‘anarchical society’. All of the others, in different ways, reflect the impact of globalization, with its numerous nonstate actors and ever-increasing economic interdependence, and with a China interacting peacefully with the other members of international society.

NOTES

2. Global Times, 10 September 2010.
that India should indeed advance new normative agendas, arguing that its cultural and intellectual inheritance provides India with a wealth of insight and ‘soft power’ with which to bring about change in international society (Hymans 2009; Wagner 2010; Blare! 2012; Tharoor 2012; Thussu 2013). In 2012, the *NonAlignment 2.0* report, authored by eight leading Indian scholars and businessmen and published by the Centre for Policy Research, presented a Nehruvian vision, suitably updated, which was widely discussed—and criticized—within and outside India (Khilnam et al. 2012). These ideas (and others) found some currency in the latter stages of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. And the debate did not end there. In 2014, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) election manifesto presented an alternative vision, emphasizing the concept of ‘Brand India’ and the desirability of leveraging India’s soft power to the country’s advantage and for the greater global good (BJP 2014, 39–41). These concepts have been echoed by the new National Democratic Alliance government of Narendra Modi, as his speech to the United Nations General Assembly later that year demonstrates so well (Modi 2014).

This chapter assesses the promise of a revivified ‘normative power India’ and the challenges that the various normative agendas proposed by Indian scholars and politicians might face in contemporary international society. To that end, it explores what it might mean to be a ‘normative power’, drawing upon the significant body of literature that has grown up since the early 1990s on that concept and, in particular, on the experience of ‘normative power Europe’. It then looks back to Nehru’s earlier effort to make India an active participant in the shaping of the normative order of postwar international society—at the means that he utilized and at the reasons for what success he managed to achieve. The final part analyses what the theoretical literature and the history of India’s attempt to act as a postcolonial ‘norm entrepreneur’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998) tells us about the prospects for ‘normative power India’ today.

**WHAT IS A ‘NORMATIVE POWER’?**

The concept of ‘normative power’ is relatively new, but the use of such power is arguably age-old. The term itself was coined by Ian Manners in a now-famous and much-discussed analysis of the emerging role of the European Union (EU) in international society (Manners 2002). Manners argued that the EU was a different kind of power to the familiar ones—a power that sought to promote values and norms by mainly noncoercive means rather than a power that sought to realize interests by whatever means necessary, including what Thomas Hobbes famously termed ‘force and fraud’. His idea of ‘normative power’ harked back to earlier
that India should indeed advance new normative agendas, arguing that its cultural and intellectual inheritance provides India with a wealth of insight and ‘soft power’ with which to bring about change in international society (Hyams 2009; Wagner 2010; Blare! 2012; Tharoor 2012; Thussu 2013). In 2012, the NonAlignment 2.0 report, authored by eight leading Indian scholars and businessmen and published by the Centre for Policy Research, presented a Nehruvian vision, suitably updated, which was widely discussed—and criticized—within and outside India (Khilnam et al. 2012). 2 These ideas (and others) found some currency in the latter stages of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. And the debate did not end there. In 2014, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) election manifesto presented an alternative vision, emphasizing the concept of ‘Brand India’ and the desirability of leveraging India’s soft power to the country’s advantage and for the greater global good (BJP 2014, 39–41). These concepts have been echoed by the new National Democratic Alliance government of Narendra Modi, as his speech to the United Nations General Assembly later that year demonstrates so well (Modi 2014).

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For Manners, the EU was the quintessential normative power, a supra-national polity with a distinct and distinctive mission, to be pursued noncoercively, or at least nonviolently. The EU has, Manners observed, an overt and explicit commitment to promoting within and outside its borders the norms set out in both the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Moreover, the Treaty on European Union (TEU) of 1991 sets ‘the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’ as foreign as well as domestic policy objectives (articles 6, 11, and 177) (Manners 2002, 241). For these reasons, Manners argued that the EU cultivates a distinct identity in international society ‘characterized by common principles and a willingness to disregard Westphalian conventions’ (Manners 2002, 239). The EU is a normative power partly because it prioritizes the projection of norms over the projection of military might. It is also a normative power because it refuses to play by the normal rules of power politics, disregarding the notions of noninterference and nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other states.

