foreign policy or not.

Below follow a brief discussion on, to my knowledge, previous research conducted on the subject of foreign policy and identity. The mentioned research will help me orient myself in my conducted study.

On the subject of identity and foreign policy, David Campbell (1998) has made significant contributions with his “writing security” in which he argues that the creation of U.S. identity is largely based on the U.S. perception of danger and differentiation, which he connects to foreign policy through the interpretations of those dangers.

Campbell questions ‘objective’ threats to a state’s security and argues that more often than not whether something is a threat or not depends on how it is interpreted. Campbell does not deny that there could be such a thing as ‘real’ threats to security such as diseases and political violence that could be seen as a matter of life and death. However, danger is something that states can prescribe meaning to depending on how they interpret it. How things are interpreted are related to conceptions of national identity (Campbell, 1998:3). Campbell asserts that identity is something that everyone has, and the way identity is conceptualized according to Campbell is “constituted in relation to difference,” and “not

fixed by nature, given by God, or planned by intentional behavior” (ibid, 9). He uses Judith Butler’s theory of performativity to illustrate how identity is not something that exists decoupled from its actions, but rather, it is the repeated performative actions that serve as the referent of identity (ibid, 10). This line of argument will be used throughout this paper as well and will be further elaborated under the theoretical framework. As mentioned above, Campbell argues that identity is defined in terms of differentiation, i.e., by constructing a Self, one by default also construct what the Self is *not*. To construct a state identity on the “inside”, Campbell argues is interconnected to the construction of danger on the “outside”, which culminates into the creation of boundaries, hence, foreign policy to be theorized as “one of the boundary securing practices central to the production and reproduction of the identity in whose name it operates” (ibid, 68). Thus, the formulation of identity is connected to security.

Campbell’s study scrutinizes the U.S. identity from Columbus to the post-Cold War-era and draws upon several important examples of how this theory works in action. E.g., his findings suggest that the U.S. war in Iraq is connected to the identity as formulated by George W. Bush, where the U.S. had to safeguard and spread its values of human rights and freedom.

The methodological framework of this paper is based on discourse analysis, following the methodological tools as formulated by Lene Hansen (2013) in her book “Security as practice: discourse analysis and the Bosnian war”. In this book, she lays out a concrete methodology for a poststructural discourse analysis, which will be further discussed in the following chapter. She gives a thorough description of poststructuralism and the relationship between foreign policy and identity, which is important, as “it is through the formulation of foreign policy that identities are produced” (ibid, 1). The second part of the book showcases how the identity of the Balkans was discursively constructed within the Western debate of the Bosnian war.

On the subject of the U.S. national identity, Hixon (2008) has conducted a historical study in his book “The myth of American diplomacy: National identity and US foreign policy” in which he asserts that U.S. foreign policy, through e.g. discourse, has served to create and maintain cultural hegemony, as he emphasizes the importance of language in constructing reality. His book concludes that, historically, there is violent aggression, often legitimized through patriotism, within the construction of a U.S. identity, as he demonstrates

a pattern of warfare and intervention throughout U.S. history. E.g., many labels George W. Bush foreign policy as aggressive but in actuality, Hixon asserts that it is a behavior that can be traced throughout U.S. history, as the U.S. has chosen to go to war on numerous occasions, and thus ought to be considered as a part of a U.S. identity. This then offers some motive to actions. He links this to nationalism, which he states “forges emotional bonds of unity, loyalty, and patriotism that powerfully reaffirms U.S. identity” (ibid, 14). This points towards the connection between foreign policy and identity. Hixon highlights that culture has played an important part in shaping identity, and this affects how other states are depicted as friends or enemies. On the whole, his study gives insight into how U.S. foreign policy historically been linked to warfare, military and aggressive characteristics.

Elgin Medea Brunner (2013) is another researcher who theorized on the subject on foreign policy and identity but with an analytical focus on gender. Her book “Foreign Security policy, gender, and U.S. military identity” is what inspired the subject of this paper. In this book, Brunner builds upon the work of Campbell and Hansen, and her study derives from a poststructural standpoint investigating U.S. military identity through discourse analysis, through military documents on perception management in conflict from 1991-2007. Her findings show a military identity which is highly masculine. Her book exposes some of the links between national identity, the state, and its foreign policy. Brunner also ties masculinity with orientalism and has an analytical focus on articulations of ideology within the documents, as well as the gendered implications. Her analysis also shows how ‘Othering’ is framed within these documents and what implications this has on foreign policy. The aim of her research for this book is to highlight the gendered underlying assumptions of military perception management. By shedding a light on this, Brunner exposes power relations, its distributions, and its challenges. Her conceptualization on performativity and identity will be used in this paper as well.

Brunner’s analysis is important for contribution to research on gendered identities within IR, and I wanted to explore if her line of argument would be applicable to other types of cases. By having a similar method and theoretical framework tested on different types of scenarios, I believe, builds a stronger argument for the importance of the relationship between gender and foreign policy.

3. Theoretical framework

This chapter will present the theoretical framework chosen for this paper. These theories will serve as a foundation for the analysis of the gathered texts, as will be interpreted in accordance (Rienecker & Jørgensen, 2008:292).

3.1 Poststructural theory and IR

Poststructuralism within the field of IR is influenced by thinkers such as Foucault and Derrida (Daddow, 2013:220). A common starting point for poststructuralism is the rejection of a reality which would exist without being subjectively constructed. For a poststructuralist, concepts such as ‘truth’ and ‘knowledge’ are contested on the basis that they can never be objective but rather, the meanings attached to those concepts depends on how and in what context they are situated. Often how things get to be view as the truth are when it is formulated by those in power (Mc Marrow, 2017:56). The way power is theorized in poststructuralism is directly linked to the ideas of Foucault and differs from how many other IR-theories view power, in which power often is formulated as repressive, about control and threats. According to Foucault, on the other hand, power is thought of more in productive terms and is something that exists everywhere. Foucault connects power with both discourse and knowledge (Daddow, 2013:22ff).

The poststructural ontology is linked to language, thus, language is understood as the foundation of what is brought into being (Hansen, 2013:15). Discourses normalize forms of social organization, knowledge, meaning, subjectivity, and identity, ‘discourses are ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity, and power relations which inhere such knowledge’ (McCann & Seung-Kyung, 2017:359). Language is a crucial part of how discourses maintain dominance (Mc Marrow, 2017:57). In the context of IR, this often means to scrutinize how ‘facts’ works to maintain dominance, and to expose the power relations those concepts entail. The relationship between knowledge and power decides what the agenda will look like. Concepts that many prominent IR-scholars take for granted, like the nation-state and anarchy, is something that is questioned within poststructuralism. A poststructuralist would argue that the meaning of what those words

entail is produced rather than objectively existing. I.e., the meaning of those words are socially constructed, hence, the meaning is not fixed. Another aspect of poststructuralism is the meaning of dichotomies, e.g, good vs. evil or developed vs. underdeveloped, which are common features within the IR-discourse, often articulated by those in powerful positions (Mc Marrow, 2017:57-8).

This paper is structured around the poststructural discourse analysis as formulated by Hansen. Hansen is a poststructural IR theorist from the Copenhagen school. In accordance with her methodological framework, policy and identity are conceptualized as ontologically intertwined. This leads us to the epistemological assumptions, which are discursive. i.e., knowledge is gained through discourse. Hansen concludes that there is no identity which exists in a vacuum, and with this statement is to be noted an important difference between the poststructural IR theories and a constructivist one. Alexander Wendt first theorized about social constructivism as a branch within IR, and this theory does have some similarities with poststructuralism about identities. However, according to Wendt, identities of states can exist decoupled from relational differences. In poststructuralism, on the other hand, identity is directly linked to the discursive system and is performed through both differentiation and linking, thus, the poststructural formulation of identity is always relational. Moreover, in poststructuralism, foreign policy is regarded as exclusively a discursive practice, which is not in line with constructivist IR theories (Hansen, 2013:21,1).

