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van Haaften, Lourens; Goddeeris, Idesbald

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How European Think Tanks Think About India: A Perceptions Study, 2008–2017

Lourens van Haaften and Idesbald Goddeeris

INTRODUCTION

The European perception of India has been studied extensively over the past few years (see, *inter alia*, Jain & Pandey, 2010, 2012, Ling & Goddeeris, 2015; Vergeron, 2006). Most of these studies focus on individual (or a limited number of) EU member states and work with limited time frames. This is not surprising, given the abundance of sources available for such research. As a consequence, however, the perception is often studied in a detailed way. This contribution aspires to offer a larger frame, working from a bird's-eye perspective, and in this way compare different

L. van Haaften (✉)

Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences, University of Groningen,
Groningen, Netherlands

e-mail: l.w.van.haaften@rug.nl

I. Goddeeris

Department of History, University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

e-mail: idesbald.goddeeris@kuleuven.be

European countries, evolution over time in fields of interests and disciplinary approaches, and shifts in metanarratives. It will do so by analysing reports of European think tanks on India.

In today's diplomatic and policy-making processes, think tanks play a significant role by providing evidence-based information and analyses on foreign affairs and by acting as brokers of ideas to politicians, diplomats and civil servants. Their role in political processes and governance has received increased scholarly attention in the past years (Kelstrup, 2017, 2018; Köllner, 2011; Stone, 2004; Weaver & McGann, 2000).

Think tanks are considered to be a significant actor by embodying an 'institutional link between ideas, knowledge and public policies' (Köllner, 2011: 2). Hence, studying reports of think tanks in writing about India provide an opportunity to identify living perceptions of India in the European Union.

The present chapter is based upon a desktop research¹ conducted in 2019 that started from a list of think tanks with a focus on international affairs from all twenty-eight member states of the European Union. The absence of a workable definition of the phenomenon of think tanks posed a first challenge in this process. The term think tank is slippery or ambiguous because of the diversity in forms in which think tanks exist (Köllner, 2011: 2). The organisations often work on the boundaries of academia and politics. They can function as autonomous organisations as well as closely associated to political institutions. We solved this problem in a pragmatic manner. As the objective of this research is to gain deeper understanding of the EU perceptions of India, we aimed at a selection of think tanks that have a good outreach to the European institutions and represent views from across Europe. This was found in the selection of think tanks used by one of the European institutions, the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union in Brussels. The Central Library of the General Secretariat monitors think tanks and every month publishes a document with a review of their publications (*Think Tank Review*). It aims to provide EU policy officers with a selection of EU-related think tank articles, but the reviews are also made available to a wider audience of interested professionals. The selection of the *Think Tank Review* covers over a hundred think tanks of different origins. We

¹ This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement No. 722446.

have used this list as a starting point for selecting 62 think tanks from all over Europe (see Appendix). American or other foreign think tanks with a department in Europe are excluded. Our selection of think tanks covers all member states of the EU, except Croatia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Republic of Cyprus and Slovenia, which all lack think tanks studying international affairs.

After compiling the list of think tanks, we searched their websites for articles about 'India' in the ten-year period between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2017. We then gathered all articles about India, either as the main topic or in which India is a shared topic. Examples of the latter are articles comparing the rise of China and India or discussing India-Pakistan relations. All articles in which India was only a topic of minor interest were excluded from collection. Articles on the BRICS, for instance, have not been included unless a specific case of India was made. Finally, all articles with less than six pages were left out for this study, to keep only the substantial publications.

This has resulted in a selection of 145 articles that were used for further analysis. They were written by 124 unique authors or combination of authors. We first collected metadata on authorship, date of publication, number of pages, publishing think tank and the country of publication. Subsequently, we took a closer look at the content of the articles and identified from which disciplinary background the articles were written, such as 'geopolitics of trade', 'geopolitics of international security', 'foreign policy analysis', 'political economy', 'security studies', 'migration', 'energy', etc. In a similar way, the articles were categorised for their main theme, like the 'Europe—India partnership', that was central in several studies, or 'maritime security'. The categories were not created *a priori*, but chosen while studying the differences between articles. In adding these categories manually, the challenge was to find a right balance between being too general and too specific. A final tag was added to an article when India was described in a way that fits a particular meta-narrative or stereotype image, like India as an emerging power or as a development country. This field was kept blank in the many cases that the article did not follow such a metanarrative.

