

Historical Aspects of Modern Indian Foreign Policy

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the historical foundations of Indian foreign policy, and the principles historically formulated as the main principles of modern Indian foreign policy are of decisive importance.

Keywords: *Indian foreign policy, historical factors, post colonialism, non-inclusion movement*

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South Asia is a region consisting of independent sovereign states, which includes representatives of several nationalities. India considers regional security as one of the priority areas of its foreign policy, while promoting leadership in this region and carrying out joint relations based on cooperation and solidarity as a state worthy of this position on all fronts.

India is the backbone of peace and stability in the region – it sees in the strengthening of mutually beneficial economic cooperation of the states located in the South Asian region, as well as the relations built on the basis of social and political agreements that bring these countries to a common goal.

At present, the Government of India occupies a worthy place in the world community, taking into account the maintenance of its strong position in the South Asian region and the full provision of national security issues.

The conditions for the formation of the principles of Indian foreign policy can be considered through a number of factors that are interrelated, the first of which is the factor of historical experience. The influence of Britain on India is ambivalent. British rule affected both positively and negatively the political development of India. Great Britain has started the process of modernization of India in both economic and political spheres. The introduction of self-government was important in order to bring India into the world economy on the basis of industrialization and democratization of the state.

To this end, a number of reforms, called Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, were approved in 1919. The

involvement of ordinary Indians in the electoral process marked the beginning of the emergence of political parties and served as a platform for the future independence of the country. In addition, as a colony of the British Empire, India inherited the Westminster political system, which played an important role in the development of democratic principles and institutions. It should also be noted that as a result of British rule, public opinion in India began to show a tendency to openness, unlike the signs of intimacy and isolation¹.

The historical experience of any state, naturally, affects the worldview of this state society. Thus, the three stages in the political development of India contributed significantly to the formation of the modern foreign political mentality of the country.

First, the period of colonial rule and the national liberation struggle. The National Liberation Movement and especially the movement for the protection of the National idea expressed in such a formula as “unity in diversity” had a significant impact on the formulation of the principles of Indian foreign policy. This recognizes the origin of the states of India from the regional originality and supports ethnonym through various forms of self-determination of internal self-determination (territorial or national-cultural autonomy)². It also provides national unity through common cultural,

¹ Привалова А.Ю. “Особенности внешней политики Индии в контексте американо-индийских отношений” Управленческое Консультирование. N 3. 2014 стр.167-174

² Тишков В. А. Единство в многообразии // Этнопанорама. 1999–2011 гг. 2-е изд., перераб.и доп. Оренбург: Издат. центр ОГАУ, 2011. 175 с.

historical, political, emotional and other values, views on a single civil state. The Indian interpretation of this fundamental postulate implies the inviolability of the principles of the social and political life of the country, such as consensus, secularism, social justice and anti-communism.

In the pre-colonial periods in India, in the course of historical progress, there were complex processes of interaction between the regions. The integration of states with different ethno-cultural characteristics and the need to find consensus to strengthen statehood influenced the formation of Indian political culture. It was a difficult and heterogen process for a peaceful situation to be complicated by catastrophic events. The Sparrow of Indian history has been repeatedly shaken between “order” and “chaos”, which have played an extremely important role in the economic, political and cultural development of India and therefore deserves special attention³. This experience of the formation of Indian statehood can also be extrapolated to the context of foreign policy: India has a high potential for new realities of international relations, including flexibility, but it is manifested by a high degree of caution in making political decisions.

Secondly, the declaration of independence of India in 1947 year ended the British colonial rule, in which the leading role of the Indian National Congress party was played by the result of the national liberation struggle. This historic decision marked the creation of a new Democratic state with the active participation of the population in the political life of the country, regardless of caste or religious affiliation, which created favorable conditions for the strengthening of Indian society and the pursuit of democratic values.

In addition, the colonial heritage of India is reflected in the political worldview of the state in terms of territorial integrity and state boundaries. India, for example, has shown persistence and resilience in matters related to its state borders with China and Pakistan. Negative historical memory obliges India to show consistency and integrity in the issue of mediation of third countries in regional conflicts. India strictly adheres to the following principles of the Simla Agreement signed in 1972, to which these principles call for the resolution of potential disputes through diplomatic means and only on a bilateral basis⁴.

The next important stage was the period of leadership in the non-inclusion movement. In the early 1950s, India demonstrated its position on the international arena as a fighter against aggression, racism, colonialism and the arms race. In the next 30 years, India was at the beginning of the National Liberation Movement and in 1986 year received the official status of the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. The formation of an independent India was a strong impetus for the growth of the national liberation struggle against colonialism in the region and around the world. His successful long-term experience as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement, his ability to coordinate the actions of

the United States around a common goal, his reputation in the international community, has created a solid foundation for growth and has strengthened his position as the center of global influence force. India’s modern foreign policy mentality continues to be a philosophy of peace and goodness, a desire for peace and the Prevention of differences and contradictions.

The ideas of direct non-inclusion and autonomy continue to be reflected in India’s foreign policy sentiment as a result of anti-colonialism policies and an incoherent action. In February 2012, Policy of “non-inclusion 2.0: Indian strategic and foreign policy in the XXI century” was announced, and the foreign policy guidelines, opportunities, prospects and challenges of the strategic security of the Republic of India in the XXI century were analyzed and formulated by leading Indian analysts and senior officials. But, it should be noted that this document, prepared by the well-known New Delhi Research Institute – Political Research Institute – is not considered an official doctrine of the government of India.