In opposition to other prominent IR-theories, identity is from a poststructural standpoint not theorized in terms of causality. This is because there is nothing outside the discursive field that can constitute other explanations of reality, hence, there is nothing the discursive practices can have causally links to. This, however, does not mean that materialistic objects have no relevance to discourses, but rather, materiality is discursively constituted. I.e., the reality is not something that exists "out there". The identity of a state is constantly being constituted through foreign policy discourse. Hence, identity is a result of discourse and there is no identity that would exist without discourses constituting it - foreign policy and identity are inseparable (ibid, 24). The rejection of causality need not be a flaw but merely the chosen ontological and epistemological principles (ibid, 25). The identity of a state does not exist decoupled from discourse, but rather identity is the result of discourse (ibid, 1). To sum this up, "at the core of post-structuralist International Relations is the

reciprocally performative (as opposed to causal) relation between foreign policy and identity” (Brunner, 2013:9).

3.1.1 Poststructural feminism

Feminist approaches to the field of IR are relatively new, emerging around the 1980s. There are usually three feminist ontologies when theorizing about gender: biological gender, biological gender as mediated through social understandings of masculinity/femininity, and lastly, ‘of both social and biological gender as socially and performatively constituted’ (Hansen, 2010:15). The latter is how gender will be theorized throughout this paper, which corresponds to the poststructural feminist framework. Within IR-theory, poststructural feminists acknowledge the historical division of spheres between men and women, which will be further developed below, resulting in, among other things, the structural subordination of women in favor of men as well as the view of the state as a patriarchal institution. Furthermore, this is related to the social construction of masculinity and femininity, which is continuously upheld and reproduced by discourse and practice (ibid, 18ff). In relation to IR, theorists like Campbell (1992) have linked the construction of national identity to gendered discourses (Hansen, 2010:21). How gender is performed will be further discussed below.

3.2 Performativity

The theoretical framework of performativity is formulated by Judith Butler (1988), influenced by the ideas of Foucault. The theory is based on gender as something constructed through one's own repetitive performance of gender, and I will use it as a way of framing how I theorize about gender throughout the paper, as well as how performativity can be theorized in terms of the nation-state and as an empirical tool. Butler argues that gender does not exist without a correlation to a discourse, thus, there is no biological gender that exists independently of the social constructions of masculinity and femininity. The core of her argument is that identity is “instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*” (ibid, 481). In other words, one's gender does not exist in a pre-social setting but is rather something that is constituted by repeatedly performing a certain way of being or acting accordingly within the

given social context. A result of this is thus the possibility of fluctuation of gender roles, and the repetition needs to be continued through time to be considered stable. These performative acts are not always intentional. Butler does not deny that humans have physical bodies but her theory can be seen as what gives meaning to materia (ibid, 483ff). A way of performing gender identity is through discourse.

Cynthia Weber uses Butler's theoretical framework in relation to the nation-state to demonstrate how the identity of states are not pre-giving but actively performed and can be seen as a gendered entity (Weber, 1998:78). Weber is critiquing how often within IR-theory, states are taken for granted, existing in a "natural" state of being. She mentions how IR-scholars like Kenneth Waltz, situates sovereignty and states "within an ahistorical structure of international anarchy" (ibid, 83). Weber argues that due to its historical context, sovereignty cannot be defined in fixed terms. Weber argues instead for the theorization of a connection between state identity and sovereignty;

If we accept that—like sex and gender—states and sovereignty are both discursive effects of performative practices, then it follows ... that there is no sovereign or state identity behind expressions of state sovereignty. The identity of the state is performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its result. One of these expressions is sovereignty (Weber, 1998:90).

In this sense, Weber argues that state identity is always performatively constituted through discourse and practice, e.g., through foreign policy (ibid, 92). This captures how the identity of a state can be seen as performative, and thus dependent on in what context and whose name it is operating in, and in relation to what discourses (Campbell, 1998:73).

Furthermore, as argued by Brunner (2013:49), performativity "is a powerful tool for feminist analysis because it allows the analyst to disclose how the dichotomously (dis)empowering gender relations are perpetuated, and thereby it simultaneously generates the potential for transcending these very relations of power". In other words, applying performativity can have an emancipatory effect and is thus relevant for feminist researchers.

Performativity will be used as a theory as well as an empirical tool to be applied to the findings of the discourse analysis conducted for this study. In accordance with the poststructural theory of this study, foreign policy and identity are conceptualized as interrelated, and by applying performativity the aim is to highlight this relationship.

3.3 Gender and nation

In this paper, gender is “referring to a symbolic system, a central organizing discourse of culture, one that not only shapes how we experience and understands ourselves as men and women but also interweaves with other discourses and shapes them” (Cohn, 1993:228). I.e., investigating gendered implications can be seen as a tool for unveiling how a “natural order” comes to represent how principles for political life is organized (Stern, 2011:33). Looking at policies, governments, and institutions through a gendered lens, thus, means to look at how a certain kind of logic of gendered meanings and images are contributing to organizing the way individuals interpret events and their surroundings, as well as their positions and their ability to act within these. This could also offer a motive for actions (Young, 2007:142). The following section will conceptualize how I will explore the implications of gender in the documents for the discourse analysis. The focus point for the analysis will mostly be expressions of masculinity, i.e. how attributes and characteristics can have meanings and associations to masculinity, and binary dichotomies.

Nira Yuval-Davis has made significant contributions for a theoretical framework of a gendered understanding of nations. Yuval-Davis argues that the construction of the nation often intertwines with the construction of gender (Yuval-Davis, 1997:4). A starting point for the theorization of gender and nation is the historical exclusion of women resulting in the public vs. private sphere. Throughout 200 years of Western history, women have primarily been defined by their reproductive abilities, hence, the roll for caregiving fell on women (Trask, 2016:6). Furthermore, introduced with the industrialization, there was a shift in the economic sphere towards a market economy and with it, the spreading of liberal ideology. An ideology with emphasis on the free and autonomous individual played out in the manner of having the right to own private property, however historically, only men were entitled to that right, hence, women were subordinated to men by law. This further enhanced the division of gender roles, where women were now not only seen as best suited for housework because of their "natural" abilities but also because of the emerge of moral superiority. This then culminated in the idea of “separate spheres”, where men were considered to be more dominant and better suited for the work of the public sphere and women, for reasons mentioned above, better suited for the private sphere which is politically irrelevant (ibid, 9). When theorizing on gender and nation, nation and nationalism are typically located within the

public sphere, resulting in a lack of women or femininity within that realm (Yuval-Davis, 1997:3). Nevertheless, the theorization of womanhood within the representation of nation has been central, where women are seen as the biological reproducers of the state and given the role of the culture bearers of a nation (Yuval-Davis, 1997:14, Sinha, 2004:257-8). The cultural aspect of womanhood is coupled with reproduction, as a woman is responsible for preserving tradition and it is through this she 'fulfills her duty' (Thapar-Björkert, 2013:11). A result of this is that women are seen as the embodiment of the nation, e.g, the name Marianne for France (Sinha, 2004:256). Making women visible in the context of nation and nationalism are important contributions, however, the analytical focus for this paper is rather with 'the constitution of the nation as itself in the sanctioned institutionalization of gender *difference*' (Sinha, 2004:258). Both femininity and masculinity are involved in discourses on nations. For this paper, this also means the relations to *masculinities*, this will be elaborated below. Yuval-Davis emphasizes that gender and nation are to be theorized in relation to one another as they are constructed by each other (Yuval-Davis, 1997:22).

