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RELUCTANT INDIA

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What role will human rights and democracy play in India's foreign policy? India is itself a relatively successful democracy. Despite immense challenges, its democratic traditions run deep. Although adapted and improvised in light of India's particular history, India's national identity is very much shaped by Enlightenment values. India's constitutional ideals have an intimate connection to the Enlightenment: They are founded on respect for human rights, democracy, constitutional government, progressive liberation from the tyranny of tradition, and government by public reason. Although achieving these ideals is a work in progress, India's self-image is that of a beacon of modernity. There is a profound truth in Sunil Khilnani's claim that the future of Western political theory will be decided in India.[1] So on the level of principle and ideology, at least, there is a potential for India to become a beacon for democracy, not only through the power of its example but also because of the values that it espouses.

But to what extent will democracy and human rights actually become high-level items on India's foreign-policy agenda? The likelihood, I believe, is that India will continue to display a strong commitment to democratic ideals, but will do so without making democracy promotion an avowed element of its foreign policy. These broad background considerations will not rule out active Indian engagement abroad in the service of democracy and human rights. But these engagements will probably be modest at best. And yet, in a final twist, India will probably—despite all its prudence and caution—end up more actively, if indirectly, promoting democracy than its standoffish posture might suggest would be the case.

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Studying foreign policy is a methodologically challenging enterprise. Policies are the product of many contradictory pulls and pressures, and flow from circumstances as much as from ideas. This is particularly true in the case of India, where the gap between aspiration and ability, plus a deeply contentious domestic political scene, makes the articulation and pursuit of long-term goals a most tricky business. Foreign policy is also an area where the gap between a nation's self-image and the reality of its actions is often so pronounced that linking the two can seem jarringly odd. Consider for instance, as many have, how official U.S. disavowals of empire often look beside actual U.S. practices. How does one interpret a country's behavior? How does one weigh its words against its deeds? A country that claims to promote democracy may have a record of subverting it as well. And when a country chooses to promote (or not promote) democracy in a particular case, is it doing so out of a simple calculation regarding its ability to effect change, or is it revealing that its basic foreign-policy aims may be other than what it claims they are?

Before we examine the "idea" side of the ledger as regards India and democracy promotion, we should look at the general considerations that hold India back from having any sort of fully "ideology-driven" foreign policy at all. These considerations are likely to remain binding constraints for some time to come.

First, Indian domestic politics is fractious and contentious—and will remain so. The capacity of any political leader to take foreign-policy risks, whether for the sake of "democracy issues" or any others, is likely to be small. The very intensity of democratic political contention within India makes for risk-averse rather than grandly ideological foreign policies. Moreover, it is a signal achievement of modern India to have elites, but no permanent or semi-permanent "establishment." Those who hold power, whether in the bureaucracy, elected office, or intellectual life, tend not to hold it for long. The impressive degree of continuity exhibited by the U.S. foreign-policy establishment of diplomats, scholars, experts, commentators, officials, and former officials, for instance, is scarcely imaginable in India. There, elites are too insecure in their positions to take much interest in long-range projects such as democracy promotion.[2]

Then too, the reality of India's material interests makes a coherent articulation of ideational interests difficult. For example, sheer economic necessity requires that India be circumspect in its policies regarding the Middle East. Countries in this region not only supply a large share of India's vast and growing energy needs, but also host millions of Indian workers. Thus whatever India's level of commitment to Middle Eastern democracy as a value, that commitment must be tempered by a weighing of concrete risks. Finally, India's overriding foreign-policy aims will remain securing its own territorial integrity and achieving maximum strategic autonomy. Neither of these aims will take second place to another

agenda, and both will require India to shun any notion of committing itself unconditionally to the promotion of democracy and human rights.

In order to understand further the constraints that shape India's thinking on these matters, we should also consider the key topics of India's attitudes regarding sovereignty, its South Asian neighborhood, and its allies, respectively. None suggests an unalloyed enthusiasm for democracy promotion.