In both its internal politics and its external relations with states outside its borders, Manners claimed, the EU promotes two sets of norms, one major and one minor. The major set includes peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights—norms laid down in successive European treaties, declarations, and conventions since the late 1940s. The minor includes norms that have emerged and been agreed on more recently, during the 1980s and 1990s, namely, social solidarity, antidiscrimination, sustainable development, and good governance (Manners 2002, 242). Manners argued that the EU promotes and diffuses these norms to states outside Europe in six distinct ways: unintentional ‘contagion’, deliberate ‘strategic’ and ‘declaratory communications’, institutionalization of certain bilateral or multilateral relationships, ‘transference’ via ‘goods, trade, aid or technical assistance’, ‘overt diffusion’ by EU representatives abroad, and use of a ‘cultural filter’ to teach, adapt, or reject local norms (Manners 2002, 244–45). He showed all of these at work in the pursuit of EU policy on the abolition of the death penalty, which
was promoted—sometimes successfully—even in cases where pressing the issue might damage diplomatic, economic, or other relations with target states. In these ways, Manners argued, the EU has set out to acquire capabilities and to utilize techniques ‘to define what passes for “normal” in world politics’—a power that he called ‘the greatest power of all’ (Manners 2002, 253).

These bold conclusions have not escaped criticism. Some argue that the true power of the EU is not only soft and ‘normative’ but also hard and principally economic and military, and that the EU is not shy in utilizing economic and even military coercion when it wishes. Moreover, they maintain, claims about the importance of values and value-promotion have been used to make the case for augmented coercive capabilities, not just better aid, development assistance, public diplomacy, and knowledge transfer (Aggestam 2008). Others suggest that the notion of ‘normative power Europe’ rests on an idealized account of European values and societies (Diez 2005; Keene 2013). Still others observe that the EU is not the only power seeking to define what is normal in world politics; the United States, most obviously, has long pursued foreign policies that place the promotion of certain values, such as democracy or good governance, at their core (Sjursen 2006, 241-42).

These debates about normative powers have value, but they are also incomplete, as they overwhelmingly concentrate on Western polities as paradigmatic cases. As Amitav Acharya (2011) and others argue, they overlook the roles played, past and present, by non-Western states that have sought (and are seeking) normative change in international society. And one example of this behavior looms above all, the prolonged campaign by India and other postcolonial states to delegitimize imperialism—and with it, racial discrimination—and ‘power politics’ as ‘normal practices’, aiming to establish new rules for the interactions of postcolonial and developed states (see especially Crawford 2002). From the mid-1940s until the mid-1960s, India’s leaders, like those of other postcolonial states, conceived of their country as a quintessential ‘normative power’, aiming to transform the normative order of postwar international society (Bhagavan 2013).

NORMATIVE POWER AND NONALIGNMENT

Like the EU, India was deliberately conceived as a complex, multilayered polity. And like the EU, India’s claim to be a normative power lies in its constitutional structure as well as in its world views or behavior. It is a federal union of (now) twenty-eight states and seven union territories, governed by a federal parliament of two houses, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, serving under a president. The constitution, which came into effect on 26 January 1950, gives executive power to the president as both head of state and government (5, 53[1]), but these powers are devoted to the prime minister (PM) and cabinet, who conduct the everyday business of governing. The Seventh Schedule (article 246) of the Indian Constitution allocates responsibilities and powers to the federal, union government and to the states and union territories, with all the former given competency over all matters concerning external relations.

Unusually, India’s Constitution also lays out ‘directives of state policy’ deemed ‘fundamental to the governance of the country’ and mandates that it ‘shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws’ (4, 37). Equally unusually, but like the Treaty on European Union, these directives concern foreign as well as domestic policy. Article 4, 51 instructs the Union government to ‘endeavour’ to

a. promote international peace and security;
b. maintain just and honourable relations between nations;
c. foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another; and
d. encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration.

Like the EU, in other words, India’s government is thus—in theory, at least—constitutionally bound to uphold and promote certain norms of behavior in international society. The lists of norms is, however, somewhat shorter than the EU list; indeed, they amount to little more than a reiteration of the basic principles underlying the United Nations and the commitments made by its members.