3.3.1 Masculinity and national identity

Ann Tickner is one of several IR-scholars whom has theorized about gender within IR-theory and gendering in terms of femininity and masculinity is a recurring feature. Feminist IR scholars have argued that questions related to topics such as foreign policy and national security have masculinist underpinnings. Ticker (1992:8) phrases it;

Masculinity and politics have a long and close association. Characteristics associated with 'manliness', such as toughness, courage, power, independence, and even physical strength, have, throughout history, been those most valued in the conduct of politics, particularly international politics. Frequently, manliness has also been associated with violence and the use of force, a type of behavior that, when conducted in the international arena, has been valorized and applauded in the name of defending one's country.

On the theorization of masculinity, Raewyn Connell has made great impacts. Connell defines masculinity as "...simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices on bodily experience, personality and culture" (Squires, 2008:76). This is summarized by Shippers (2007) as having three components; it is a location that is practically performed by

individuals, these practices along with characteristics can be understood as “masculine”, and these have social and cultural consequences. Furthermore, these components can be embodied regardless of gender identity. Moreover, there are several types of masculinity, and what is labeled as hegemonic masculinity is, according to Connell, referring to a type of masculinity which upholds domination (Connell, 2005:115). To elaborate, the hegemonic masculinity is thus considered to be highly normative and entails stereotypical aspects of masculinity such as physical strength, competitiveness, aggressiveness, heterosexuality and emotional unavailability (Brunner, 2013:24). This can further be connected to the logic of masculinist protection, as theorized by Iris Marion Young. Young (2007:155ff) describes the masculinist protection as a way of depicting the state as a “good” man on the inside, protecting women, children, and citizens from “aggressive” men on the outside. She further explains that the logic of the masculinist protection implicitly comes with an ultimatum; one either subordinate oneself under the rule or one will get hurt by the aggressive men on the outside. Hence, there is a hierarchy between the protector and the one being protected, which Young links to the way women has a subordinated role in a patriarchal household.

In the case of the US, masculinity has historically been linked to nationalist imperialist projects, the earliest example of this being destiny manifest, the justification of expansionist pursues. Theodore Roosevelt has been pointed out as the personified example of masculine nationalism. At the beginning of his career, he was called weakling but later turned into a masculine “cowboy of the Dakotas” established through a series of books which “secured his identity as a real man”. A racialized, imperialist masculinity can be found in a lot of Roosevelt's politics, cornerstones being warfare, militarism, and nationalism. The national state can thus be seen as a masculinist institution because of the history, being constituted by mostly men, and distributing highly masculinist institutions such as the military(Nagel, 1998:250). Nationalism corresponds with similar characteristics as hegemonic masculinity, like patriotism, and bravery. Femininity also has its representation within nationalism, as mentioned above, coupled with motherhood and the bearer of the culture and masculinist honor to future generations. Other defining features of femininity within nationalism is support and tradition (ibid, 251ff). Following this, nationalism is also intertwined with the heterosexual, nuclear family (Sinha, 2004:260).

To conclude, the theorization on gender and masculinity and their relationship with the nation discussed above will serve as the foundation of how I will conceptualize gendered underpinnings as explored through the discourse analysis, following the analytical steps for the construction of national identity. Stern (2011:35) points out that the reading of texts through gender is “to explore what might be revealed by questioning how chains of signifiers (such as protector-protected, hard-soft, order-anarchy, rational-emotional, state-nation, war-peace, civilisation-barbarism and Mars-Venus, etc.) are imbued with meaning through their gendered coding.” However, gendered codings are often not explicitly articulated (ibid), but as I will argue throughout this paper, gender is nonetheless persistent in the documents, and the theorization on masculinity and gender as discussed above will serve as the analytical tools to identify these implications. Articulations associated with masculinity will be seen as the key concepts for the analysis.

4. Methodology

This chapter will give an overview of the chosen methodology for this paper, which, as the poststructural theoretical framework of this paper allows, is discourse analysis. Firstly, I will present the research design of the conducted discourse analysis, which is based on Hansen’s framework (2013), the following section will be a brief, general, discussion on discourse as a concept, followed by a more in-depth presentation of Hansen’s discourse analysis and the analytical steps the research design is built upon.

4.1 Documents, analytical focus, and research design

The analytical focus of this paper in terms of identity, is a single Self, the U.S., constructed in a process of linking and differentiation with an Other, which in the case of this paper, attention will be especially paid to China. Moreover, the analytical focus will be in what way these articulations draws upon gendered underpinnings. This paper will examine official discourse, that is, intertextual model 1. Meaning, that the chosen documents for the analysis are official documents produced by those who have the authority to sanction the foreign policies pursued. In this paper, attention will be paid to three speeches, one news conference, as well as one official document, which are:

1. Trump’s State of the Union speech on January 31st, 2018(a).
2. Trump’s speech to joint sessions of Congress, February 28th, 2017, which was his first public address as elected president.
3. Trump speech to the United Nations General Assembly in 2018(b).
4. The National Security Strategy (NSS) formulated in 2017.
5. Trump’s news conference following the midterms election on November 8th, 2018 (c)

The motivation for the chosen texts is in line with Hansen’s (2013:76) criteria, which are: 1. clear articulations, 2. Widely attended to, and 3. Formal authority. State of the Union speeches are considered ideal in meeting all the criteria. For the chosen time period for this paper, however, Trump has only conducted one State of the Union speech, hence, the other speeches have been chosen on the basis of their similarity to a State of the Union speech. The NSS was chosen on the basis that represents key aspects of foreign policy. The texts will be analyzed on the basis of the analytical steps presented under section 4.2.2.

The number of events is affected by the temporal perspective which consists of Trump’s first two years in office, from January 2017 - December 2018, and attention will be paid to a single specific event during this period, namely the U.S. China trade war. The research design of this paper is presented in the figure below.

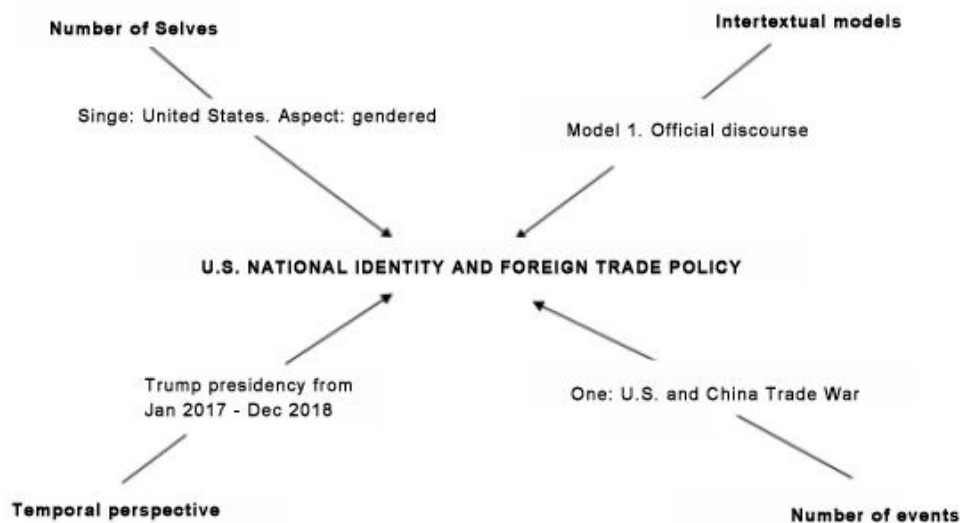


Figure 1. The research design for the discourse analysis of this study adapted from Hansen (2013:67).