Sovereignty and Human Rights

It is often said that Indian foreign-policy thinking features a realist strand and an idealist one. Or to couch the duality in terms of a somewhat caricatured historical shorthand, India is both Kautilya, the South Asian Machiavel, and the Emperor Ashoka, the high-minded upholder of universal values.[3] Noting that there are realist and idealist aspects to Indian foreign policy is fine as far as it goes, but beyond a point is not very analytically illuminating unless one strand can identify the conditions under which one rather than the other comes to the fore.[4] One view holds that the idealist strand is merely a cover for weakness. When a country has little real influence in the international system, the argument goes, taking stands on principle and supporting rules will hold a certain appeal as possible ways to check the willfulness of stronger powers.

At the time of independence in 1947, India was weak indeed—a deeply impoverished and divided country with precious little weight to throw around abroad. In such circumstances, the language of idealism, conflict avoidance, and norm-based international relations made a lot of sense. And no norm was more important than the principle of sovereignty, a principle that was designed to protect weak powers against the strong. Nonalignment, and an ostensible strategy of keeping great powers out, suited a country that was not yet in a position to resist them. But none of this prevented India from acting as an interventionist power when it could get away with it, or stopped New Delhi from courting alignment with superpowers (the United States in 1962, the USSR in 1971) when it seemed as if holding the moral high ground would not by itself offer enough protection.

This slightly jaundiced account suggests that India has been and is less constrained by ideology than by will and capacity. If this view is correct, as India's power waxes, its inclination to defer to formal rules of international behavior will wane. Like the United States and other, earlier, great powers, India will come to view international norms mainly as instruments for projecting its power and advancing its interests. India is constrained not by ideals, but rather by a relative lack of military, social, and political capacity. Idealism—in this case meaning mainly principled support for the idea of sovereignty—is the virtue of weakness that will

give way the more India's power grows. Some analysts, such as Raja Mohan, place this predicted shift from weakness and idealism to power and realism at the forefront when they assess Indian foreign policy.

As India grows in power, where will it stand on the norm of sovereignty? To many, this norm now too often shields abusive dictators and as such forms a (if not *the*) major obstacle to the promotion of human rights and democracy. At the time it became independent, India was among the most internationalist of countries, at the forefront of promoting democracy and human rights in the postwar global system. As Mark Mazower and Manu Bhagavan have recently and separately shown, India was far more influential in shaping the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights than has been acknowledged. Moreover, at the time the UN was formed a few years previously, India had been *opposed* to making sovereignty its sole organizing principle at the expense of human rights. New Delhi would prove a vocal critic of efforts by Western powers, including the United States, to shield apartheid-era South Africa from scrutiny on human-rights grounds.[5]

Then too, on an admittedly more "realist" level, India has never been especially scrupulous about respecting sovereignty principles when dealing with its own immediate neighbors. India's 1971 armed intervention in East Pakistan—undertaken for a mixture of reasons—is widely and fairly regarded as one of the world's most successful cases of humanitarian intervention against genocide. Indeed, India in effect applied what we would now call the "responsibility to protect" (R2P) principle, and applied it well.

The standard narrative about commitment to the sovereignty principle notwithstanding, therefore, India has a fairly long history of both internationalism and human-rights protection. One might say that India has loved sovereignty in word, but has been willing to treat it conditionally in deed. The rhetorical adherence to sovereignty has flowed from two trends. First, in the aftermath of India's experience with the UN on the painful Kashmir issue, and the domestic vulnerabilities that this issue exposed, New Delhi began to invest much more heavily in the sovereignty principle. Second, during and immediately after the Cold War, India derived a good deal of international influence from its status as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement among the world's nations. Keeping that bloc together, even if merely in a formal sense, meant a lot to India's sense of its own international standing. And how can "nonalignment" mean anything without sovereignty? India also associated interventionism with the subversion of democracy, particularly after the U.S.-supported September 1973 military coup against President Salvador Allende in Chile, an episode that weighed heavily on Indian thinking for many years thereafter.

