

India: Power, to what end?

Christophe Jaffrelot

India is gradually slipping into its new avatar of an emerging power¹. That this notion – power – is multifaceted is a well-known fact; but India today seems to be verifying all the criteria inherent to power: military strategy related, economic, demographic and even cultural and political. If India is asserting itself in this fashion in all the compartments of the game, it is largely thanks to a consummate art of voluntarism: it aspires for power at the same time for dominating the region and for carving for itself a place in what has come to be known as the court of the greats. But what does India want to do of this power? What is the vision that it holds of this quest? These questions are generally met with a deadening silence in India as if the answers are to be found in the unspoken words of an elite which is at once enamoured of realpolitik and nationalism.

The attributes of the Indian power

Geostrategy and military striking force

At the strategic and military levels, the symbol of the desire for power which is firing India is, quite naturally, the nuclear test conducted in May 1998. This event moved the country on to the ranks of nuclear players in factual terms if not in legal terms. Eight years down the lane, it is easy to measure the distance covered since New Delhi today enjoys international recognition that is far superior to its prior status, even though it probably holds less than a hundred odd nuclear heads.

However the endeavour for the modernization of its 1,350,000 strong army does not end there. In budgetary terms, this endeavour costs around 2.3 % of the GNP from 1994 onwards – whereas the growth rate has reached 7-8 % since the last three years. These expenditures have, in particular, enabled equipping the naval forces with six French made submarines (the Scorpènes) and a Russian aircraft carrier undergoing modernization. They have also funded a highly ambitious ballistic programme: The Prithvi missiles, having a 150 to 200 km range, and Agni 2, with a 2,000 km range, are already operational. They should be soon joined by Agni 3, having a 3,000 km range. Besides, India has also acquired a Falcon radar system from Israel, one of the most sophisticated of its kind which will soon be equipping Russian Ilyushins.

New Delhi will therefore within a very short time possess a projection force and an entire array of delivery vehicles capable of carrying along a nuclear warhead – that its fleet of MIGs, Sukhois and Mirages will also join in, quite obviously. Provided thus, the country can aspire to the status of watchdog of the Indian Ocean and hold in abeyance its Asian adversaries: Pakistan, and also China. This potential comforts the United States in the idea that India could quite well be the counterbalance to China that they are on the look out for in Asia.

Emerging country and high-tech giant

The new striking force of India has been rendered possible by the considerable financial margins owing to its accelerated economic growth which made the Indian GNP move ahead of the GNP of Russia in 2002. Whereas from 1950 to 1980 the country recorded on an average a growth rate of 3.5 % per annum, it "is veering" from the past three years, as we said, around a growth rate rhythm of 7-8 % yearly. This economic dynamics has in particular

benefited big companies certain among which are becoming important multinationals, such as Tata, Mahindra, Reliance, Infosys, Wipro... These companies, feeling cramped in the domestic market, are henceforth economic powers capable of buying a great deal of foreign assets. In 2005, Indian companies disbursed 13 billion dollars for getting established worldwide.

The engine of this economic growth: the service industry and, especially, computer services, which are progressing at 30 % since several years. India henceforth finds itself at the forefront of the global software market, and is marching along shoulder to shoulder with the United States. Biotechnologies are also rising in power, which has enabled the country to position itself at the sixth rank of generic drug manufacturers. Though big companies such as Ranbaxy and Dr. Reddy had acquired their position owing to a remarkable ability of adaptation – for the sake of avoiding saying piracy – of the chemical formulae perfected by others, they are presently putting in real efforts in the matter of research and development. This is the reason why New Delhi is advocating the cause of strict respect of intellectual property under the aegis of the WTO and is finally abiding by WTO rules.