4.2 Discourse analysis

The chosen method for this paper is discourse analysis, which is a useful tool when examining identities and power relations, which is the principal goal of this study (Bergström & Boréus, 2000:354). Discourse is a multifaceted concept that originates from the ideas of Foucault and his theories of power. A generalizing definition of the term could be “a specific way to talk about and understand the world (or a particular domain of the world)” (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000:7). The term can be derived from structural and poststructural theories in which language is a crucial part of how to understand reality and how its social relationships are constructed (ibid, 15). According to Foucault, discourses are intertwined with power, because discourses work as rules of how knowledge regarding a specific subject is constructed and reproduced. A discourse always comes to represent a social practice which shapes the world (ibid, 25).

Discourse analysis can be undertaken in several different ways, but a starting point is that linguistic processes constitute crucial ways of both understanding and constructing the world around us. Thus, the construction of the world does in this sense not rely on idées derived from material things but rather, is derived from the organization of social reality as presumed by language. Discourse analysis is thus structured around the textual analysis. (Bergström & Boréus, 2000:354). An analysis based on language thus inherits an interpretive nature, which generates a hermeneutic foundation for my conducted analysis (Brunner, 2013:66). I.e., how the chosen texts are analyzed is based on how I interpret them, and the results could thus differ if they were to be interpreted differently. However, this also provides consciousness of the temporal and contextual settings of the author.

One way for researchers to navigate within discourse is to investigate a subject and explore if there are any patterns within specific areas of that subject, and what social consequences these might have for the construction of discursive conceptions of reality (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000:28). This intertwines language with practice, and this is essentially in line with the view of discourse as connected to pursues of foreign policies, which will be elaborated below.

4.2.2 Lene Hansen's poststructural discourse analysis

The analytical and methodological framework through which I will investigate identity constructions is drawn upon by Lene Hansen. The epistemological starting point of poststructural discourse analysis is language, hence, explicit articulations will be the center of this. Language is what gives meaning to different things and this is further connected to social relations, where the connections of sound and objects give meaning to things (Hansen, 2013:18). In IR, identity and foreign policy are conceptualized as discursive, political, social and relational:

Poststructuralist analysis has a research program that speaks directly to the conduct of foreign policy. This research program is based on the assumption that policies are dependent upon representations of the threat, country, security problem, or crisis they seek to address. Foreign policies need to ascribe meaning to the situation and to construct the objects within it, and in doing so they articulate and draw upon specific identities of other states, regions, peoples, and institutions as well as on the identity of a national, regional, or institutional Self (Hansen, 2013:5).

A starting point for examining the chosen documents would, according to Hansen's methodological tools, be to "identifying those terms that indicate a clear construction of the Other" (ibid, 37). This is to emphasize the relational nature of identity, which is in constant reference to a juxtaposing Other. The juxtaposing Other should be seen as a part of signs situated in a larger textual web. These signs are thus connected to its counterparts, which represents privileged and devalued signs, labeled as a process of linking and differentiating (ibid, 40).

The processes of linking and differentiation provide theoretical concepts and methodological tools for conducting empirical analysis and they allow for a structured and systematic analysis of: how discourses seek to construct stability, where they become unstable, how they can be deconstructed, and the processes through which they change (ibid).

This signifies the social aspect of identity as intersubjective.

Moreover, Hansen outlines three dimensions of identity constructions situated within discourse; spatiality, temporality, and ethicality. These dimensions can be seen as the content of identity. Spatiality is referring to the relational formulation of identity and is often articulated in relation to the constructions of other countries, or regions like 'the West' or 'the

Middle East', or peoples. The spatial identity is hence involving the constructions of boundaries (ibid, 42). The construction of temporal identity is often formulated in progress and intransigence, or the unwillingness to change one's view, and could e.g be referring to development and change. The focus point for the temporal aspect is how the subject is placed in time, in regards to the processes mentioned above. Within the formulation of the temporal identity of the Self, there is also the articulation of the temporal identity of the Other, which could be both similar or oppositional (ibid, 44). The construction of ethical identity is referring to discourses regarding responsibility, ethics, and morality. A way to formulate this can be the national interest of a government because "to legitimize their foreign policies as in 'national interest' is to articulate a responsibility toward the national body of politics" (ibid, 45). The reason for why these three dimensions are chosen for identity construction, Hansen argues, is because historically, "space, time and responsibility are the big concepts through which political communities are thought and argued" (Hansen, 2013:41).

It is through these dimensions of identity, combined with the Self/Other dichotomy, Hansen points out as the "theoretical grip"; one can thus analyze in what way identity and othering are framed within foreign policy (ibid, 45). As mentioned, a starting point while analyzing the documents is to identify signs of relationships of Self and Other. Furthermore, the texts should be built around key representations of identity. An example of this could e.g. be the word 'evil' if looking at George W. Bush's foreign policy in regards to Iraq (ibid, 46-7).

In this paper, I will be examining one Self, the U.S. as formulated under the Trump administration. Moreover, I will be using an intertextual model, labeled by Hansen as model 1, in which to structure the foreign policy discourse around. The model in question will be focusing on official texts or documents, from political people with authority. This could, e.g., be speeches (ibid, 53-4). In this paper, this is material from Trump and his administration. The intertextual links within the chosen official documents are the analytical focus. Intertextuality is basically referring the view on how text is to be seen as. Every text makes by default references to other texts because all texts are part of a relational textual web, and this is essentially the meaning of intertextuality (ibid, 49).

Fundamentally, this paper will be based on Hansen's analytical steps as introduced above for constructing a U.S. national identity. Throughout the discourse analysis, attention will be paid to processes of linking and differentiation, as well as the spatial, temporal and

ethical dimensions of identity. The reason why Hansen's methodological framework was chosen is because her framework explicitly refers to identity construction, which is the center of the research agenda of this paper.

4.3 Research limitations

The analytical focus for the gendered implications of identity in this paper is primarily discussed in terms of masculinity/femininity. Nevertheless, the theorization of gender in this context, as a social organization of practice, leaves room for other types of gendered aspects, such as ideology and colonialism, which could be subject for further research.

Although Hansen does not mention a specific time period which would be ideal when analyzing national identity, it should be noted that one could argue that the time period for this paper could seem narrow.

A more general critique towards poststructuralism and this method of discourse analysis is the question of reliability, whether the same results would be concluded if the analysis was carried out by a different researcher, and that essentially *any* text could be subject for the discourse analysis, that poststructuralist epistemology allows for a sort of anything goes-mentality when choosing text. In a response to this, Hansen points out that the chosen text for this method is carefully structured around explicit signs of representation and a juxtaposing Other, i.e., not every text can be used for this method (Hansen, 2013:41).

5. Background - U.S./China Trade war

This chapter will give an overview of the related event analyzed in regards to the discourse analysis. The purpose of this is to give some insight into the given context.

China and the U.S. have historically been intertwined in various disputes which can, among other things, be traced to their ideological differences, as China is a communist state. Going back to the Cold War, communists were seen as evil and "godless", whereas the U.S. was to be perceived as the protector of "free peoples" (Hook & Spanier, 2016:41-3). This led to the containment doctrine, which essentially meant that the U.S. would support all nations that were threatened by communist expansion (ibid, 63). This is an early example of national identity as articulated by differentiation. In regards to China, this e.g. meant that during the

Korean War, the U.S. sided and offered allegiance to South Korea, whereas China supported communist North Korea.