If this history is correct, there is nothing intrinsic in Indian foreign-

policy thinking that makes India favor sovereignty. Instead, this inclination should be understood as depending on changeable circumstances. So long as India feels worried about threats posed by internal revolts and secessionist movements (as in Assam and Kashmir), it is more likely to cling to the sovereignty principle. There is some evidence that as India feels less pressure from the international community on issues such as Kashmir, New Delhi feels more willing to relax its dogmatic support for sovereignty. Second, its decision to set aside G-77 leadership in favor of a very delicate game of seeking power through international forums will promote a more selective and strategic use of the sovereignty card. Third, the threat of international interventions that subvert democracy has receded, and with it the credibility of the sovereignty principle as a shield for democracy. That said, we should expect New Delhi's movement away from the sovereignty principle to be gradual and tacit rather than sudden and outspoken.

To be sure, India's capacity is growing, and it will likely have more options and see more reasons to "intervene" abroad. New Delhi would certainly like to play a more active role in Afghanistan, for instance, and has the resources to do so. But the expansion of India's capacities will be incremental at best, and not enough to convince Indian policy makers that they can effect large-scale changes in other societies.

India and the Politics of Ideas

Guiding templates for the policies of nations typically come in two types roughly corresponding to the "idealist" and "realist" strands discussed above. The first type of template is ideological. In such a conception, the national identity of a country or the legitimacy of its regime is tied to a cause, be it socialism, the spread of liberty, or something else. World order is thought best secured by having as many countries as possible converge ideologically so that all "sign on to the cause." The goal of promoting "the cause" then provides a framework within which particular foreign-policy choices are made. India is the veritable reverse of such a cause-driven power. It has long subscribed to a kind of ideological minimalism. Indeed, by its very nature, India's commitment to the principle of sovereignty as the soundest basis for world order is at the same time a commitment to eschew the pursuit of any ideological convergence among states. Nor is there any Indian equivalent of the French *mission civilisatrice* or any other expansion-prone ideology capable of shaping New Delhi's relations with the world abroad.

The second guiding template posits the maximization of power as the key goal of foreign policy. Despite a certain inherent slipperiness in the concept—it is not always clear what "power maximization" means or that stronger states always get their way—there is no doubt that states

in general and great powers in particular usually act to gain or maintain some kind of preeminence or dominance.

Yet here again, as with ideology, India is an exception. The country's foreign-policy discourse is striking in its neglect of power politics as a feature of the international system. To be sure, India has often engaged in its own form of *Realpolitik,* but this has never taken the form of the straightforward *Machtpolitik* that characterizes standard great-power rivalries or imperial doings.

Of course naked, self-avowed *Machtpolitik* is self-defeating and hence rarely seen. As John Stuart Mill pointed out, a pure, unbridled politics of power will not work because it gives no one else any reason to go along with you. It is a truism, as Mill pointed out, that no nation can hope to gain allies merely by appealing to its (and not their) own self-interest.[6] The rhetoric of "national interest" is internally potent, but offers no grounds for outsiders to go along with the imperial state. At best, a combination of power and incentives can generate a sullen compliance.

Thus it is no accident that nations typically appeal to some form of philanthropy for external legitimation. The delicate trick in any imperial intervention is to make this philanthropy—be it saving the world, making it safe for democracy, or safeguarding socialism—coincide with the best and most enlightened expression of the national interest. An expansionary power needs an ideology that can connect its national interest to its philanthropic aims. And its philanthropic aims must represent an idea of international order that other nations can accept. As Raymond Aron once perceptively put it, "in the twentieth century the strength of a great power is diminished if it ceases to serve an idea."[7]

Will India strive to serve an "idea" in this combined realist-idealist sense? If so, what might it be? India certainly has a sense that the greatest source of its power in the world will be the power of its example. If it can successfully handle its deep internal pluralism, maintain a vibrant democracy, and sustain decent rates of economic growth, it will automatically acquire a certain stature and even perhaps preeminence in global councils.