These principles were nevertheless an expression of the view that India ought not simply pursue its interests in international society and do so by the traditional means of power politics but actively seek normative change. Under Nehru, as India’s first PM, they were supplemented by an additional set of anticolonial and what might be called ‘antirealist’ principles which challenged more directly the ‘normal’ in postwar international society. First, Nehru looked to India to become a leader of ‘the freedom movement of Asia’ and to promote the self-determination not just of Indians but also of other Asians under European colonial rule (Nehru 1961c, 12). Imperialism, he argued, was corrupting both to the ruler and the ruled. It was an obstacle to lasting peace since it generated tensions between the colonizer and colonized that were all too often resolved through violence (Nehru 1961d). Second, Nehru sought deliberately to challenge the mentality and methods of ‘power politics’. Earlier, in The Discovery of India, a series of letters to his daughter, Indira, written while imprisoned during the Second World War, he mocked claims by Nicholas Spykman and Walter Lippmann that power politics represented ‘realism and practical politics’ in the contemporary age (Nehru 2004 [1946], 600–601). Conquest and expansion, alliances, and the balance of power, Nehru argued, lead merely to more war and more misery. What was
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needed was peaceful and constructive association in international society, as Mohandas Gandhi had earlier envisaged, based on mutual respect between both states and peoples.

In office, after 1947, Nehru sought to promote this normative agenda in various ways. What evolved into his policy of ‘nonalignment’—of not locking India into a political, military, or economic relationship with one or another Cold War rival—was intended from the start to embody a campaign for normative change. Of course, as Nehru himself acknowledged, nonalignment was also a realistic response to India’s weakness and a pragmatic approach to securing the national interest by encouraging new postcolonial states to stand aloof from the Cold War, requiring the superpowers to outbid one another with aid and development assistance for their support. But nonalignment was also about creating a space from which to promote a new normative agenda in international society. Nonalignment, Nehru argued, did not mean disengagement. India should and must speak up to criticize, he believed, when one of the great powers acted unethically or in contradiction to its declared principles. India ought to stand in ‘judgment of issues as they arise’, as he put it, ‘on their own merits, with an open and independent approach’ (Nehru, quoted in Zinkin 1955, 179). By those means, India aimed to bind others to its cause and bring about changes in the normative order of international society. As Itty Abraham has argued, in well-chosen terms, nonalignment concerned ‘the formation of a “social movement” of nonaligned nations’ dedicated to the ‘international circulation of ideas critical of the prevailing status quo’ (Abraham 2008, 196–97).

How was this achieved? No doubt Nehru hoped for what Manners calls unintentional ‘contagion’—and his Western critics feared for most of his premiership that that hope was too often realized. But just in case contagion did not work, Nehru also made significant investments in the infrastructure for ‘strategic’ and ‘declaratory communications’. Alongside the conventional (and sometimes unconventional) mechanisms used by the Ministry of External Affairs and India’s foreign missions, Nehru brought into being or sustained instruments for public diplomacy and strategic communications, an All-India Radio network, broadcasting in many languages to countries in India’s immediate region, an Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) promoting art, music, and literature, and an Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) as a counterpart to Chatham House or the Council on Foreign Relations (Hall 2012, 1098–1102). These provided stages from which Nehru and like-minded officials or prominent persons could expound their views. At the same time, they utilized means honed during earlier anti-imperial campaigns, pamphleteering and the circulation of books and newsletters, giving invited talks to civil society associations and political parties, and so on.

Nehru and his representatives also showed themselves highly adept at using other platforms for declaratory communications, convening meetings like the Asian Relations Conference (ARC) in April 1947, for example, or utilizing the United Nations General Assembly for high-profile, set-piece speeches. Nehru used these opportunities—to varying effect—both to build and leverage networks with Asian anti-colonialists and to project a new political conception of Asia and the wider colonial world (Singh 2011). The ARC, organized by the ICWA at Nehru’s instigation, marked the beginnings of attempts by Nehru to assert a distinct Asian civilizational identity intended to inform the relations of soon-to-be independent Asian states and to generate greater unity among anticolonial forces, as well as the start of what became the Non-Aligned Movement. At the UN, Nehru and his ambassadors could reach further. He personally addressed the UN General Assembly in Paris in early November 1948, then again in New York in December 1956, 1960, and 1961, as well as meetings of the Asian-African and Commonwealth group, both in 1956. These settings provided Nehru with the opportunity to set out his normative agenda in full. In Paris, for instance, he reaffirmed his commitment to the principles of the UN Charter but moved on to extol the virtues of ‘peaceful struggle’ over violence and the need to free Asia from European imperialism, remarking that ‘it is an astonishing thing that any country should still venture to hold and to set forth the doctrine of colonialism’. He denounced racial inequality as a ‘menace to world peace’, arguing that ‘to tolerate it is obviously to sow the seeds of conflict’ (Nehru 1961e, 162, 164).