Its success in the service industry tends to make of India a post-industrial nation: the service sector in fact accounts for 55 % of the GNP, whereas industry is only worth 25 % and the primary sector accounts for 20 %. But a rebalancing act is emerging, due to the increasing appeal that the country holds for the multinationals operating in the manufacturing sector owing largely to its low labour costs. For a long time, this reasoning applied only to well qualified Indians whose remuneration was markedly less than the remuneration of their foreign counterparts. India then aspired to become the laboratory (and the office) of the world while China was its workshop. But, today, New Delhi is showing comparative advantages in the manufacturing domain which should get confirmed in the future. To the difference of the Chinese population, which will start diminishing within a few years, the Indian population will continue to rise till the 2040's, thereby feeding the labour tank which will be appropriate for lowering the level of salaries. The country could therefore, in the long run, become in its turn the workshop of the planet.

Demographic dynamism and Diaspora

There is no one-to-one relationship between power and demography: on the one hand, a steeply rising population is often synonymous with mass poverty in the countries of the Southern hemisphere – and India where 350 million inhabitants have to survive on 1 dollar a day, is no exception to this rule; on the other hand, an expanding population is an asset, not only for the reason mentioned above, but also, in the case of India, because no one can ignore a country with a billion people – in other words 16 % of the world population -, in particular for the huge market that its middle class represents. Today this interpretation is being validated by the intense lobbying that big American companies are indulging in with the Congress so that it may back the deal signed in the civil nuclear domain by George Bush and Manmohan Singh last March²: the Americans certainly don't wish to alienate themselves from this future economic giant by challenging an agreement to which India is attaching a big price.

Yet another demographic element of Indian power: the Diaspora. It is true that the departure abroad of a part of the elite class and student youth population is related to a veritable brain drain; but the expatriates send colossal sums to their families which have remained back in their homeland (last year, 23 billion dollars were in this fashion injected into the Indian economy) and they constitute veritable pressure groups in certain foreign nations. For example, the two million strong Indian population which lives in the United States forms a lobby capable of influencing American foreign policy³. It is true that they have shown

remarkable success since their per head income level is the highest among all the Asian communities with 68,000 dollars per annum according to the 2000 census, while the average income level is located around 30,000 dollars.

Democracy, federalism and positive discrimination: the keys to political stability

The remarkable political stability that India is witnessing today greatly favours its economic dynamics. This stability is shown by the durability of public policies: since fifteen years, irrespective of the ideology of the party in power, the country has been following the same path in the economic domain as well as in the matter of foreign policy and its military strategy options. Moreover, this stability contributes to a continuous strengthening of democracy and federalism. If India has not changed either its political system or its borders since 1947, it is indeed thanks to these two pillars of political life each of which have, in their own manner, allowed it to defuse the risks of insurrection or the centrifugal forces.

The Indian democracy has gradually integrated all the components of the political game in the electoral process. The Communist Party, which, after the independence, had opted for the revolutionary path, quickly adopted the institutions established by the 1950 Constitution owing to the repression endured by its activists in Telangana (in the present-day Andhra Pradesh) in 1951, and also because of its victory in the 1957 elections in Kerala – the first ever electoral victory of any communist party in the world. In the same manner, the untouchables movements tempted by seeking recourse to violence has stopped, in the majority of cases, by instead seeking recourse to the ballot box, following the example set by the political leader B. R. Ambedkar⁴. The parties that he will lead from the 1920's to the 1950's showed the way to the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), the main party of the untouchables, which has become a major player on the national public arena over the last ten years⁵. Only the Maoists of the Naxalite movement still prefer the insurrectionary strategy to democratic rule. However, their importance – even if it is on the rise in the most bereft areas, from Orissa to Bihar going through Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh – should not represent a heavy mortgage if the government takes stock of the danger and adopts a politics of help to the most deprived classes as it has announced.

In the course of the past decades, federalism has proved to be as much an integrating force as the electoral game. From the Tamils of the South to the Sikhs of Punjab, ethnic groups have been several to demand their independence between the '50s and the '80s. Today, only Kashmir and – to a lesser extent – Assam are beleaguered with independence movements worthy of being named thus. This proves that New Delhi has succeeded in defusing the separatist movements by developing a truly federal system. Right from the '50s, the map of the Federal States has been cut out again so that their frontiers may coincide, as they wanted them to, with the linguistic areas. Other States were subsequently created for meeting with the specificities of numerous ethnic groups. At last, the autonomy of the States, which had for a long time been threatened by the centralist instincts of New Delhi (particularly tangible under Indira Gandhi), was better and better respected as the weight of big parties slackened, to begin with the Congress (which moved from 48 % in 1984 to 27 % in 2004)⁶. This slackening, in fact, ipso facto gave importance to the various regional parties whose support became indispensable for forming governmental coalitions.