It is unlikely, however, that India will seek to elevate its own success into an ideological basis for its foreign policy. For instance, there is now some discussion of whether India should join the so-called Concert of Democracies. India is a founding member of the Community of Democracies, and contributes actively to the UN Democracy Fund. But India sees those as affiliations that mean—and cost—little. India's general stance is going to remain something like this. It will certainly argue that other things being equal, democracy is a desirable value. As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has argued, the only meaningful and lasting solution to a range of security threats such as terrorism is the building of open and inclusive societies. But India is unlikely to elevate this politi-

cal and sociological assessment of where security threats come from to a principle of foreign policy.

Tales of a Troubled Neighborhood

This is so for several reasons. First, most of India's security concerns emanate from its own neighborhood, replete as it is with unstable or authoritarian regimes. There are borders with China, Burma, and Pakistan, along with Nepal, where there is still a question mark over the future of democracy. New Delhi has no choice but to do business with authoritarian regimes that can impose direct existential costs on India. First, with respect to China, India has to walk a fine line and show considerable restraint. India is not convinced that any outside power can seriously hope to change China.

New Delhi believes that even the United States will, in the final analysis, pay only lip service to the issue of human rights in China. So there is no reason to take on China. And yet India finds itself involved, willy-nilly, in the politics of human rights within China. India is home to the Dalai Lama and the world's largest concentration of Tibetan refugees. It has played a difficult, delicate game of keeping the Tibet issue alive—providing a place where Tibetan culture can survive—without provoking China. As evidence emerges that the Chinese are growing more insecure about their own domestic legitimacy inside Tibet and Xinjiang, India has an even more delicate task: leveraging the Tibet issue to pressure Beijing without antagonizing it. This will be a classic instance of India becoming involved in de facto efforts to protect human rights without espousing them as a cause.

Another tricky case next door is that of Burma. During the 1980s and 1990s, India was an active proponent of democracy there. But New Delhi gradually began to distance itself from the Burmese democracy movement, preferring instead to support what it called the "national reconciliation process and transition to democracy in Myanmar." The nuances of India's relationship with its eastern neighbor would take an entire essay or more to sort out. Most important to note are the constraints that India feels when it comes to promoting democracy.

After the Saffron Revolution (and the violent repression thereof) in 2007, India came under intense international pressure to sign on to stricter sanctions against the Burmese junta. New Delhi refused to yield, however, and now takes the position (as has the United States in several other instances) that it can do the most good not by ostracizing the Rangoon regime, but rather by seeking to nudge it toward reform, however gradual. Interestingly, Indian diplomats will say quietly that however much pressure was brought to bear publicly, in private there was a good deal more understanding of and even endorsement for the finely balanced strategy of engagement that New Delhi preferred to pursue.

What drives this strategy? One answer is China. India has long worried about being surrounded by a string of states that are beholden to Beijing and ready to act as its proxies when it comes to South Asian affairs. As long as China engages Rangoon, India will feel bound to do so as well. Another and even more important answer is India's concern for its own territorial integrity and democracy. Burma had been "hosting" several groups involved in mounting an armed insurgency in far northeastern India, and New Delhi needs the junta's cooperation to crack down on them. In short, India is *directly vulnerable*, and it must respond accordingly.

India is implicated in the politics of four other neighbors in ways that have a direct bearing on democracy promotion and foreign policy. India's Nepal policy has always had the twin aims of promoting democracy and ensuring that whatever regime rules there poses no threat. India has a vital interest in ensuring that should Maoists come to power in Nepal, they will remain unable to crush their domestic opposition and erect a one-party regime that could threaten India's democracy. Is India promoting democracy in Nepal? Yes, very actively and perhaps more constructively than the thousands of foreign consultants who are distorting that troubled country's internal negotiating process. India's open-borders policy with Nepal is arguably the most vital element in Nepal's survival, more important than Western aid.