In 2000, Bill Clinton officially initiated permanent trade with China through the U.S.-China relations act of 2000. This resulted in China rising to be the U.S. second biggest trade partner, surpassing Mexico, in 2006. However, hostilities unfolds between the nations as China's military spending rapidly increased in 2007, which to the U.S. vice president at the time, Dick Cheney, was regarded as suspicious and threatening. Tensions consist between the two nations, as in 2012, the U.S. requested China to limit its exporting of rare metals, as a U.S. trade deficit between the U.S. and China was rising (Council on Foreign Relations, 2019).

Since Trump took office, the U.S. and China are engaged in a trade war as of January 2018. A trade war is referring to “a situation in which two or more countries raise import taxes and quotas (= limits on numbers of goods) to try to protect their own economies” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). Trump's dislike of Chinese trade policies can be traced back to before he became president, e.g. from a rally in Indiana on May 2nd, 2016, where he stated: “We can't continue to allow China to rape our country and that's what they're doing. It's the greatest theft in the history of the world” (Trump, 2016). Continuously throughout his campaign in 2016, he points out that unfair trade practices with China has hurt the U.S. According to Trump, the U.S. and China were at that time already engaged in a trade war and the U.S. was the losers. He thus promised to trickle down transnational trade deals and to put up an offensive towards China's economic practices. He further linked foreign trade policies to “joblessness” in America (Corasaniti, Burns & Applebaum, 2016, June 28).

Moreover, Trump has had expressed a distrust towards China, even before he formally announced he was running for president, through a tweet from him dated to September 21st, 2011, which reads “China is neither an ally or a friend--they want to beat us and own our country” (Real Donald Trump, 2011, Sept 21). Critical voices have been raised from Trump's administration as well. Mike Pompeo, secretary of state, stated that “the trade war by China against the United States has been going on for years” and he further goes on that the administration is “determined to win it” (Samuels, 2018, Sept 23).

There are also those who are skeptical of the trade war. E.g., analyst Zachary Karabell, head of Global Strategies Envestnet, has laid out extensive critique in an article in Wired. He states that “if the US truly wants to remain economically strong and competitive, it

must focus on its advantages rather than obsessing about its weaknesses” (Karabell, 2018 March 31).

After Trump officially took office in 2017, he initiated an investigation on Chinese trade policies. This was directed towards intellectual property policies, as China has been accused of stealing from the U.S. (BBC, 2019 May 14, BBC 2017 August 19) One of Trump’s policy advisors, Peter Navarro (2018), made following comments in regards to China’s allegedly criminal behavior:

In textbook economics, trade is a win-win .. America’s trade with China is as far from that model as the Earth is from MarsWhy is the textbook model failing? The answer is .. [China’s] state-directed investments, nonmarket economy, and disregard for the rule of law. The problem’s taproot is Chinese intellectual-property theft and the forced transfer of foreign technology as a condition of accessing China’s market . . . [which allowed] Chinese companies to move rapidly up the innovation curve at much lower cost than their foreign competitors, which must recoup the cost of research and development through higher prices.

The trade war is carried out through imposed tariffs on numerous of commodities, for example, Trump has imposed a 25% tariff on all steel imports, and 10% on aluminum, as of May 2018 (BCC, May 10th, 2019).

On the subject of China and economic growth, China established its Made in China 2025 (MC-25) in 2015 in the light of that economists link productivity to prosperity. The goal of the MC-25 initiative is to establish Chinese dominance in various cutting-edge technology areas such as artificial intelligence as well as globally excel in manufacturing (Liu & Woo, 2018:332). The possibility of this was questioned by some government ministries, as this rapid manufacturing rate was not seen as possible within the framework of WTO-sanctioned instruments, which further fueled the narrative of China as using criminal methods in achieving that goal.

In regards to the trade war, China has answered by imposing tariffs on billions of dollars worth on U.S. goods (BBC, May 14th, 2019).

The core of Trump’s argument for initiating the trade war is that the U.S. has a trade deficit with its trading partners. Moreover, Trump argues that trade has been hurting some sectors in the U.S., e.g. the manufacturing sectors (BBC, May 14th, 2019, Derviş & Conroy, 2018 October 9). In March 2016, Trump wrote:

Throughout history, at the center of any thriving country has been a thriving manufacturing sector. But under decades of failed leadership, the United States has gone from being the globe's manufacturing powerhouse — the envy of the world — through a rapid deindustrialization that has evaporated entire communities (Trump, 2016 March 14).

He points out multilateral trade as the reason for a decline in power and the term “deindustrialization” of the U.S. is used. China is also mentioned as the “worst offender” of U.S. trade policies. Furthermore, he states that the U.S. has to “confront foreign trade cheating” (ibid).

This narrative suggests a gendered language; masculinist protection from China's criminal behavior and in protecting American industries through aggressiveness and competitiveness, as well as a way to reinforce power to the U.S, as the deindustrialization is connected to being weak. This leads us to the conducted discourse analysis of this paper.

6. Results and analysis

Following sections will present the results of the conducted discourse analysis. The aim of the discourse analysis is to analyze what national identity Trump articulates in these documents, what gendered implications this has, and how it interrelates with his foreign policy towards China regarding trade.

Attention will be paid to three speeches, one news conference, as well as one official document, which are:

1. Trump's State of the Union speech on January 31st, 2018(a).
2. Trump's speech to joint sessions of Congress, February 28th, 2017, which was his first public address as elected president.
3. Trump speech to the United Nations General Assembly in 2018(b).
4. The National Security Strategy (NSS) formulated in 2017.
5. Trump's news conference following the midterms election on November 8th, 2018 (c)

First, I will look at what key representation these texts provide. Following this, I will explore what political identities are to be drawn upon through processes of linking and differentiation, with an analytical focus on Hansen's three components of identity; spatiality, temporality, and ethicality. The aim of this is to illustrate the formulation of a positive U.S. national identity within foreign policy discourse and by default also the negative identity of the Other, where particular attention will be paid to China.

Following sections will provide the findings from the speeches and the NSS, and the next section the analytical focus will be on gendered underpinnings of the identifications and what implications this might have to foreign policy.

6.1 Constructions of the Self - US National Identity

The NSS (2017) is published by the executive branch of the US government, and the purpose of the NSS is to address the US national security in relation to international goals and interests (National Security Strategy Archive, 2019), which makes it ideal on the discourse of foreign policy. The NSS also provides what context the U.S. identity is situated, as the NSS articulates the international arena as in line with realism. Thus, this ought to be noted as an underlying feature of how identity is formulated.

The findings are structured around key themes. The first theme is structured around how Trump articulates what being American entails.

In Trump's speech to Congress in 2017, which was his first speech since being elected as the president, Trump articulate an American identity which is strong and proud, his opening words are as follow:

A new chapter of American greatness is now beginning. A new national pride is sweeping across our nation, and a new surge of optimism is placing impossible dreams firmly within our grasp. What we are witnessing today is the renewal of the American spirit (Trump, 2017).

A recurring feature is something Trump labels as *American*. Often it is constructed as being strong, proud, lawful and exceptional. "All the nations of the world, friend or foe, will find that America is **strong**, America is **proud**, and America is free" (Trump, 2017).

Americans as exceptional are also articulated in Trump's (2018a) State of the Union speech on January 31st 2018, "Over the last year, we have made incredible progress and **achieved extraordinary success**". He elaborates;

...no people on Earth are so fearless, or daring, or determined as Americans. If there is a mountain, we climb it. If there is a frontier, we cross it. If there is a challenge, we tame it. If there is an opportunity, we seize it.

Following the theme on success, during Trump's news conference following midterms election, Trump stated "our great country is booming like never before, and we're thriving on every single level, both in terms of economic and military strength; in terms of development. In terms of GDP, we're doing unbelievably", which also depicts an exceptional image of the U.S. under his rule (Trump, 2018c).