Indian politics also presents the immense advantage of being based on a Constitutional State. Here, justice enjoys real freedom. The Supreme Court, whose members are appointed on proposal by the judges of regional courts and remain irremovable – except in case of recourse to highly complex impeachment proceedings⁷ -, does not have to curry favour with the ruling members. In the '90s, India witnessed a veritable “cleanliness” drive which landed a number of politicians in trouble. Half a dozen ministers were even forced to resign in 1995-

1996. Generally speaking, the legal aspect enjoys an authentic aura in India. This legacy from the British Rule, which can be seen in the presence of an army of lawyers, however does not rule out phenomenal delays.

Last but not the least, democracy has made it possible to include new social groups in the public arena owing in particular to an active politics of positive discrimination. This once again has to do with a colonial legacy since the British were the first to reserve places for the untouchable castes in the educational system, public administration and elected assemblies. This device has however been systematized after independence, with the quotas becoming proportionate with the demographic weight of the untouchables, whose census continued to be taken every ten years. The castes which are placed just above the untouchables also benefited from a quota of 27 % of jobs in the central administration (the public production sector included) from 1990 onwards. Today, the lower castes are asking the government to move a step further in the same direction by granting them a quota in elitist universities and institutes. Manmohan Singh's cabinet has got a bill voted for this purpose during the summer of 2006. The matter will most certainly be referred to the Supreme Court, and it is not impossible for it to validate the same.

The State is thus striving to promote new social groups, which, if they were to be ignored, could very well turn against the "system". To a certain extent, this involves a co-opting strategy aimed at defusing tensions that are likely to derail the Indian train. What remains is that, even if this manner of making concessions aims at maintaining the course, in the long run they will pave the way for a broad-based replenishment of the elite and a veritable take-over of power by the lower castes – which we can already observe in certain Federal States⁸. This step could reach its zenith when the lower classes will demand quotas in the new Indian Eldorado which is the private enterprise. However it is not impossible that this stage is gradually crossed because many industry heads are already preparing themselves for such an eventuality. Once again, it is Tata which is getting ready to set the example by creating schools which will educate the untouchables that it will be necessary to employ one day⁹.

Democracy and culture at the core of the Indian "soft power"

Ever since Joseph Nye introduced the famous distinction between "soft" and "hard" power in the grammar of international relations¹⁰, no country can measure its power by the sole yardsticks of its army and its economy: its influence is also conveyed through its political and cultural influence. As for the political sphere, the fact that India is a democracy and a Constitutional State naturally constitutes a substantial advantage. It plays such a big role that the European Union has placed these values at the forefront of the norms that it undertakes to recognize and propagate, and that Washington today is making the system of government of its stakeholders a determining criterion of its attitude in their regard - an omnipresent assertion in the utterances of neo-conservative speakers and, more generally speaking, of the Bush administration. India plays this to the hilt every time such an opportunity is given to it. It is in this fashion that it justifies the preferential treatment that it claims in nuclear matters by its democratic qualities ... and the Westerners feel that it is justified in doing so: if this country should enjoy special benevolence – and, in particular, nuclear technology transfers – whereas Iran, on the contrary, is subjected to all kinds of preventions, it is because one is democratic and the other is not. India derives real political mileage from the prestige attached to its title of "the world's largest democracy" – after decades during which this status served it no purpose at all.

As for its cultural influence, it partly leans against an industry, the cinema industry. Bollywood in fact produces a record number of films and its productions are no longer only

meant for the local audience but also for foreign markets and specially countries hosting heavy Indian immigration. Without this cinema being able to compete with the models (in the sense of patterns) conveyed by the big American production houses, it is exported much more than the cinema of most of the European countries, in particular in the rest of Asia and the Middle East.