India has a similarly delicate task in postconflict Sri Lanka. There is great pressure within India, particularly in the state of Tamil Nadu at the southern tip of the subcontinent, to intervene in Sri Lanka on behalf of the defeated Tamils. At the same time, as evidence from WikiLeaks suggests, India has been at the forefront of shielding the Sinhalese-dominated Sri Lankan government from becoming a target of any international R2P provisions. Why is India doing this? New Delhi prefers to work in Sri Lanka and its Tamil-minority areas in ways that a showdown with the victorious (and increasingly authoritarian) government in Colombo would render impossible. Thus while India appears on the one hand to be protecting the Sri Lankan government from stronger international censure, on the other hand New Delhi is the only player that is actively engaged in the rehabilitation of Tamils in northern Sri Lanka. India may be opposing human-rights-based interventions, but at the same time it is doing more than anyone else to secure the welfare of Tamils.

India is actively engaged in supporting Bangladesh on its return to a more robust democracy through a massive aid program (worth US$1.5 billion) and several other concessions. In Pakistan, New Delhi has very little leverage. But India has been more conscious than the United States of the need to shore up the legitimacy of the civilian government in a country historically prone to military coups.

In engaging its various neighbors, India must balance any thoughts of democracy promotion against not merely its interests but also its

own very real and concrete vulnerabilities—a task that calls for infinite finesse and threatens direct costs if mishandled. India may do things in the course of these engagements that benefit democracy and human rights, but will not allow itself to be driven to do so by any ideological template.

India is well attuned to the idea that democracy is hard to promote, even though things can be done at the margins to strengthen democratic institutions. Even more important, it will likely take the view that if a stable global order requires engagement with China, Iran, or Russia, the last thing you want to do is to make the regimes that rule these countries feel ideologically beleaguered. India understands, perhaps better than does the United States, that great powers and proud nations are driven not merely by ideas or interests, but by a sense (however warped) of honor. Policies that are too norm-driven will make problematic countries even harder to engage. Thus, despite India's own democratic example and sense of desirable regime forms, it is unlikely to sign on to democracy promotion as a "big idea."

The Logic of Balancing

One of the features of the realist tradition is the concept of "balancing" among great or at least regional powers. Curiously, this note in the realist chorus has been little heard in India. For much of its history, it was obviously not in a position to play the balance-of-power game in the global arena, and regionally it mainly wanted to keep powerful outsiders from gaining too much influence. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru deprecated balance-of-power thinking as a legacy of imperialism that encouraged the unfair manipulation of other countries and promoted perpetual competition and rivalry.

Where promoters of the balance of power saw an upward path to stability, Nehru saw a slippery slope to stability's opposite. His successors at India's foreign-policy helm have not been as clear about their qualms, but it is undeniable that India has been relatively hesitant to adopt balance-of-power doctrine as its own. When Burma tried to court him as a counterweight to China in the late 1940s, Nehru stood aloof and in doing so set a lastingly influential example. Perhaps this was yet another case of making a virtue out of a necessity, and perhaps Nehru's ideological reasons have withered away, but the Nehruvian instinct to eschew balance-of-power considerations has remained remarkably durable.

Could that change? Could the "balancing game" gain more credence in Indian strategic thinking, especially with regard to China's growing power? Perhaps, but it remains the case currently that a search for the balance of power is not the default mode of Indian foreign-policy thought. India's record of extraordinary self-restraint in the export of technology, for instance, flows from its refusal to play the balance-of-

power game, even to the point of rejecting Sallust's maxim (seemingly a favorite of the Chinese) that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." India has always felt considerable anxiety about China and the threat that it might pose, but for the most part the worry has not been over any old-school great-power rivalry so much as a set of border disputes that both countries' conceptions of their own national identity have rendered intractable.

These disputes are serious enough for India and China to have fought a month-long war over them in October and November 1962. But that conflict was restricted to two disputed sections of remote, mountainous borderland—harshly inhospitable and sparsely peopled regions where more casualties were caused by the elements than by combat—and there is scant evidence that this longstanding territorial rivalry with China has shaped Indian foreign policy in any far-reaching way.