We used social network analysis as a tool for analysing the data and created projections of the network of relations between the most relevant metadata. For this, we made use of the network analysis software named

UCINET.² This quantitative approach is combined with a qualitative approach of deep-reading of the texts. As the total body of text covered over 5,700 pages, we concentrated mostly on introductions, conclusions and executive summaries.

The dataset that was composed of the 145 articles is used to obtain deeper insight in the differences in the perceptions of India over time and space in European think tank publications in the period 2008–2017. We will answer several sub-questions. First, we want to see whether India is becoming more prominent on the European think tank agenda and therefore checked whether there is an increase in the number of articles published on this topic. Second, the study looks into the dominant themes, topics and disciplines in think tank studies and how this developed over time. Third, the research examines significant differences in think tank publications in different EU member states that could affect the perceptions of India in the national discourses.

The structure of this chapter contains two sections. The first section will delve into the changes in think tank publications in Europe over time. The second section focusses on the geographical differences among member states in producing knowledge about India.

INDIA'S GROWING WEIGHT AT THE EUROPEAN THINK TANK AGENDA

In the ten years between 2008 and 2017, India has clearly transformed from a low-priority issue into a closely reviewed topic for European think tanks. Figure 14.1 shows the considerable increase in the number of publications over the years, from 5 in 2008 to 37 in 2017. In a relatively short period, the number of publications per year multiplied by a factor of seven. Not only has the total amount of articles increased, but also the number of countries contributing with think tank publications on India, more precisely from three countries in 2008 to 8 in 2016. In total, 12 out of the 28 member states' house think tanks which wrote about India during 2008–2017.³ The growth in quantity was gradual, with the

² Borgatti, S. P., Everett, M. G. & Freeman, L. C. (2002). *Ucinet for Windows: Software for social network analysis*. Analytic Technologies.

³ In the data set, we listed all the names of authors to see whether the field is dominated by a hand full of experts offering their services to different think tanks. This is hardly the case. The 145 articles were produced by 124 unique authors or combination

sharpest increases in 2010, 2014 and 2016. In these years, the number of articles doubled or almost doubled from the preceding year.

This first observation, however, namely that India has gained prominence on the European think tank agenda, comes with a disclaimer. In absolute numbers, the attention on India is dwarfed by the amount of publications about China. Unfortunately, those numbers are not available, but a scan of European think tank websites shows the dominance of China as a topic in the past fifteen years. In a policy brief of the Dutch think tank Clingendael of 2018 about India and Japan, Okano-Heijmans rightly observed: ‘Thinking on Asia in the European Union has long been about China, China and China...’ (Okano-Heijmans, 2018: 1) Put in this larger perspective, the interest in India looks more modest. But despite

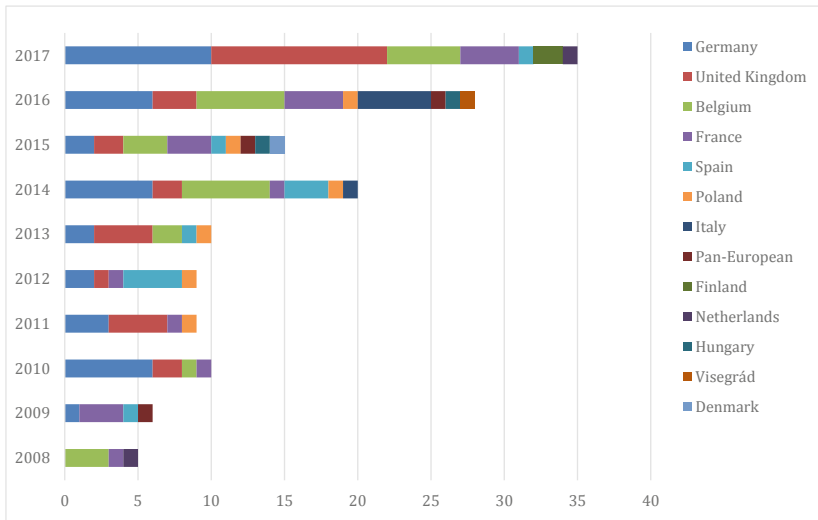


Fig. 14.1 Number of publications by country

of authors. Only eight authors produced more than one article, of which only four on a more structural basis, over five articles. Contributors with more than 5 articles as author or co-author are Gareth Price (6), Patryk Kygiel (7), Christian Wagner (5) and Anupama Sen (5). What furthermore stands out is that authors are from very diverse national backgrounds that not necessarily coincides with the think tank location. In several occasions, European think tanks also used the expertise of Indian academics. This shows that the work environment of think tanks is to a high extent internationalised.

this nuance, the increase in attention for India by European think tanks is unmistakable and significant.