Trump continuously refers to Americans as strong and proud, e.g., illustrated as "the steel in America's spine", as expressed in his State of the Union speech. Trump also describes being American as coupled with patriotism: "Americans love their country" and "we want every citizen to be proud of this land that we love" (Trump, 2018a). In his speech to the UN General Assembly, he states that "we prize our culture that sustains our liberty - a culture built on strong families, deep faith, and fierce independence. We celebrate our heroes, we treasure our traditions, and above all, we love our country" (Trump, 2018b). Moreover, he explicitly embraces patriotism as he also states "we reject the ideology of globalism and accept the doctrine of patriotism"(ibid). His UN speech has a general underlying tone of patriotism within it.

The strength of the American people is also articulated within the NSS (2017:14), "In difficult times, the true character of the American people emerges: their strength, their love, and their resolve". Throughout the NSS, Trump refers to American values and the American way of life, however it does not explicitly state exactly what this means, although the last few pages of the NSS (2017:56) gives us an idea what this means by stating: "The National Security strategy celebrates and protects what we hold dear - individual liberty, the rule of law, a democratic system of government, tolerance, and opportunity for all". The last few words could be interpreted as somewhat contradictory considering the critical statements towards e.g. immigration, which is also to be found throughout the NSS.

The second theme is the articulations of U.S. interests. In the NSS (2017:46-7) it is stated that the U.S. “will redouble our commitment to established alliances and partnerships while expanding and deepening relationships with new partners that share respect for sovereign, fair and reciprocal trade, and the rule of law”. I.e., allies are considered to be important, however, there is a clear rejection of states who are not completely in line with what is constructed as American. This will be further elaborated in the following chapter. This also serves as the ethical dimension of identity which the NSS articulates, where the US will ‘lead by example’ (ibid, 37), implying that how the U.S. governs is showing how others should act as well. As mentioned in the NSS, the U.S. articulates the international arena as a state of anarchy, and sovereignty is articulated as an almost sacred state of being. That to say the strategy does not aim for complete isolationism. ‘Partners and allies’ are, again, articulated as important for the security strategy but one is only considered friend or ally if one shares American values. “The United States offers partnership to those who share our aspirations for freedom and prosperity”, (ibid, 37), “[...] those who want to partner with the United States in pursuit of shared interests, values, and aspirations”. (ibid, 1). In Trump’s State of the Union speech (2018a), he states “I am asking the Congress to pass legislation to help ensure American foreign-assistance dollars always serve American interests, and only go to America's friends”.

Most importantly, the moral obligations of the US Self is first and foremost to protect the American way of life, ‘our fundamental responsibility is to **protect the American people, the homeland, and the American way of life**’ (NSS, 2017:4) and ‘U.S. development must support America’s national interests’ (ibid, 39). This is further expressed in his State of the Union speech as well.

We are proud that we do more than any other country to help the needy, the struggling, and the underprivileged all over the world. But as President of the United States, my highest loyalty, my greatest compassion, and my constant concern is for America's children, America's struggling workers, and America's forgotten communities. (Trump, 2018a).

During the news conference (2018c), on the subject whether Trump is a nationalist, he does not give an infinitive answer but he states “I also love the world and I don’t mind helping the world, but we have to straighten out our country first”. He states that building industries in the U.S. is important and that the U.S. will not lose companies for outsourcing and that the steel and aluminum industry in America is, thanks to him, doing well. He calls the economic

situation in the U.S. as an “economic miracle” and implies that a reason for this is the changing trade relations with China. Trump states that “billions of dollars will soon be pouring into our treasury from taxes that China is paying for us”, he continues to talk about China’s economy as declining by stating that “China would have superseded us in two years as an economic power; now, they’re not even close” (ibid). In general, Trump is critical towards free trade, which is implicitly articulated within the NSS (2017:1), as international trade on several occasions is described as being “unfair” and has weakened the economy and exported jobs overseas. Similar implications can be found in Trump’s (2018a) State of the Union speech as he states “from now on, we expect trading relationships to be fair and to be reciprocal”. In his speech to the UN General Assembly he says that the U.S. has been generously opening up its economy through trade throughout the years, however, “other countries did not grant us fair reciprocal access to their markets in return” (Trump, 2018b). This will not persist, as he states that the U.S. “will not be taken for granted any longer”, and is thus in the process of renegotiating trade deals (ibid).

The third theme is articulations in relation to U.S. capabilities, which also to some extent corresponds well with the temporal aspect of the Self. Trump articulates an identity which is highly modernized and developed, and further modernization is considered to be key for security and safety. An important aspect of this is the military and US nuclear capabilities, he states that “we must modernize and rebuild our nuclear arsenal [...] making it so strong and powerful that it will deter any acts of aggression” (Trump, 2018a) and “America’s military remains the strongest in the world” (NSS, 2017:3). In Trump’s Speech to Congress, he states that “...to keep America safe, we must provide the men and women of the United States military with the tools they need to prevent war. If they must, they have to fight, and they only have to win” (Trump, 2017). In the NSS, the U.S. strong military is described as vital in maintaining the American power position and thus, maintaining the balance of power, as well as preserving American interests (NSS, 2017:28).

In summary, the key articulation of a US national identity under the Trump administration which I identify is lawful, proud, strong both in the sense of mentality as well as military means and technology, and exceptional. Furthermore, it is clear that Trump desires a homogeneous national identity built on patriotism. An overview of the spatial, temporal and ethical dimensions of identity will be presented in the next section.

6.1.1 Constructions of the Other (China)

On a general note, the construction of danger and threats under Trump are almost exclusively articulated as something outside of the U.S. borders. In the NSS, many of these are bound to geographical areas, and four dominant areas are identified; Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran. These countries are described in terms oppositional of the American Self, hence, the spatial identity. Russia and China are mostly described in negative terms, such as having malign intentions and lack of respect for human rights. “China and Russia want to shape a world antithetical to U.S. values and interest” (NSS, 2017:25). A similar statement can be found in Trump’s (2018a) State of the Union speech, “[...]rivals like China and Russia that challenge our interests, our economy, and our values. In confronting these dangers, we know that weakness is the surest path to conflict, and unmatched power is the surest means of our defense”. These statements clearly capture the oppositional construction of these nations. Furthermore, China and Russia are described as authoritarian and revisionist on numerous occasions in the NSS. For example, they are described as being “determined to make economies less free, less fair, to grow their militaries, and to control information and data to repress their societies and expand their influence” (NSS, 2017:2). It is also implied that the U.S. strategy in dealing with China previously has been based on the spreading of liberal values, as stated:

For decades, U.S. policy was rooted in the belief that support for China’s rise and for its integration into the post-war international order would liberalize China. Contrary to our hopes, China expanded its power at the expense of the sovereignty of others (ibid, 25).

China is further described as instead been exploiting and free riding on the access to the international market as well as having exchange students in American universities (ibid, ff). The NSS further implies that China and Russia are not trustworthy of trade and or development work by stating:

“American-led investments represent the most sustainable and responsible approach to development and offer a stark contrast to the corrupt, opaque, exploitive, and low-quality deals offered by authoritarian states” (ibid, 39).

Another clear antagonist toward the U.S. national identity is any type of criminal behavior. In the NSS (2017:10) it is stated “we will secure our borders through the construction of a border wall [...] We will set higher security standards to ensure that we keep dangerous people out of the United States”, implying that dangerous people is something coming from outside of the U.S., not from the inside. A similar statement can be found in Trump’s State of the Union speech (2018a): “for decades, open borders have allowed drugs and gangs to pour into our most vulnerable communities”. China is also described as guilty of criminal acts, being stated in the NSS (2017:21) that “Every year, competitors such as China steal U.S. intellectual property valued at hundreds of billions of dollars”. In Trump’s speech to Congress, Trump (2017) states “we have lost 60,000 factories since China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001”, implying that China is the reason for this.