Additional evidence of India's reluctance to play a balancing game can be gleaned from its approach to "alliances." New Delhi has formed close strategic relationships with a number of countries, among them the old Soviet Union, and seems now to be flirting with closer U.S. ties. But India has been reluctant to enter into comprehensive alliances of the kind that NATO represents. Instead, New Delhi has approached alliances pragmatically and with a concern for maintaining its own foreign-policy autonomy at the forefront. Its larger, underlying assumption, moreover, has been that India's overall strategy should be to emerge as an area of "great-power agreement," as it were. In other words, the idea has been that India does best when all other powers, whatever their rivalries with one another, acknowledge that an independent and flourishing India is a source of stability for the world. Indeed, as Sisir Gupta pointed out thirty years ago, the core meaning of nonalignment was to make "India one of the few areas of great power agreement."[8]

Another feature of India's approach to alliances has been an insistence that the timing and choice of close partnerships should be dictated by contingent circumstances rather than some preexisting structural necessity for India to act as a balancing force. India had a close relationship with the Soviet Union, for instance, but this did not preclude New Delhi from approaching the United States in 1962 (when U.S. military aid was sought from an unaccommodating President John F. Kennedy) and again several years later (when the succeeding administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson rebuffed India's advances). India was restrained in those cases neither by its own links to Moscow or the close U.S. strategic relationship with Pakistan. If India moved toward the Soviet Union during the late 1960s and the 1970s, it was more a product of necessity than of commitment to some structural logic of balancing.

India's traditional reluctance to play a balancing game will now be put to an interesting test. In terms of the logic of balancing, India should be caught on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, global balancing

requires the creation of a so-called multipolar world, where new powers combine to challenge U.S. hegemony. On the other hand, the logic of regional balancing requires India to focus largely on China, whose dominance over Asia is now an accepted fact. For the moment, India has been trying to improve relations with both Washington and Beijing, and to avoid seeing the situation as a zero-sum game. But voices within India are now suggesting that New Delhi should use the United States to counterbalance China's intra-Asian ascendancy. Will such a logic of regional balancing move India toward a closer alliance with the United States?

Although U.S.-Indian ties are clearly deepening, it is too early for a definitive answer to that question. If anything, India's quest for strategic autonomy will most likely push it to keep as many options open as possible. In its own regional context, India will, for example, need to cooperate with Iran and Russia. As with India's push toward the Soviet Union, India will move decisively closer to Washington only if compelled by absolute necessity, not as some preemptive act aimed at balancing Chinese power. India still views the notion of balancing with Nehruvian skepticism, taking a cue from Nehru's insight that the nature of power in the international system is too complicated to allow wise policy to be spun out of one "big idea" such as balancing. India will be driven into an alliance not by the mere fact of rising Chinese hegemony elsewhere in Asia, but only if that hegemony translates into direct and imminent danger to India.[9]

India's game in the coming years will not so much be seeking active balance. It will try to leverage the fact that it is going to be courted by several powers to seek maximum concessions from other powers. Its foreign policy will require several crosscutting coalitions on different issues, and it is therefore unlikely to commit to an ideologically driven alliance with the United States. New Delhi and Washington may well draw closer before too long, but it will not be democracy promotion that brings them together.

Why Nothing Succeeds Like Success

In a sense, India's best "program" for promoting democracy and human rights is its own success as a great nation that cherishes both. If the Indian economy grows at 8 to 10 percent annually for another decade or so, this will not only secure India's own prosperity, but will transform the global debate on democracy and development. There is evidence that India and China are emerging as rival ideological models, not because either of them particularly wants to be party to an ideological competition, but simply because India's success will do so much to drive home the point that democracy and freedom (not merely from foreign rule but from domestic authoritarianism) can bring a huge development pre-

mium. This is why China has acquired a higher stake, not in threatening India, but in impugning the Indian model of development.