The next question is obviously about the impetus for the increased focus on India from 2014 onwards. Think tank articles themselves often explain this by referring to the metanarrative of the changing power balance in the international system. After years of focusing on China, in what has been described as the 'pivot to Asia', attention has turned to other influential powers in the region. In particular, the focus on India has been brought on by the need for like-minded countries to become partners with the European member states in upholding the multilateral rule-based system based on democratic and liberal values. A further structural explanation is the impressive economic development of India that makes the country simply a more relevant economic and political actor in the international scene and partner for EU member states. Based on its growth records and its huge demographic numbers, India was already included in the so-called BRICS countries that were the centre of attention during the late 2000s. As a consequence of the economic problems in Brazil, geopolitical conflicts between Russia and the West, and the definite increase of power of China, it has become less common to conceptualise these countries as a group. India is now becoming a more important topic by itself.

In sum, think tank authors themselves explain the increased attention for India as the result of changes in the dynamics of the international system and India's economic development. A closer look at the content of the articles seems to confirm this. In the years 2016 and 2017, over two-thirds of the publications were from the perspective of geopolitics of trade, geopolitics of international security or foreign policy analysis, which is a first indication that the increase in attention is related to the growing perception of India as an important international actor.

More concretely, the growth of articles can indeed be largely contributed to an increase in studies of India as a global actor and as a partner for the EU. In particular, the thirteenth EU-India summit in Brussels on 30 March 2016 appears to have been an important incentive for think tanks to turn their attention to India and pushed the numbers up. After years of stagnation of EU-India relations, with a deadlock in the free trade negotiations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Commission President Claude Juncker and European Council President Donald Tusk announced at the summit in 2016 a 'new momentum for the EU-India Strategic Partnership'. A few in-depth studies were published in advance,

to provide an analysis of the potential for further partnership and trade negotiations, such as a study by the European Union Institute for Security Studies in 2012, or by the think tank of the European Parliament, published in 2015 (Peral & Sakhuja, 2012; Sachdeva, 2015). In the aftermath of the event, many more articles were published. Most of them explored potential for further cooperation, especially in the fields of cybersecurity and defence. The event was also clearly an incentive for several national-oriented think tanks to review EU-India cooperation on national opportunities and implications. In total, 27 of the 145 articles addressed specifically the issue of Europe-India relations. Eleven of them were published in 2016, which was 40% of the total publications in that year.

In 2017, the topic of EU-India relations was, however, largely replaced by an interest in Modi's foreign policy. Nine out of thirty-six articles in that year reviewed Indian foreign policy, a remarkable increase considering the low attention this topic received in the preceding years. But taking a closer look at the articles, it appears that the largest share was part of a special edition of the Chatham House Group's journal *International Affairs* (see vol. 93(1), 2017). The objective of that issue was to get a clearer picture of India as a rising power, as part of the UK's reorientation on international partners in the context of the looming Brexit.

The incentive of the EU-India summit in 2016 and the increased focus on India as an international actor in 2017, however, do not explain the doubling of articles in 2014. This increase is obviously related to the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. That year, 33% of the articles focussed on domestic political developments. The election victory of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) also formed an occasion to write critical reflections on the political development in India, like, 'India 2014: Return of the One-Party Dominant System', 'The BJP and State Politics in India: A Crashing Wave?' 'Modi's Reform Agenda: Change You Can Believe In?' (Chandhoke, 2014; Vaishnav, 2015; Verniers, 2015). In Europe the election result seems to have come as a surprise. One felt the need for interpretation of this development and for analysis of the consequences for the European continent.

Also in the subsequent years, Modi and his government's policy remained a frequent topic for European think tanks. Modi, with his charismatic and energetic style and active foreign policy, appears to be a factor in itself that contributed to the increased attention for India. This

‘Modi-factor’ also fits well with the explanation that the increased attention for India stems from Europe’s search for like-minded countries as a partner to uphold the regimes for global governance. Modi’s ideological roots in Hindutva make the development of India’s domestic politics and foreign policy an urgent topic that is closely observed in Europe. This is, for example, reflected in the several articles that study Modi’s foreign policy in the context of India’s long tradition in non-alignment (Basrur, 2017; Giroir, 2017; Hall, 2017; Juhos, 2015 and many more).