In a less popular vein but not elitist for all that, Anglo-Indian literature has created a new genre whose appeal among Western readers does not seem to be waning: Salman Rushdie (Booker Prize 1981), Arundhati Roy (Booker Prize 1997 who sold more than two million copies of the *God of small things*), Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh (prix Médicis for non-French authors), Naipaul (Nobel Prize 2001) win literary awards and land mind-blowing contracts with big Anglo-Saxon publishers who are rewarded with excellent business each time that they publish them (not including the multiplication of translations in foreign languages). However, though they no longer still live in India, these authors speak about the country of their origin with such brilliance that they render it familiar to the rest of the world: thus making a society and its culture penetrate the imaginary space of the others is already tantamount to exerting power on them.

Last but not the least, the Indian civilization finds many other relays in traditional arts which are music, dance, song, etc., as is witnessed by the success of festivals and itinerant recitals.

What to do with the power?

Though India today possesses the main attributes of power, the use that it intends to make of it cannot yet be clearly deduced from official statements.

The dilapidated inheritance of Gandhi and Nehru?

In former times, this country had a world view. It thought of itself as the Third World. It defended a philosophy of non-alignment and rejected the confrontation between the Soviet model and capitalism in the name of a third path inspired by Gandhian views. It advocated the solidarity of young nations, the emancipation of the colonized people and non-violence - including through the denuclearization of Asia.

There was idealism – and even utopia – in this position that Nehru incarnated during the seventeen years that he spent heading the government, from 1947 to 1964 – a period during which the prime minister retained the External Affairs portfolio. Nehru's diplomacy came within the scope of a form of humanism because his nationalism was indissociable from a fundamental universalism. He drew from the immense quality of the Western influences that he had absorbed in Europe, but also from Gandhi, his spiritual father about whom he said in 1946, even before India attained independence: "Gandhi was a passionate nationalist; he was also, at the same time, a man who felt that he was the harbinger of a message meant not only for India, but for the entire world community, and he ardently desired world peace. His nationalism therefore had a universal reach and remained devoid of any aggressive intention. Wanting India's freedom, he had come to think that a world federation of independent States was the only just goal, as distant as it may be".¹¹ Once in power, Nehru will put this Gandhian approach into practice by drawing his argument from the manner in which India had managed to free itself from the British yoke. In 1955, he confides in Tibor Mende that in the course of the anti-colonial movement Indians fought "not on the military plane – we couldn't do that -, (but) in a peaceful manner. For a certain number of reasons, we succeeded. We are therefore inclined to attach less importance to military solutions than to peaceful solutions..."¹² Which

explains Nehru's call: "Disarmament should be bilateral, or multilateral... Everyone should disarm".¹³

These words reflect a vision of the world and principles which contrasts with the realpolitik of the Indian governments which have followed one another ever since the '90s. The latter have greatly moved away from multilateralism in favour of a constant rapprochement with the United States. The present prime minister, Manmohan Singh, a thoughtful man if there is any, justified this pro-American realpolitik in an explicit manner when his communist allies reproached him for the warm congratulations that he had addressed to George Bush after his re-election: "one must face up to reality. International relations are a matter of power and powers are not equal in worth. One cannot escape from reality. The international context has to be used to the best of our interest. It is indispensable to become closer to the United States. The United States plays a leadership role in global economy and international politics. We cannot ignore this fact".¹⁴

The new American friend and goodbye to multilateralism?

The signs of an increasing alignment of New Delhi with Washington are innumerable. The joint military manoeuvres between the two countries are increasing by the day. The Bush and Singh administrations have entered into an agreement named "open skies" in 2005 in order to increase the air connections between both the countries. A short while ago, India had hurriedly joined the coalition of donors launched by the United States in the aftermath of the tsunami which struck on 26 December 2004 – a sign of its propensity to follow American initiatives rather than a multilateralist approach. And in June 2005, both the countries set up a strategic partnership in the matter of military cooperation.¹⁵