Nehru also showed willingness to institutionalize his preferred norms, albeit somewhat conservative ones. He used the 1954 treaty recognizing China’s sovereignty over Tibet to set out the ‘Panchsheel’, or Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence: mutual respect for territory and sovereignty; mutual nonaggression; mutual noninterference; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence (Ministry of External Affairs 2004b). These were intended to inform Sino-Indian relations for an initial period of eight years, and although the treaty was not formally renewed, Indian diplomats continue to refer to the principles as guides to their foreign policy. Nehru was keen to see a public declaration of these principles again at Bandung the following year, and at Colombo and Belgrade in 1961, at the meetings that paved the way for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Moreover, Nehru was keen to use UNGA resolutions to give these principles further institutional form, such as the Indian cosponsored (with Yugoslavia and Sweden) resolution on ‘Peaceful and Neighbourly Relations among States’, passed on 14 December 1957, which reiterated the basic norms of the UN Charter and the Panchsheel.

Nehru was particularly keen, however, on ‘overt diffusion’ of his norms. He took great pains to represent himself as a ‘statesman’ and to utilize the mass media to convey his vision of international society. He wrote to newspapers and produced pamphlets and books. He gave many interviews to influential American and other foreign journalists, such as
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Marquis Childs (1903–1990), as well as Indian ones. His image was reproduced on the cover of Time magazine no less than six times—compared with a mere three for Gandhi himself, five for Ho Chi Minh, and seven for his old foe, Winston Churchill. Nehru also used trusted family members, scholars, and activists as diplomatic special representatives, giving them ambassadorial posts but allowing them much wider remits than their formal roles would ordinarily allow.

The most prominent of these activist-diplomats was Nehru’s sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, who had campaigned in the United States during the Second World War for Indian independence and then served as ambassador in various places, including Moscow and Washington, as well as president of the UN General Assembly. Others were distinguished scholars. The historian K. M. Parukkar, author of Asia and Western Domiance (1946), was dispatched to China as ambassador, while the philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, later vice president and then president of India, was sent first to UNESCO (1946–1952) and then to Moscow (1949–1952). Still others were activists, with long experience of fighting for a cause. Until his fall in the wake of the disastrous Sino-Indian border war in 1962, V. K. Krishna Menon, in particular, acted as a kind of diplomat-publicist, giving speeches and interviews, making declarations, and ensuring his constant availability with a pointed quote or comment on issues of the day. Personally odd and extremely voluble, arrogant, and intolerant, Menon had earlier been a hugely energetic campaigner for Indian independence, working in London throughout the 1930s and 1940s.6

India’s diplomat-activists were encouraged to put themselves forward as mediators and peacemakers. During the Korean war, Menon played a leading role—first as Indian high commissioner in London, and then at the UN—in resolving one of the most difficult challenges to ending hostilities, helping to broker a deal on the return of prisoners of war. He had a hand in negotiating the replacement of British and French troops on the Suez Canal after their invasion of Egypt in 1956, helping to persuade General Nasser to accept the Canadian-sponsored idea of a UN emergency force, and in sending Indian troops to the Congo in 1960 as part of the UN’s first authentic peacekeeping operation (Breach 1968, 9–10, 85–106).

Under Nehru, then, India operated as a kind of ‘normative power’ or state norm entrepreneur, championing the causes of peace, anticolonialism, the basic principles of the UN Charter and the Panchsheel, and, to a lesser extent, quasi-socialist economics. It utilized both conventional and unconventional means of promoting new norms in international society that were not compatible with a number of inherited norms. In some areas, its entrepreneurship was rewarded. India played a major role in discrediting imperialism as both an ideal and as a state practice (Edwards 1965). Nehru was also the first political leader to push for a moratorium on nuclear testing, paving the way for the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (Kennedy 2012, 206–7). Elsewhere, India and Nehru were less successful. Nonalignment did not lead to India being acknowledged as the natural leader of postcolonial African and Asian states; indeed, by the Belgrade Conference of 1961 that formally instituted the “Non-Aligned Movement” (NAM), Nehru had become isolated and alienated from the demagogues and dictators that had risen to power elsewhere in the developing world (Sahgal 2010, 64–65). Nor did nonalignment triumph over “power politics” or displace the balance of power as a core institution of international society, and India itself abandoned the policy, if not the idea, soon after Nehru’s death in 1964.

FROM ‘NORMATIVE POWER’ TO ‘NORMAL’ POWER...