It should be noted that in the new architecture of the world order, which is characterized by interdependence, India is pursuing a policy of diversifying foreign policy relations, strengthening economic and political cooperation with countries on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

India is exposed to the constructive and destructive factors of world politics and undoubtedly has found itself in the epicenter of international relations. This comes along with new opportunities and prospects as well as significant risks, responsibilities and increased competition.

India’s historical heritage and geographic location have come out of a series of long-term border conflicts that have brought a component of tension to Delhi’s political discursion. India has not been a single state politically for a long time, so it has not been able to pay serious attention to security issues. Ideologues of the national liberation movement, first of all, a single country, India, even, as already mentioned above, never existed before on the borders of the modern Republic of India. Unlike similar trends in other countries under foreign rule, Indian nasionalists did not seek to return what was lost and restore what was destroyed, but tried to create a single Indian state, a single nation, which did not exist before.

Analysis of the geopolitical situation in Asia shows the special geostrategic situation of the Republic of India. India is the largest and most densely populated state in South Asia, bordered by each country in the region, which contributes to the high potential for natural interdependence and cooperation. In addition, India is part of all the concentric circles of the Asian space, which ensure the desire to find the most effective and mutually beneficial formats of interaction with Asian countries and determine the main role of India in the construction of a guaranteed security architecture.

It is also worth noting that India’s arsenal of foreign policy priorities includes its direct location in the Indian Ocean, its global importance in the foreign policy environment is undeniable. The Indian Ocean is connected with the rich reserves of raw materials, their location in the quarters of trade and economic routes, etc. This strategic position gives Delhi the status of a key actor in regional and global politics.

³Кужык Б. Н., Шаумян Т. Л. Индия–Россия: стратегия партнерства в XXI веке. М.: Ин-тэкономич. стратегий, 2009. с. 54-55.

⁴Simla Agreement. July 2, 1972 // Ministry of External Affairs. Government of India: [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5541/Simla+Agreement>

It is evident that the geopolitical factor plays a decisive role in the formation of the principles of Indian foreign policy. In the process of resolving the Indo-Chinese conflict in 1954 Year, J.Neru had put forward five principles of peaceful coexistence called the principles of Pancha-Shila, to which these principles include mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual coexistence, peaceful coexistence⁵. These principles are also relevant in the current foreign policy of India.

In addition, the cultural and ideological factor is undoubtedly important. It is permissible to emphasize India's contribution to the world spiritual culture of mankind. Prominent political figures of the XX century J. Neru and M.Gandhi were the founders of socio-political development in India and supporters of humanization of international relations. J. Neru and M. Gandhi, basically, were the spiritual leaders of the Indian people, advocating the need to spread democratic ideas and nurture high morality among Indian citizens.

Characteristic features of gandism are intolerance in any form, refusal of violence and oppression, commitment to peace and peaceful resolution of any conflicts. The political culture of India is permeated with the ideas of Gandism, the basis of which determines the paradigm of domestic and foreign policy of the state.

Speaking about the worldview of the Indian people, it is impossible not to dwell on one of the main peculiarities of Indian society, which left a huge mark in the formation of its mentality. We are talking about the caste structure of society, which, although it has undergone significant changes, largely determines the worldview of the Indians. The humanism of the ideas of M. Gandhi and J. Nehru, along with the caste structure of society, laid the foundation for pluralism and polycentrism, which strengthened the democratic direction of Indian society.

India has historically been the center of World Culture and the birthplace of the greatest inventions and achievements in various fields of knowledge. The importance of the spiritual and cultural values of India, which is the impetus for World Cultural Development and the guarantee of its authority, cannot be overemphasized. India is an example of the symbiosis of linguistic, ethnic and social groups. The high level of confessional and ethno-cultural heterogeneity of Indian society both contributes to a significant level of conflict, and significantly enriches and diversifies Indian political culture.

The next important component that forms the Indian foreign policy is the factor of transformation of the system of globalisation and international relations. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union were marked by a radical change in the balance of power on the world stage, as well as significant changes in Indian foreign policy. The tendency to adapt to the balance of New Forces has affected Indian foreign policy. The transformation of the bipolar

structure of the world into the polycentric system of international relations, the intensive processes of globalisation mobilize the potential of Indian society, revealing new aspects of the political culture of the Republic of India. The postulate of "unity in diversity", revealed in multiculturalism and tolerance in the conditions of globalization, becomes the main imperial of its foreign policy, characteristic of the political culture of India, becoming a priority. In the age of globalism, India's foreign policy is enriched with a soft power category in order to ensure long-term political authority in the world community.

Proceeding from the above, the historical foundations of Indian foreign policy can be seen below:

First, historical experience, geopolitical location, cultural and ideological, a set of factors of globalisation shape the political culture of India. Political culture is a decisive category of foreign policy of any state.

Secondly, India's foreign policy is a historically formed principleillarni consistently implements: peacefulness, tolerance, commitment to democratic development and independence.

Thirdly, in the conditions of the transformation of the international relations system, India is successfully adapting to the new realities of world politics in order to achieve and maintain the status of a global power center.

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