This rapprochement, from the Indian point of view, can be explained in several manners. First of all, on the subject of the fight against terrorism, the strategic vision of the Indians is akin to the one held by Americans. Since 11 September, several are those who consider that the United States finds itself in a situation comparable to their own: for New Delhi, the Americans are, in their turn, victims of the same Islamist networks, whose source is to be traced back to Pakistani terrain. Over and beyond this aspect, India appreciates the cooperation that Washington is offering it. In the agricultural domain, the Americans have undertaken to help their partners in accomplishing a "second generation green revolution". Furthermore, they claim that they are willing to offer them the techniques required for the processing of their coal for rendering it more efficient and less polluting. Last but not the least, the Americans are likely to develop Indian capabilities in the matter of nuclear energy. During his visit to India last March, George Bush in fact declared that he was ready to authorize sensitive transfers provided the IAEA will have access, by 2014, to 65 % of the nuclear installations, in such a manner as to be able to verify that dual technologies are not being used for military purposes. Eight of the twenty-two Indian reactors would remain under the sole control of New Delhi authorities, who could develop their military arsenal there. So far India has accepted to make only minor concessions, which do not come in the way of its national sovereignty in military and strategic terms. As for the Americans, they are thrilled with the rise in power of this country in which they see a first class counterbalance to China.

The Indo-American rapprochement can however be explained by reasons other than solely the mutual interest angle. There exist between the two countries strong affinities, or even a veritable community of thought. It is true that Europeans postulate that "India and the EU share a world view founded on multilateralism"¹⁶; but, in reality, New Delhi's statements on multilateralism and on the necessity for a multipolar world are loaded with false pretences. Nehru's country has of course inherited from his commitment within the Non-Alignment Movement a speech riddled with anti-imperialistic connotations that may be interpreted as

being directed against American hegemony. This legacy presents possible similarities with the multilateralist project (European) aiming at promoting a system of international norms and with the idea (French) of multipolarity. What remains is that, in practice, Indian leaders show a pragmatism which has even taken on shades of realpolitik right from the '90s. For New Delhi, the United States represents an unavoidable leadership, whereas the EU is not a real international player – in particular for want of holding a credible projection force. The extreme valorization of military and strategic power constitutes herein a major factor for the lack of consideration that the EU is subjected to.

As for the UNO, it is certain that India would pay more attention to it if this institution were to welcome it within its Security Council as a permanent member. The suspicious nature of New Delhi towards international law - and moral issues – is nurtured here at the source of the resentment. The Indian strategists of the “think tanks” opine that becoming the “world’s largest democracy” has got much less for the country than the 1998 nuclear tests. This new inclination is perfectly coherent: Did the West listen to India when it defended values such as peace through disarmament or men like the Dalai Lama?

India’s revenge, or the metamorphosis of Indian nationalism

India’s evolution is basically explained by the metamorphosis of its nationalism. The universalistic variant which was successively incarnated by Gandhi and Nehru has been followed by an aggressive brand of nationalism whose essential force stems from a feeling of insecurity and rancour. The country legitimately felt threatened from the '60s onwards with the 1962 Chinese aggression, the 1965 Pakistani attack and finally, the 1971 war, once again with Pakistan. This geo-strategic threat was coupled with an economic threat from the '70s when China and the “tigers” – and other “dragons” – witnessed an economic boom which left India where it stood with its Hindu growth rate – for borrowing a time-honoured and condescending tag bequeathed upon it – of 3-4 %. Ever since, anxiety rose further in New Delhi. In the '80s to '90's, these psychological dispositions furnished fertile ground for Hindu nationalism which nursed the wounded soul of the majority of the population (80 % of Indians are Hindus) by upholding the supremacy of India in ethno-religious terms. This re-conquest of self-esteem – mainly cultural in its orientation – of the '90s was expressed loud and clear in the fetish slogan of the Hindu nationalist movement: “Garv se kaho, ham Hindu hein!” (“Say with pride: we are Hindu!”) that the main party of this shift in trend, the BJP, struck up in the early '90s, a decade during which it increased violence against the Muslims, in order to polarize the electorate and finally take over power in 1998. Today, the poised nationalism displayed by the Congress which was back in power in 2004 is no longer ethno-religious, but it reflects the same will for revenge. India wishes to occupy centre stage as if power were an end in itself.