India's footprint on the world is growing, but it is less the footprint of the state than of the dynamic Indian private sector, including the millions of Indians who work in places such as the Middle East. It is Indian private enterprise and Indian labor that will, more than anything else, determine how India orients itself toward the world beyond its borders. Indian entrepreneurs, engineers, bankers, investors, traders, and guest workers may not think of themselves or be thought of primarily as "democracy promoters" in any direct sense, but they will by their mere presence contribute to the opening of societies—not least in the Middle East. And as for the Indian state, its modest, decentralized aid program has been helping to deepen democracy through steps such as the dissemination of broadband technology in Africa.

Indian foreign policy has had to be conducted with the consciousness that force is not readily available as a means for projecting power. This alone has made India less prone to ideological zeal or big ideas such as balancing, and more apt to see the virtues of caution. If one had to come up with a single phrase to describe the mindset that drives Indian foreign policy, it might be "cautious prudence." India is made cautious by a sense of its own limited capacities and unwillingness to use force. It is wary of enduring alliances, and accepts them only when it feels driven by necessity. It is cautious in recognizing a limit to its own ability to effect change elsewhere. Indeed, one of the great debates of the twenty-first century is going to be the extent to which great powers are led by an illusion of their own power. It is unlikely that this charge will be placed at India's door. If anything, India is more likely to be accused of being overly cautious.

But India is a prudent power in the sense that, contrary to standard narratives, it understands that power does matter. The advantage of a category such as "prudence" is that it cuts through the distinction between ideas and material interests that characterizes so many discussions of foreign policy. It is an inoculation against excessive zeal of any kind in foreign policy (including an excessive zeal for caution). Its response is situational, not determined by any predetermined logic. Or if there is any logic it is this: India's own success will do far more for democracy promotion than any overtly ideological push in that direction could ever hope to accomplish.

NOTES

1. Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1998), 208.

2. It is an intriguing sociological question whether ideologically driven foreign-policy agendas require one of two conditions. Either there must be a self-consciously revolutionary political class that feels committed to reshaping the world according to revolutionary

ideals (be these liberal-democratic, socialist, or otherwise), or there must be an establishment that feels securely situated enough to afford the luxury of long-term thinking. India is unlikely to have an establishment of this kind, and this will reinforce its national preference for risk-averse diplomacy.

3. Kautilya (ca. 370–283 B.C.E.) was the author of the strategic treatise known as the *Arthashastra,* and a political counselor who helped to build the massive Mauryan Empire that ruled most of South Asia during the Iron Age. Ashoka (ca. 304–232 B.C.E.) was the third Mauryan emperor (Kautilya was his grandfather's advisor); he embraced Buddhism after making bloody conquests and is revered today as an icon of the humane, tolerant, and benevolent ruler.

4. C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India's New Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2005).

5. Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Place: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Manu Bhagavan, "A New Hope: India, the United Nations and the Making of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," *Modern Asian Studies* 44 (March 2010): 311–47.

6. John Stuart Mill, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention," in *Essays in Politics and Culture,* ed. Gertrude Himmelfarb (Garden City, N.Y: Anchor, 1968), 368–84.

7. Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations,* trans. Richard Howard and Annette Baker Fox (Garden City: N.Y.: Anchor, 1973), 280. Viewed from this angle, realism and idealism seem less like polar opposites than like two sides of the same coin, or two hands working together.

8. Sisir Gupta, *India and the International System,* ed. M.S. Rajan and Shivaji Ganguly (New Delhi: Vikas, 1981), 47.

9. All this is assuming, of course, that Washington wants to act as a balancer. One must not forget that U.S.-China relations are interdependent as well as competitive. It may be that in the near term the structure of that interdependence—a relationship in which the United States owes China a great deal of money while China counts on the United States to keep buying Chinese exports and providing the world's safest place to invest all those Chinese-held U.S. dollars—will set limits on how much the United States wants to project itself as a counterweight to Chinese preeminence in Asia.