However, on an individual level, Trump also expresses great respect for China’s president, Xi Jinping. In his speech to the UN general assembly, he states “I have great respect and affection for my friend president Xi, but I have made clear that our trade imbalance is just not acceptable” (Trump, 2018b). During the midterms election news conference, he states that he has a good relationship with President Xi, as well as Russia’s president Putin, but he “knows President Xi better”. On the subject where he talks about how China’s economy is declining he also states that he does not want that and that he and Xi will have “a good meeting” because he “want to have great relationships with President Xi, as I do, and also with China” (Trump, 2018c). These articulations are somewhat contradictory to the image of China which is depicted in the NSS.

In addition, there is a distinction made in the NSS between illegal and legal immigrants. Illegal immigrants are depicted in negative terms, e.g. “illegal immigration, however, burdens the economy, hurts American workers, presents a public safety risk, and enriches smuggler and other criminals” (NSS, 2017:9). Legal immigrants are those described as “whose entry is consistent with the national interest” (ibid), which also highlights the homogenous identity of being American as constructed by Trump.

Turning to the three articulations of identity as formulated by Hansen, they are summarized below.

	Spatial	Temporal	Ethical
U.S. Self	An American who is strong, proud, and patriotic	Modernized, democratic, free	Lead by example, defend the American way of life and American values
Other	China, Russia, immigrants	Authoritarian	Stealing, unfair trade practices, free-riders

Figure 2. Characteristics identified as spatial, temporal, and ethical aspects of the U.S. Self

The results show that China is mostly articulated as the opposite of the U.S. Self, however, the degree of Otherness differs, when speaking of China as a whole country it is considered a clear antagonist, but when referring to president Xi the tone differs. Fundamentally, however, the results of this analysis conclude that Trump depicts China oppositional that of the U.S. Self, where China is articulated as a threat to the U.S. economy.

Following Hansen’s analytical steps, the analysis locates privileged signs of U.S. Self and devalued signs of Other within a larger system of identity construction. Based on the findings presented above, this is illustrated in the figure below.

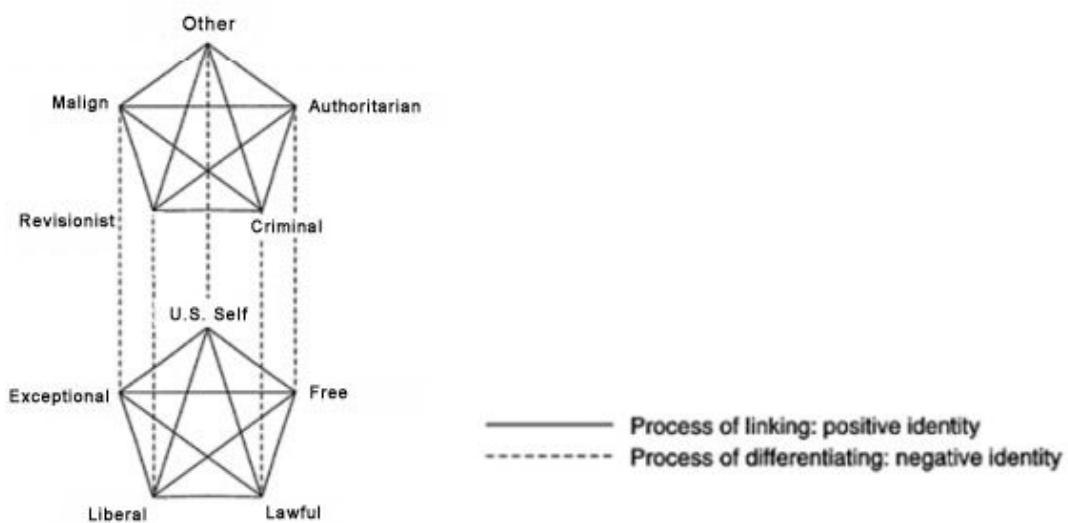


Figure 3: *The differentiation and linking of the U.S. Self and the Other, adapted from Hansen (2013:18).*

The figure illustrates how the processes of linking and differentiation, and how the construction of identity is not completely stable, but an ongoing process which depends on how the linking is situated within different discourses (ibid, 19).

6.2 Gendering identity

This section will lay out the gender underpinnings of the characteristics identified. Looking at the five documents we see a fairly coherent identity based on these categories:

	Articulations of hegemonic masculinity
U.S. Self	Strong
	Proud
	Patriotic
	Courageous
	Competitive - Always winning
	Military capabilities
	Freedom, liberty

Figure 4. *Identifications of embedded masculinity of the U.S. Self*

As the results presented above shows, many of the characteristics of the U.S. Self identified can be associated with Western, normative, and hegemonic, ideas of masculinity, as discussed under the theoretical framework, such as courage, honor, competitiveness, and strength. Furthermore, the U.S. Self is articulated as free, which is also tied to masculine ideals of liberty and fraternity. These are characteristics that historically have been tied to patterns of masculinity and “manly virtues” within U.S. history (Nagel, 2010:245).

The findings also show an instrumentalized masculinity in the form of military means, which is described as well equipped, a priority, and highly advanced. It is further articulated that a strong military is necessary for preserving American interests and deter threats from Russia and China (NSS, 2017:26). This suggests a narrative of masculinist protection. In this case it thus works as a way of giving oneself superiority, and, by extension, legitimizes whatever measures taken to be able to give protection. Tying military means to protection further emphasizes the masculine attribute of protection, as the military is a masculine institution (Yuval-Davis, 1997:94, Sinha, 2004:264).

Although Trump himself seems to reject being a nationalist, it is evident that he expresses strong patriotic rhetoric. The difference between patriotism and nationalism is subtle, but they are not synonyms. Patriotism is described as “love for or devotion to one’s country” whereas nationalism is defined as “exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups” (Merriam Webster, 2019). However, the two words have historically been used interchangeably (ibid). There are findings in the result that seems to fit the descriptive of nationalism, as Trump continuously emphasizes the homogenous view of the U.S., and to always put America’s interests first, and only engage in cooperation with other states if it benefits U.S. interests. Nationalism is a gendered concept, as it is tied to the construction of the nuclear family and normative constructions of family roles and the subordination of femininity in favor of masculinity (Sinha, 2004:259ff). Nagel (2010:249) argues that “the culture and ideology of hegemonic masculinity go hand in hand with the culture and ideology of hegemonic nationalism” as their modern Western definitions emerged around the same time. Nationalism can be seen as a way to sort of “fulfill” a masculine identity because as mentioned in chapter 3, the state can for historical reasons be seen as a masculine institution, and nationalism locates themes which correspond with those of masculinity such as honor, duty, and patriotism (ibid, 252). Patriotic masculinity thus holds a self-conscious rejection of femininity or the feminized (Sinha, 2004:264). Masculinity and nationalism as tied together are incorporated in U.S. history as well, also as mentioned in chapter 3 and has been demonstrated through previous research from Campbell (1992) and Hixon (2008).