Making India’s voice heard in the global governance

From the great provider of ethics, India is therefore veering towards becoming a harbinger of the realistic approach in international relations. Doesn't it run the risk of losing its soul in the process? The Indian decision makers to whom we ask this question prefer responding with another question: Did the West listen to them when, loyal to Gandhian (and Nehruvian) principles, they advocated pacifism? This retort is perfectly well founded: as we have already pointed out, India was not taken seriously so far as it spoke of good feelings; it had to proceed with the 1998 nuclear tests for the opinion of the great powers that be of this world to change at last.

The initial question does not cease to be any the less important for all that, and should in fact be completed with another question: what message can India bring to the planet? The answer is double-edged. First of all, the realpolitik which dominates its diplomacy today is due to just a minority – of course a highly active one – of leaders. The political society – very lively in this country – which is formed by the parties, NGOs, trade unions, etc. often remains loyal to Nehru's heritage and is concerned by the consequences of a quest for power on the heels of the Americans.

Secondly, and above all, New Delhi can employ its power to positive ends from the view point of the values cherished by multilateralism. As we have already stated, India is a democracy which has proved its attachment to the Constitutional State. It has been organizing free elections since long. This know-how could be put to use for nation building operations - for borrowing the jargon doing the rounds - of a greater or lesser magnitude. India is already greatly participating in building a democratic State in Afghanistan, with all the more motivation since it hopes, through these means, to establish a reverse alliance directed against Pakistan. Not only is it financing the new building of the Afghan parliament, it has also conducted the training of thirty-five local officials in parliamentary affairs (in particular in the writing of laws) at the *Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training*, in 2004-2005 at New Delhi. In December 2003, during the constitutional Loya Jirga, it also supplied 65 electronic voting machines and 50, 000 pens whose indelible ink allows marking the index finger of the electors who have voted in order to spot them easily if they try to vote again. The *Indian Law Institute* of New Delhi trained eighteen judges and prosecutors in February-May 2003. Finally, 250 Afghan policemen received instruction in India from June to September 2002. All these efforts stand witness to a real know-how in the matter of Nation building and learning of democracy; what remains though is that they are still quite meek, not only owing to New Delhi but also because the authors of the Afghan reconstruction do not wish to cause worry to Pakistan by allowing India to get involved in the country.

Indian expertise in electoral matters could also be brought out in many other contexts, in particular thanks to the mastery of its Electoral Commission - an autonomous institution which enjoys an experience of sixty years in the organization of all sorts of ballots. The government seems to be tempted to forge farther ahead, as is suggested by the Internet site of the Ministry of External Affairs in which figure the main features of a *Centre for Global Democracy Initiative to promote Democracy and Development*. In this column, Afghanistan is moreover presented as a "model case". But will India persevere in this direction for contributing, for instance, to the setting up of democratic rule in Nepal? Will it work, in future, through the intermediary of the United Nations' system or will it prefer to adopt a bilateral approach? The Afghan experiment suggests that New Delhi will probably leave both the options open. It is high time, in any case, for a certain amount of reflection to be engaged in India on these subjects which are the burning issues of today. The development of a doctrine in such matters would help it, in fact, for determining which attitude to adopt in the face of a crisis such as the one which has been shaking up Nepal since the conquest of the Western parts of the country by the Maoists hostile towards Monarchy.

These agreements suggest that New Delhi is wavering between an approach geared towards multilateralism and yet another which is more in phase with the American brand of unilateralism. This hesitation showed up in broad daylight for the first time when India pondered over for a long time before responding to America's request for participation in the Iraqi operation. It ended up saying no at a time when it became quite obvious that the war would be a long drawn out and highly debilitating affair.

For convincing the Indians that the best use that they can put their new-found power to would consist in investing in multilateral operations, the Europeans will have to show a great deal of audacity. Campaigning for India's entry into the Security Council of the UNO would

enable to accomplish a first step in this direction – especially if this step would prove to be successful! Failing the integration of this country at the highest level of global governance, it is in fact likely to pursue its quest for power without deeming it necessary to put the same at the service of humanity and peace – for borrowing the great words (the only ones which are worthy) of Gandhi.

