

the works initiated are not near to the labor households demanding employment. These outcomes point to the persistence of lack of proper planning in the awareness creation and in the selection of work sites.

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India's foreign policy : Culture and its consequences

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Abstract

This paper will focus on India's foreign policy from pre independence to the present day. It is divided into three distinct sections with impact of culture and its consequences. It will also attempt to explain the underlying reasons for these policies, India's initial orientation, and subsequent shifts that occurred over time. The first section deals with the period from pre independence to 1962, and India's aspirations evolve: interaction with international culture and socialization, the second deals India's aspirations evolve during (1962 to 1991), and the third India's stand After-1991 to the present. The choice of these seven segments is far from arbitrary. This brings to the fore the issue of Indian strategic culture and its impact on shaping Indian foreign and security policy. This chapter examines the contemporary Indian foreign policy culture and the consequences it has had on Indian foreign and security policies.

Introduction

Indian foreign policy has been deemed inconsistent.¹ During India's struggle for independence, which India's leaders interpreted as part of an 'Asian Renaissance' with a dynamic and proactive India at the helm. A nuclear capacity was additionally regarded as part of this aim in terms of developing both independent capabilities and national self-worth. Despite these more forceful approaches that explicitly called for the world to recognize India's future position, such aspirations continued to be peaceful, dominated by the understanding 'that power-seeking provokes power-seeking, force begets force'.²

Today, when India wants to shape the international system it should be expected that its foreign policy will be anchored on a planned augmentation of the power of the nation as a whole. Some are indeed suggesting that after years of rejecting power politics and emphasizing the importance of international norms, India has now 'begun to lean towards greater strategic realism'.³

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Contemporary culture is an amorphous concept in international politics and using the term have often been blamed for resorting to a desktop approach because of the difficulty in defining the boundaries of this term. Culture can refer both to a set of evaluative standards, such as norms or values, and to cognitive standards, such as rules or models defining what entities and actors exist in a system and how they operate and inter-relate. It has been argued that the cultural environment affects not only the incentives for different kinds of state behaviour but also how states perceive themselves, what is called a state identity.⁴ Cultural elements of a state's domestic environment, thereby, become an important factor shaping the national security interests and the international relations of states. While critics have argued that culture does not matter in global politics and foreign policy, and cultural effects can be reduced to epiphenomena of the distribution of power and capabilities, one can surely examine culture as one of the variables shaping a state's foreign policy even if there are reasons to be cautious about using culture to explain political outcomes. The chapter concludes with some observations on the future trajectory of India's search for global importance.

Ancient legacies and idealistic principles (pre independence to 1962)

Indian foreign policy originated from their great empires dating back several millennia as often personified in classical Indian texts, such as the Mahabharata and Kautilya's real politic-evoking Arthashastra. In turn, India's historical exposure to various empires also emphasized the physical and strategic position of India as both a meeting point and a bridge between the Middle East and East Asia. As external Great Powers continued to want India for both its geopolitical location and material resources, a sense of national self importance and prestige was inculcated within India's elites, leading to an urge and expectation to play a major role in the world.⁵ The raw nature of such an aspiration was tempered by ancient Hindu practice, which instilled itself into Indian psyches as pragmatism, patience and autonomous separation.

India's autonomy in international affairs

Jawaharlal Nehru was a strategic thinker and his non-alignment was a classic 'balance of power' policy in a bipolar world where the two superpowers could not go to war because of nuclear weapons. He was an internationalist. However, nonalignment was reduced to a dogma and an ideology after him and became in effect isolationism. India. India was forced to alter its economic and foreign policies because of the

grave economic crisis in the early 1990s. Isolationism did not lead to a careful assessment of the dynamic international security situation and exploration of options for India.

India's aspirations evolve: interaction with international culture and socialization

India's misjudging about the role of both regional and global powers towards it were sustained in 1954 when Pakistan aligned itself with the USA in the Mutual Defence Assistance Pact and the US-backed South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). Perceived US aims of creating Indo-Pakistani parity, in order to cancel out each other's influence through mutual animosity, facilitated and confirmed an Indian elite distrust of the USA as a core threat to her long-term status aspirations. Although the USA had encouraged Indian independence, the region's poverty and colonial past marginalized India in the post-Second World War global hierarchy. India's prior recognition of the communist government in China in 1949 only underlined this opinion, as did India's socialistic orientations.

However, as the Cold War began to solidify into different power blocs, Indian leaders became fearful of the superpowers using China against it. As China began to see India threatening its perceived leadership of the Third World, relations between the two countries became more fraught, especially concerning the annexation of Tibet and Chinese aid to the nascent Mizo and Naga insurrections in India's north-east. This tension became personified by ongoing border disputes between the two sides and proved to be the stimuli for armed conflict in 1962, in which India was humiliated.⁶

India's aspirations evolve during (1962 to 1991)

After the 1962 setback, the belief in pursuing important status remained and India's 1965 victory against Pakistan strengthened his self-sufficiency. India's growing awareness of Powerful status was again shown before the 1971 war with Pakistan, when he signed 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation with the USSR. This treaty protected India from UN censure by the USA, balanced against the Islamabad-Beijing-Washington line-up, and acted as a socializing experience in Great Power real-politic.