Turning to the linking and differentiation of U.S. identity, it is evident that identity is described in binary terms, the Self in positive terms and the Other in negative terms. This

means that the positive represents empowering characteristics whereas the negative characteristics are to be seen as disempowering. This indicates a gendered hierarchy, as the meanings of these characteristics is power, beyond that many of the characteristics identified are already tied to hegemonic masculinity, and “they appertain to the essence of stereotypical masculine power” (Brunner, 2013:105). The Other, in this case with particular attention to China, is also depicted in masculine ways (e.g. aggressive), but as opposed to the U.S. Self, China is depicted more in a deviant masculine way. It is backward because it is authoritarian, it is savage as it is criminal as well as having malign intentions. This also depicts a moral superiority of the Self, since the Other is constructed as e.g. criminal, it gives an ethical dimension in so far that the Self can be seen as simply responding to the Other, meaning that action is enforced on the Self by the Other. This facilitates moral agency to the Self, as it legitimizes actions because it is seen as responding to a threat (ibid, 107). As shown in the previous section, this is in line with the ethical dimension of U.S. exceptionalism. The constructions of the Self and Other in these texts draw upon a gendered dichotomy of the ‘civilized’ vs. barbarism, where the civilized positive aspects are represented as free, lawfulness and strength, whereas the revisionist, malign and criminal behavior as the negative associations (ibid, 144). This illustrates a Western, modernized, Self, whose ethical actions thus is referred to as ‘humane’, which is a crucial aspect of contemporary Western hegemonic masculinity (ibid, 108).

In summary, the aim of this section has been to identify gendered implications from the documents of the discourse analysis. The results illustrate embedded masculinity as well as binary opposition within the articulations of a U.S. national identity. The U.S. Self unfolds a gendered dichotomy in so far it casts a superior Self and a deviant Other, which point towards an expression of gendered hierarchies of masculinities.

6.3 Performing identity and foreign (trade) policy

The following section will discuss how identity is performatively linked to foreign policy, following the conceptualization as laid out by Brunner (2013). So, why is performativity meaningful to a theorization about identity and foreign policy? As discussed under the theoretical framework, the agency is performatively located within discourse, meaning, that identity is not only important to discourse but identity is repetitively being performed through the means of foreign policy (Brunner, 2013:156ff). This will now be

applied to a case of foreign trade policy, namely, U.S. China trade war and gives us an insight into how states reproduce themselves.

It should be noted that “the concept of war valorizes power and identifies it with a ‘heroic’ style of masculinity” (ibid, 161). As demonstrated in the previous section, the chosen documents represent a U.S. Self which is heavily masculinist, and Trump’s initiation of a trade war articulates a Self/Other dichotomy which is similar to the findings of the discourse analysis. Coming back to the notion of intertextuality, performativity operates in regards to historical context, since every articulation is connected and in reference to a wider web of historical and present articulations and texts. Similar to Brunner’s analysis, many of the identified characteristics presented in the previous section can be traced throughout U.S. history, as laid out under previous research, which also works as a way of making the understanding of it to be seen as a “fact” in the sense that “that is how things always have been”. This works in a depoliticizing way, so to grasp how performativity can be understood one has to “think the present historically” (Campbell, 1992:213, Brunner, 2013:158). Applying this line of thinking to the result of the discourse analysis above, some characteristics that are historically rooted have been naturalized. As mentioned, patriotism has historically been tied to the articulations of being American, what is thus represented as the “American way of life”, being strong, and proud and so on, which I have linked to masculinity and oppositional to femininity, becomes normative and privileged. With the example of the trade war with China, we can see how the national identity presented in the previous chapter is performed through foreign trade policy. When Trump declares a trade war on China, it casts China as a threatening Other because it is hurting the U.S. economy and, thus, the American people. The trade war is thereby an instrument which protects the American people. As the findings of the discourse analysis suggest, China is depicted as a threat, that is criminal, steals American jobs and is hurting the American economy. This creates a dichotomy which by default also depicts the U.S. Self as operating on a moral high ground, as a response to the threats by China.

This directs us to see how the action, constructions of Self/Other, facilitates the actor. Essentially, performativity thus directs us to see how power relations work as both empowering and disempowering (Brunner, 2013:155). This means that when the Self produces the Self, it prescribes to a particular set of chosen characteristics and associations, which by default prescribe particular traits of the Other, which thus is regulated by the Self.

The traits of the Other are thereby marginalized.

Coming back to Weber's (1998) argument, a national identity, in this case the gendered U.S. Self, is facilitated by foreign policy and vice versa, as through the trade war, is not something that comes "naturally" internally, e.g. that sovereignty is a "fact" or a true representation of identity that just exists, but rather, is being produced and reproduced continuously. An essential line of argument of Butler's theory is that the repetitive comes to represent the normative, it is thus through the repetitive act of producing an identity that the identity becomes normative. As shown in previous chapters, Trump articulates a highly masculine identity, described as strong, patriotic and operationalized through military capabilities. Following the theoretical conceptualization of performativity, agency can be found on the discursive level. As stated under previous research, these type of characteristics has been a recurring feature in U.S. foreign policy throughout history. I.e., the masculine comes to represent the normative through its repetition. It is here we can locate the potential for change, as one gets aware of the power relations which are at works.

In conclusion, performativity has in this chapter been used as both a conceptualization of gendered identity and as empirically applicable to the finding of the discourse analysis. This demonstrates how the gendered national identity presented above thus facilities through politics of the notion of masculinity and manliness, in this case, through foreign trade policy with China, and can be seen as an example of a link between discourse and practice. Further examples of how identity is performatively linked to foreign policy have been demonstrated in several other cases, as discussed under the section previous research.

7. Concluding discussion

The purpose of this paper has been to illustrate how a gendered identity of the U.S. is constructed and how this can be connected to foreign policy. The findings suggest a gendered reproduction of the U.S. Self through foreign trade policy.

This paper explored identity construction in five foreign policy-related speeches and documents following Hansen's analytical steps for identity construction, looking at the spatial, temporal and, ethical, aspects of the Self, as well as the dichotomy between Self/Other. The poststructural theoretical framework places this through a process of linking

and differentiating and positions the Self to a juxtaposing Other. Applying this on the material for the discourse analysis we can grasp a theoretical understanding of identity, which answers my first research question. The methodology of discourse analysis and Hansen's analytical steps for identity construction gave important insight into the answer.

The analyzed documents and speeches lay out several gendered implications through the articulations of the national identity. A fairly coherent theme is here identified with traits that are associated with hegemonic masculinity, such as strength, courage, competitiveness, and patriotism. Although these are not explicitly articulated, theories on the conceptualization of gender, masculinity and the nation-state direct us to see how these are yet persistent, which answers my second research question.

Lastly, I used Butler's theory of performativity as empirically applicable to the findings, to highlight the connection between discourse and practice. Through performativity, I find that the results of the discourse analysis are applicable to a concrete case of foreign trade policy, namely, the U.S. China trade war. This particular case demonstrates the casting of the Self and Other in a similar manner as through the identity constructions of the discourse analysis, pointing towards the connection between discourse and foreign policy. This gives some insight into how a gendered identity can be concretely related to foreign (trade) policy issues. Applying performativity as a theoretical concept also directs us to see how power relations work as empowering as well as disempowering, and how some characteristics thus get viewed as normative.

This paper operates within a poststructural landscape, thus the findings of this study are not to be seen as objectively answering the questions, but rather, to offer some understanding of how the processes of identity and its gendered underpinnings are at work.

7.1 Further research

On the subject of further research, it would be interesting to see if the nation-identity constructed under the Trump administration differs from previous presidential periods since previous research also points towards a masculine national identity. As mentioned under the theoretical framework, imperialism is another recurring feature within U.S. history which would be interesting to explore further, along with its ties to masculinity.

Another aspect of identity under the Trump administration that would be interesting to explore is to what extent there is an internal Othering within what is constructed as being American, as this is depicted in a rather homogeneous way, which could be connected to right wing populism, as its core can be seen as the rejection of pluralism (see e.g. Müller, 2016). It would be interesting to explore what gendered implications this might unfold as well, especially since populism seems to be increasingly more widespread around the globe.

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