Although the above-described topics stand out in quantity in the total body of think tank articles, the increased interest in India is not fully absorbed by these topics or themes. The focus on India spans a wide spectrum of issues and themes. As Fig. 14.2 and 14.3 demonstrate, studies include social and cultural analyses, regional security issues, political economy of India, the development strategies, migration, energy and climate issues. The spectrum of issues has also become more differentiated over the years. This wider interest for India could well be a spin-off of the increased interest in India as a global actor or partner for the EU.

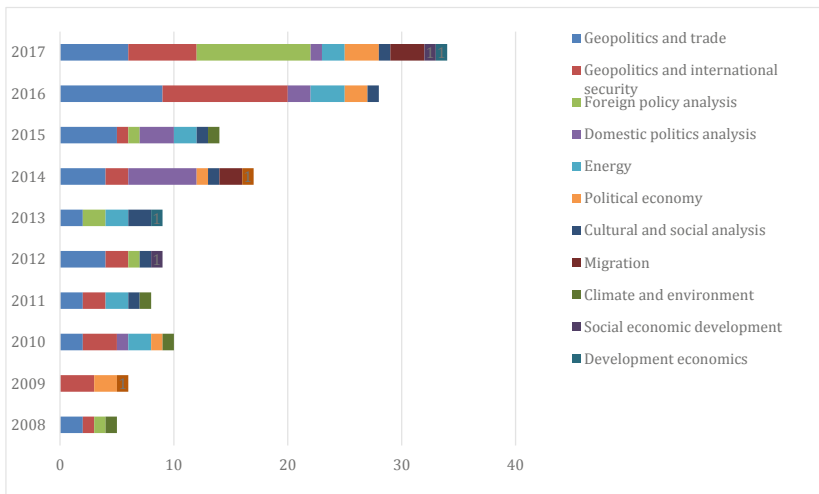


Fig. 14.2 Disciplinary angles of publications by year

GEOGRAPHICAL DIFFERENCES IN THINKING ABOUT INDIA

In this section, we will delve deeper in the different ways EU member states thought about India. The geographical spread of published articles shows strong variation in the quantity of contributions by member states. Germany (38), the United Kingdom (30), Belgium (26) and France (20) take the lead in producing studies on India. This is not surprising. The three largest countries of the EU house a large share of European think tanks, and Belgium stands out because of the many Brussels-based think tanks close to the European institutions. These four countries are followed by Spain (11), Poland (6), Italy (6), Hungary (3), the Netherlands (2), Finland (2) and Denmark (1). One think tank presents itself as pan-European and is responsible for two publications, and one study was published as collaboration between four think tanks from Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary, the so-called Visegrád Group. We must also take notice of the long list of EU member states with no publications on India at all. Think tanks in Sweden, Portugal, Ireland and Greece that were included in our selection published no substantial articles about India in the period 2008–2017.

The absolute numbers of articles, however, are strongly affected by a country's research capacity. Therefore, the mapped differences are a weak indicator for a country's relative interest in India. It would have been interesting to compare the percentage of a country's publication on India to the total amount of articles produced, but that information is not available. Instead, we can count the ratio of think tank articles per number of think tanks in a country. This changes the order significantly. The selection of this study included eight think tanks from Germany. They produced in total 38 articles, which gives a ratio of 4.8 articles per think tank. In this approach, Poland is surprisingly on the top of the list with a ratio of 6.0, followed by the UK (5.0), Germany, Spain (3.7) and France (2.7). The Brussels-based think tanks produced articles only with a modest ratio of 2.2.

Significantly, the interest for India, at least in quantity, does not follow the usual fault lines within European Union politics, like North versus South and Central/East versus Western Europe. The dominance of the large countries in producing knowledge about India is to a certain extent counterbalanced by perspectives from Poland and Hungary in Central Europe and Italy and Spain in the South. Moreover, the geographical spreading per year (see Fig. 14.1) demonstrates that this pattern

is quite consistent over the years. The Polish Institute of International Affairs published an article almost yearly since 2011. Spanish think tanks also regularly published about India. Importantly, the number of articles published by Brussel-based think tanks dropped sharply after 2009, in parallel with the deadlock in the strategic partnership, and began to increase again from 2013 onwards. Germany and France, in contrast, have been consistent contributors over the full period. Figure 14.1 shows one more trend. It appears that in the latest years also medium and small member states, like Hungary, the Netherlands, Finland and Denmark are catching up with producing knowledge about the state of affairs in India.