The 1971 conflict with Pakistan and India's consequent 'liberation' of East Pakistan into Bangladesh showed India capable of successfully fighting a limited conflict and of redefining her strategic environment.

These events also emboldened India's acquisition of nuclear weapons, achieved through the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) of May 1974. The tests were emblematic of its criticism of the permanent vetoes of the P-5 (China, France, the USA, the then-USSR and the United Kingdom) Permanent Members of the UN Security Council and the Non-Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968 that protected their exclusive nuclear status.

As part of this doctrine, Indian military power was used as a deterrent and as an interventionist force in the region, with India engaging in bilateral peacekeeping operations in Sri Lanka (1971 and 1987-90) and in the Maldives (1988), as well as an economic blockade of Nepal in 1989-90. While not always wholly successful-as with the 1987-90 peace-keeping operations in Sri Lanka-India embraced such interventionist policies towards South Asia, which it abhorred if applied to itself.

India's aspirations to achieve Powerful standing also contained engrained beliefs of her natural supremacy in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). India stepped up multilateral links within the region in order to improve her stability and trade links and most importantly to increase India's global standing. This policy included joining various multilateral bodies such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985, BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation- formerly Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand Economic Cooperation) in 1997, and links with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) from 1992 onwards.

Overall, by the 1990s India was steadily increasing her regional and international status en route to her goal of acquiring Great Power status. In response to its interaction internationally, India's core belief in becoming a Great Power remained in place, now characterized by an injection of real politic and continued anti-imperialism towards the USA and China. These attitudes had enabled India's successful dominance of South Asia, and a gradual spreading of her influence eastwards into South-East Asia and the Indian Ocean. On a wider scale, however, she remained an outlier in the international system, separated from the supremacy of the P-5 powers of the UN Security Council.

India's stand After-1991 to the present

India's domestic politics shifted away from the dominance of the Indian National Congress (INC) Party. On a wider spectrum, India

remained suspicious of foreign investment, multinational corporations and a gradually globalizing economic order. Such external financial mechanisms were regarded as threatening swadeshi through coercive and restrictive multilateral organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). India's gradual liberalization would be resolutely spurred on by the 1991 balance of payments crisis. In the face of heightening energy needs and deeper economic relations, Indian policy towards the region changed in the 1990s, mainly through the actions of Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, who effectively gave up reciprocity in bilateral affairs. Regarded as necessary to counter the influence of states such as Pakistan, China and the USA, the Gujral Doctrine instead based regional relations upon good will and benevolence.

In 1998 the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition gained power, they resuscitated calls for India to reclaim her rightful place in the world. Explicit nuclear weapon testing was deemed necessary to fulfil these aims and to ensure for India, as BJP manifestos stated, 'a role in world affairs commensurate with its size and capability'.⁷

From these perspectives, BJP policy fitted with voices within India's strategic community who believed that the pre-eminence of the UN Security Council P-5 was only guaranteed by their exclusive possession of strategic nuclear forces. The BJP had formed a new government in March 1998, a series of nuclear tests were carried out in the Pokhran desert bordering Pakistan on 11 and 13 May, 'nuclear nationalism' and 'nuclear imagination' in operation. The impact of the Pokhran tests on India's desire for Great Power status was immense and transformed much of its foreign diplomacy. In particular, the far more pragmatic and single minded outlook of the BJP concerning foreign policy made India proactive and expectant in its powerful standing acquisition by forcing international engagement. As BJP Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee stated at the time, 'India is now a nuclear weapon state it is not a conferment that we seek; nor is it a status for others to grant it is India's due, the right of one sixth of humankind'.⁸ Their after the USA began to accept the new consequences of India in terms of her economy, nuclear capabilities, stable democracy and large middle class. Such respect and acceptance increased India's international standing and made closer US ties a new pillar of India's foreign policy. In turn, India became a key strategic partner of the USA, witnessed in their bilateral Defence Agreement drawn up in 2005.⁹

In recent times, this phenomenon was exemplified when after the terrorist attacks on Mumbai in 2008, India found that it no longer had the capability of imposing quick and effective retribution on Pakistan and that it no longer enjoyed the kind of conventional superiority vis-à-vis its regional adversary that it had enjoyed for the past seven decades.¹⁰ A state's legitimacy is tied to its ability to monopolize the use of force and operate effectively in an international strategic environment on the basis of hyper-realism, then India had lacked clarity on this relationship between the use of force and its foreign policy priorities.

Conclusions

While India is accurately seen as an important role in the group of Great Power in the world politics, because her border issues are stumbling blocks to freeing her influence away from South Asia and into the international system. India's population is also India's potential regarding human resources to the Indian Diaspora in across the globe. However, as India's economy continues to expand and investment continues to filter out through the country's states to its vast population, it is reasonable to expect that, with time, many of these issues can and will be resolved. Although India may never achieve a permanent seat on the UNSC (given that the P-5 would have to implement any reforms, which would by definition diminish their own influence), we can expect India to emerge as one of the major Great Power Standing in the world, of the 21st century.

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