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1. Works on the subject have achieved great success, among which, for citing only three works: S. Cohen, *India: Emerging Power*, Brookings Institution, Washington, 2001; S. Ganguly (ed.), *India as Emerging Power*, Franck Cass, London, 2003; and B. R. Nayar et T. V. Paul (eds), *India in the World Order: Searching for Major Power Status*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003.
2. The American President de facto acknowledged an exceptional status to India: even though it had not signed the NPT, he declared that he was ready to authorize sensitive transfers (including enriched uranium) to the Indians owing to their statements of service in the matter of non-proliferation and democracy, provided that the IAEA will have access by 2014 to 65 % of the nuclear installations in such a manner as to be able to verify that dual technologies are not being used for military purposes. Eight of the twenty-two Indian reactors would therefore remain under the sole control of New Delhi authorities who could develop their military arsenal there. India has therefore made only few concessions, which do not come in the way of its national sovereignty in military and strategic terms
3. This pressure group has thus succeeded in getting humanitarian-conditionality clauses enlisted in the aid that the United States is offering to Pakistan.
4. Ambedkar, the first untouchable to get a doctorate – and at the *London School of Economics* no less – founded the first political parties of the untouchables between the '30s and the '40s before fighting for the cause of the lower castes within the Indian Constituent Assembly and as the Minister of Justice in Nehru's government right from 1947 onwards. For more details, refer to: Christophe Jaffrelot, *Dr. Ambedkar, leader intouchable et père de la Constitution indienne*, Presses de Sciences-Po, 2000.
- 5 . The BSP, which was founded in 1984, has become an important political force in the Northern parts of the country and, particularly, in Uttar Pradesh, the biggest State of India, which it has ruled for three terms between 1995 and 2003. With 19 members in the lower house of the Parliament, its influence is felt in certain important parliamentary debates.
6. This decline is firstly due to the rise to power of the regional parties, which explains that the share of the national parties has dropped from 85 % in 1980 to 62 % in 2004.
7. For this the majority of the two parliamentary Assemblies whose members will be specially convened for this occasion will have to be gathered. A two-thirds majority of the present members is then required.

8 . I developed this argument in *Inde : la démocratie par la caste*, Fayard, 2005.

9. I got this information from Sukhhadeo Thorat whose co-edited book can be profitably read: S. Thorat, Aryama and P. Negi (ed.), *Reservation and Private Sector. Quest for Equal Opportunity and Growth*, éditions Rawat, Jaipur/Delhi, 2005.

10. As opposed to "hard power" which refers to the power to pressurize, "soft power" reflects the capacity of a nation to seduce or to define the terms of the political agenda; it rests on intangible resources such as cultural influence or values. The inventor of this distinction is the political scientist Joseph Nye who formulated it in the early '90s in a work available in French, *Le Leadership américain*, Presses universitaires de Nancy, 1992.

11 . Jawaharlal Nehru, *La Découverte de l'Inde*, Philippe Picquier, 2002, pp. 480-481.

12 . T. Mende, *Conversations avec Nehru*, Seuil, 1956, p. 109.

13. Ibid., p. 122.

14. *The Hindu*, 8 November 2004.

15. The "New framework for the US-India defence relationship" signed in Washington on 28 June 2005 by the Indian defence minister, Pranab Mukherjee, and his American counterpart, Donald Rumsfeld provided in particular for technology transfers pertaining to military equipment – including ballistic missiles – as well as peacekeeping operations in third countries. (Refer to: <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/ipr062805.html>).

16. Commission of the European Communities, "Commission staff working document. Annex to the Communication from the Commission, An EU-India Strategic Partnership", Brussels, 16 June 2004.

17. Refer to: "Nepal : from people power to peace", A policy report of the International Crisis Group, no. 115, 10 May 2006, p. 20.

Revue des revues, sélection de juillet 2007

Christophe JAFFRELOT : « Inde : la puissance, pour quoi faire ? »
article publié initialement dans *Politique Internationale*, automne 2006.

Traducteurs :

Anglais : Padma Natarajan
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