The geographical difference in relation to disciplines exposes a sharper distinction, as is visualised in the projection of Fig. 14.3. The graph represents the relationship between disciplines and countries. The size of the squares and circles reflects the quantity of publications, and the thickness of the ties mirrors the quantitative strength of the relationship. As already noted, the majority of the articles study India from the perspective of geopolitics of trade, geopolitics of international security and foreign policy analysis. These perspectives share the state-centred approach that is dominant in international relations studies. Italy, the Netherlands and Finland have exclusively contributed with publications from one of these perspectives. Spanish and Polish articles as well mostly fit these perspectives for, respectively, 90% and 67%. The UK at first sight seems to offer a more varied approach, but this can be contributed fully to the presence of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies in the UK. As part of its strong focus on diverse regions in world, this institute has produced 10 articles on the particular subject of energy issues in India. Without these contributions, the UK perspectives would also be limited to geopolitics of trade or international security and foreign policy analysis. Only, Germany, France and to a lesser extent Belgium show convincingly a more diverse spectrum in research into India. These countries put more emphasis on the study of India from the angle of political economy and domestic politics analysis. Figure 14.4 shows these differences on an even more detailed level, as it visualises the relationship between the more detailed level of themes and countries. At a first glance, the centrality of the issue of Europe-India relations stands out, as this is connected with almost all contributors. The map furthermore shows the great variety in themes, which again can be mostly attributed to Germany, France and Belgium. A closer description of the content of the articles in the different countries will expose these fault lines more clearly.

The first case will be Poland. Based on the ratio articles per think tank, Poland is a relatively large producer of publications on India, although it must be noted that almost all articles were written by a single author.⁴ The publications had an explicit focus on the national interest, assessing the value of India as a partner for the West and in particular for Poland. The created a narrative pointed at a shared history of socialism in Poland and India and emphasised the growing ties between the countries (Kugiel, 2016b; Kugiel & Pedziwiatr, 2014). The general opinion in the articles was that there was a large potential for cooperation between India as an emerging global power and Europe, and that Poland had much to gain from this, but that the state of affairs in the EU-India dialogues was insufficient to shape this.

This nationalistic perspective of ‘what’s in it for me?’ is also at the heart of a joint study by four think tanks of the Visegrád Group, i.e. Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The report of 2016 explored the opportunities for deeper cooperation with the BICS countries (thus excluding Russia from BRICS) (Kugiel, 2016a). The study emphasised the historical ties between communist Europe and India as a good basis for further cooperation and made an analysis of the present economic relations to identify opportunities. The governments were urged to invest more in an active foreign policy towards India in order to profit from India’s economic growth. On the one hand, this study shows that the Central European countries are catching up as far as writing about India. On the other hand, it is telling that the study only partly focussed on India. In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, no further publications appeared in the researched period. The Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade in contrast did produce two further studies with a reflection to Modi’s foreign policy and Modi’s economic growth model.

A closer look at Italian publications shows that India was absent from the national think tank agenda for the first period. From 2008 to 2013 no articles appeared; the first study was the previously mentioned article from 2014 on the results of the Lok Sabha elections. The other five titles are from 2015 and were composed as a part of a cooperation project between the Istituto Affari Internazionali in Rome and the Indian Gateway House in Delhi. The EU-India Think Tank Twinning Initiative, initiated by the

⁴ Slovakia and Czech Republic are counted in this number, but have only contributed with a joined study produced with Poland and Hungary. In the further charts, therefore, these two countries are not included.

EU delegation in India to stimulate European and Indian think tanks collaboration, funded this project.^{5,6} The fact that at an external incentive of the twinning project was needed to move Italian think tanks to take up the subject of India suggests that India was not considered an urgent topic in Italy at forehand. The external funding by the EU also affected the choice for topics by the Italian think tank. The articles were exclusively addressed to the potential for EU-India cooperation, in the aftermath of the revitalisation of the strategic partnership earlier in that year. The papers identify the key bottlenecks for further EU-India cooperation and the need for further integration and coordination within the EU.

The Spanish record of publications is older and more varied. Three out of the 11 articles focussed on India's regional conflicts, on India's role in Afghanistan and on India-Pakistan relations, all written in the period from 2009 to 2012 (Raman, 2009). In 2014, a study was presented on the changing relations between India and Latin America (Vishwanathan, 2014). From the Spanish national perspective this is a relevant topic, as Spain contains strong relations with Latin America as a legacy of its colonial past. Just like in Italy, the articles after 2014 in Spain were all focused on EU-India relations, emphasising the need for further cooperation from EU perspective. All articles were published in English (or published as a translation from Spanish), except one article from 2015 by the Real Instituto Elcano that was written in Spanish. This article reviewed Spanish-India relations through the national lens (Palarea, 2015).

The Dutch studies exclusively focussed on India from an international security perspective. An exhaustive study from 2008 focussed on China-India relations. In 2017, an article appeared on India as part of a series assessing 'great powers assertivitis' (Spiegeleire, 2017). It frames India explicitly as a great power and concludes that the country's increased assertiveness could lead to conflicts in the Asian region, which would directly affect the Dutch interests by endangering the supply chains of manufacturing that are crucial for Dutch trade. This international security angle is also dominant in a 2017 report and policy brief of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (Katz, 2017). The text describes India as a 'potential global great power' on the one hand, while on the other

⁵ The initiative started in 2015 and was extended in 2018. See <https://euindiathink tanks.com/> (accessed on 11 September 2018).

⁶ Six articles were by Patryk Kugiel at the Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych.

hand considers India to be constrained by its internal ethnic and religious diversity that endangers the state with secessions.

So far, it can be concluded that the countries with a medium or low number of contributions in think tank articles have mainly studied India through the lens of their national interest. Italy, Spain and Poland stand out with their contributions focusing on EU-India strategic partnerships. Studying the articles published in the United Kingdom gives a different picture. Besides the previously discussed studies of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies dealing with the developments in India's energy sector, 20 articles appeared. These focused, without exception, on the emergence of India as an international actor. In 2010, an extensive study appeared at LSE Ideas on the question whether India was 'the next superpower?', part of a series on global power shifts. It described India as a remarkable economic success since its liberalisation in 1991 with one of the best performing economies in the world, lifting millions of people from poverty, and as an increasingly military factor due to its military investments. The article called for caution in assessing India as a superpower, as it still had 'major developmental challenges' being 'still entrenched in the division of castes', and the democracy as threatened by 'corruption and nepotism' (Kitchen, 2010: 4). The report further concluded that India would continue to 'play a constructive international role in, among other things, the financial diplomacy of the G20, and it certainly has a soft-power story to tell as a model of liberal political and economic development' (Kitchen, 2010: 5).

These reservations about the image of India as a superpower hardly played a role in the series of articles published in 2017. In the introduction article of a special edition by the Chatham House Group, India was described as 'a formidable economic force [...] gaining in both political power and status' (Chatterjee & de Estrada, 2017). Further emphasis was put on India being the largest democracy in the world and a nuclear power. In this perspective, India is pictured as an international actor of unambiguous strength.

Reading the body of texts produced in the UK, three further remarks can be made. First, there was a strong interest in India as a soft or normative power. Three articles directly addressed this topic and several others indirectly focussed on India's development agenda and engagement in Africa (Hall, 2017; Pant & Super, 2015; Price, 2011; Sidiropoulos, 2011; Taylor, 2012; Vines, 2010). Second, in 2017, the topic of Modi's foreign policy was dominant, as was the question whether this deviated

from India's tradition of non-alignment and other continuities (Bajpai, 2017; Narlikar, 2017). Third, and perhaps most striking, the topic of EU-India relations was totally absent in the articles, even before the Brexit-referendum in 2016. This disinterest in EU-India strategic partnership is illustrative for the UK's more intergovernmental orientation in foreign policy thinking.

For the Brussels-based think tanks, on the contrary, EU-India relations are the centre of attention. Fourteen out of the 23 articles directly related to this topic. They plea in more or less the same words for deeper cooperation between India and the EU, stressing that India is a 'rising power' that is becoming 'more influential in international politics and trade' and that the EU and India are 'natural partners' (Gros, 2008; Kumar, 2008: 26).

The Think Tank of the European Parliament wrote most comprehensively about India with publications on the Free Trade agreement (2013), the Parliamentary election (in 2014), the revitalisation of the EU-India strategic partnership (2015 and 2016), and an evaluation of Modi's first year of governance (2015). The initiation of a new think tank specialised in South Asia in 2011, the South Asian Democratic Forum, contributed further to more diversity in Brussels thinking about India. In 2016 and 2017, working papers and policy briefs on the issues of water management, education and trans-Himalayan cooperation were published (Dentinho, 2016; South Asian Democratic Forum, 2017; Babalová, 2017). It is, however, Germany that stands out for its most diverse palette of perspectives on India in think tank publications. Interestingly, where other countries focussed predominantly on national interests, India as a foreign actor (UK) and the EU-India partnership (Belgium, Italy, Spain, Poland), German think tanks had a stronger focus on Indian domestic developments, political economy, corruption, education and other issues with a social and cultural dimension. For example, studies dealt with topics like India's rising middle class, labour participation of rural women, corruption in the Indian energy sector, vocational training and education, the informal economy of India and many more (Faist et al., 2017; Förstmann & Gregosz, 2010; Jodhka & Prakash, 2011; Ranjana Kumari, 2013; Vij et al., 2017). All these articles share a non-state-centred approach and instead offer a society-centred angle. This different perspective affects strongly the image of India that pops up. It is more diverse and detailed on internal affairs and developments.

In practice, this also means that a less flattering picture of India is created and development issues are stressed more often.

The state-centred approach is not fully absent in the German studies on India, though. Several studies over the years targeted India as an international actor, especially with a focus on its status as a soft power. Again, the German general discourse seems to be less impacted by the image of India as a potential superpower and takes a more critical stance. For example, a report studying India's potential as a partner in democracy promotion concluded that 'promotion of democracy plays only a marginal role in Indian foreign policy' and that 'India thus remains a difficult partner in German and European politics in respect to the promotion of democracy' (Dröge & Wagner, 2009: 5–6).

Only two out of the 38 articles tackled the EU-India relationship, a remarkably low number for the EU's most powerful member state. In 2016, a report was published on India's potential for security cooperation in Afghanistan. This project was a collaboration between the German Global Public Policy Institute and the Delhi-based think tank Carnegie India, again funded by the EU. The other study that addressed the EU-India partnership appeared in 2017. It offered a critical perspective on the objective to revitalise what was called the 'troubled relationship' between the EU and India. Although it acknowledged that India was strategically an important partner, it furthermore emphasised that trade between the EU and India since 2010 had 'barely grown', that the economic relations between Europe and India are 'asymmetric' and that this limited 'the bargaining power of India' (Felbermayr et al., 2016: 97).

What matters for Germany also matters for France to a high extent. In France, only three out of the 19 studies dealt with EU-India relations. They were all published by the European Union Institute for Security Studies in the period 2008 to 2012 (Peral, 2010; Peral & Sakhuja, 2012; Wagner, 2008). This institute took a leading role in advocating a revitalisation of the partnership with India. Surprisingly, after the new momentum for the strategic partnership in 2016, the topic was no longer raised. One French study was made to address further potential for cooperation in the field of space, focussing specifically at the national French perspective (Lele, 2015).

Just as in Germany, a majority of the French think tank reports took a more society-centred approach. The Institut Français des Relations Internationales, La Vie des Idées and the Institut de Relations Internationales

et Stratégiques focused in 16 reports on issues like populism, social policies, religious freedom and issues as urbanisation (Chakrabarty, 2017; Guichard, 2016; Hasan, 2009). Also similarly to Germany, the French perception of India is far more diffused and critical than the one in other EU member states. Only 2 out of 19 articles followed the metanarrative of India as an emerging power, while the state of the democracy and welfare was problematised in several articles.

CONCLUSION

This chapter sought to identify the geographical differences and chronological evolutions in the ways European think tanks wrote about India in the period 2008–2017, in order to get a deeper understanding of the different and changing perceptions of India in Europe. It can be concluded that the attention given to India in the period increased significantly, and that India became a more prominent topic on the European think tank agenda. This increase has come with a dominant metanarrative that represented India as an emerging global power, emphasising its economic and military development in recent decades and the international system that is shifting towards a multipolar world. India is perceived as a potentially like-minded country for the European member states that can become a partner in upholding the multilateral rule-based system that defends liberal and democratic values. India is also increasingly critically examined for potential superpower behaviour that could possibly endanger international stability.

The study, however, also exposed the large diversity in think tank articles on India, in the disciplinary background of the studies, the themes that were addressed, and consequently in the perceptions of India that aroused from the texts. When these differences were studied in relation to the geographic origin of articles, some patterns could be identified. They do not simply follow fault lines in EU politics, like North versus South and Central/East versus West. It was concluded that the smaller contributors study India in many cases from a perspective that can be deduced to a matter of national interest. The Brussels-based think tanks dominantly focussed on India as a strategic partner, and the UK studied most extensively India as a rising international actor. The largest difference, however, was between the countries that produce articles with a predominantly state-centred focus, and France and Germany, which produce a large body of texts with a society-centred focus. These differences in research angles

produce different images of India. In the first perspective, the emphasis is put on India as the emerging power, while the latter reveals more of the domestic affairs and India's development issues.

The diverging perceptions of India among member states seem to reflect to a certain extent national cultures of foreign policy thinking. The UK's perspective on India is consistent with Anglo-Saxon intergovernmentalism, while the society-centred focus of German think tanks fits well in the post-Second World War foreign policy culture highlighting on human rights and democratic values. This brings us to the conclusion that the knowledge of India produced by European think tanks, and the perceptions that were aroused in this process, is to a large extent shaped by the characteristics of the think tank culture in the particular countries. An interesting question for further research is to see whether this divergence in perceptions affects relations between Europe and India and the making of a common EU policy towards India.

Another question is how Europe's perceptions of India have developed after 2018. This study addressed a particular period in which India gained weight on the European think tank agenda. Yet, things have changes rapidly over the past few years. The EU and India have further developed their strategic partnership, Brexit has turned Europe-India relations upside down and provoked new challenges and dilemmas for European member states, and the increasing geopolitical instability have put Europe-India relations in a new perspective. It is worth examining whether these new circumstances have affected the major findings of this chapter.

APPENDIX

Selection of European Think Tanks Studied in the Research

<i>Country</i>	<i>Think Tank</i>
Pan-European	European Council on Foreign Relations European Union Institute for Security Studies
Austria	Wiener Institut für Internationale Wirtschaftsvergleiche/The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies
Belgium	Bruegel Centre for European Policy Studies Egmont—Royal Institute for International Relations

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Think Tank</i>
	EU-ASIA Centre European Institute for Asian Studies European Parliament Think Tank European Policy Centre Foundation For European Progressive Studies Friends of Europe South Asia Democratic Forum Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies
Bulgaria	Centre for Strategic Research of Defence and Security Centre for the Study of Democracy
Czech Republic	European values Ústavu mezinárodních vztahů/Institute of International Relations (Czech Republic)
Denmark	Baltic Development Forum Danish Institute for International Studies
Estonia	Rahvusvaheline Kaitseuringute Keskus/International Centre for Defence and Security
Finland	Ulkopoliittinen instituutti/Finnish Institute of International Affairs
France	European Union Institute for Security Studies Fondation Robert Schuman Institut de relations internationales et stratégiques Institut français des relations internationales La Vie des Idées Notre Europe—Jacques Delors Institute
Germany	Bertelsmann Stiftung German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies Global Public Policy Institute Hanns Seidel Foundation Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung/Heinrich Böll Foundation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik/German Institute for International and Security Affairs
Greece	Ελληνικό Ίδρυμα Ευρωπαϊκής και Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής/Hellenic Foundation for European Foreign Policy
Hungary	Külügyi és Külgazdasági Intézet Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade MTA Közgazdaság- és Regionális Tudományi Kutatóközpont—Világ gazdasági Intézet/Centre for Economic and Regional Studies HAS—Institute of World Economics
Ireland	The Institute of International and European Affairs

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Think Tank</i>
Italy	Istituto Affari Internazionali Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale LUISS School of European Political Economy
Latvia	Latvian Institute of International Affairs
Lithuania	International Institute of Political Sciences
Netherlands	Nederlands Instituut voor Internationale Betrekkingen—Clingendael/Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendaels The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies
Poland	Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych/Polish Institute of International Affairs
Portugal	Contraditório Portuguese Institute for International Relations and Security
Romania	The Romanian Centre for European Policies
Slovakia	GLOBSEC
Spain	CIDOB Barcelona Centre for International Affairs Fundación para las relaciones internacionales y el diálogo exterior/Foundation for International Relations and Foreign Dialogue
Sweden	Real Instituto Elcano/Elcano Royal Institute Utrikespolitiska Institutet/Swedish Institute of International Affairs
United Kingdom	Centre for Policy Studies Chatham House—The Royal Institute of International Affairs Fabian Society LSE Idea Oxford Institute for Energy Studies The Foreign Policy Centre

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