After India’s 1962 war with China and Nehru’s death, India did not cease to project or conceive of itself as a ‘normative power’, but it did make changes to its foreign and security policy that undermined its ability to do so convincingly. In the last years of Nehru’s leadership, India’s behavior began to belie its rhetoric; after it, that trend continued. As Chris Ogden rightly notes in chapter 3, India continued to serve as one of the world’s leading providers of peacekeepers, and it engaged in other significant humanitarian activities, including a fateful intervention in Sri Lanka’s civil war between 1987 and 1990. India was also active in other areas, notably in promoting the concept of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), advanced at the UNGA in 1974. But elsewhere, India increasingly behaved more as a ‘normal’ state than a ‘normative power’. In the twenty-five years between 1964 and 1991, India modernized its military, fought two wars against Pakistan (in 1965 and 1971) and became involved in a protracted conflict in Siachen, shifted away from nonalignment to a closer diplomatic, economic, and defense relationship with the Soviet Union (also in 1971), and tested a nuclear weapon (in 1974). In short, India sidelined Nehruvian idealism in favor of what some have called ‘muscular Nehruvianism’—a blend of moralistic rhetoric and pragmatic action (Cohen 2001, 43–45).

The end of the Cold War accelerated, for some observers, India’s move towards a more ‘realist’ foreign policy. As C. Raja Mohan (2004) put it in an influential formulation, India has ‘crossed the Rubicon’ and begun in earnest to transform itself into an aspirant conventional great power. Its acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1998 was one major sign of change; another was its subsequent reconciliation with the United States, with which India began to forge a ‘strategic partnership’ during the early 2000s (Schaffer 2009). Its program of military modernization also fits with the general idea that India is ‘normalizing’ itself—changing to fit in with prevailing power political norms in international society rather than trying to change them. And India is moving to open itself up—slowly,
Marquis Childs (1903–1990), as well as Indian ones. His image was reproduced on the cover of *Time* magazine no less than six times—compared with a mere three for Gandhi himself, five for Ho Chi Minh, and seven for his old foe, Winston Churchill. Nehru also used trusted family members, scholars, and activists as diplomatic special representatives, giving them ambassadorial posts but allowing them much wider remits than their formal roles would ordinarily allow.

The most prominent of these activist-diplomats was Nehru’s sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, who had campaigned in the United States during the Second World War for Indian independence and then served as ambassador in various places, including Moscow and Washington, as well as president of the UN General Assembly. Others were distinguished scholars. The historian K. M. Panikkar, author of *Asia and Western Domination* (1946), was dispatched to China as ambassador, while the philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, later vice president and then president of India, was sent first to UNESCO (1946–1952) and then to Moscow (1949–1952). Still others were activists, with long experience of fighting for a cause. Until his fall in the wake of the disastrous Sino-Indian border war in 1962, V. K. Krishna Menon, in particular, acted as a kind of diplomat-publicist, giving speeches and interviews, making declarations, and ensuring his constant availability with a pointed quote or comment on issues of the day. Personally odd and extremely voluble, arrogant, and intolerant, Menon had earlier been a hugely energetic campaigner for Indian independence, working in London throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

India’s diplomat-activists were encouraged to put themselves forward as mediators and peacemakers. During the Korean war, Menon played a leading role—first as Indian high commissioner in London, and then at the UN—in resolving one of the most difficult challenges to ending hostilities, helping to broker a deal on the return of prisoners of war. He had a hand in negotiating the replacement of British and French troops on the Suez Canal after their invasion of Egypt in 1956, helping to persuade General Nasser to accept the Canadian-sponsored idea of a UN emergency force, and in sending Indian troops to the Congo in 1960 as part of the UN’s first authentic peacekeeping operation (Brecher 1968, 9–10, 85–106).

Under Nehru, then, India operated as a kind of ‘normative power’ or state norm entrepreneur, championing the causes of peace, anticolonialism, the basic principles of the UN Charter and the Panchsheel, and, to a lesser extent, quasi-socialist economics. It utilized both conventional and unconventional means of promoting new norms in international society that were not compatible with a number of inherited norms. In some areas, its entrepreneurship was rewarded. India played a major role in discrediting imperialism as both an ideal and as a state practice (Edwardes 1965). Nehru was also the first political leader to push for a moratorium on nuclear testing, paving the way for the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (Kennedy 2012, 206–7). Elsewhere, India and Nehru were less successful. Nonalignment did not lead to India being acknowledged as the natural leader of postcolonial African and Asian states; indeed, by the Belgrade Conference of 1961 that formally instituted the “Non-Aligned Movement” (NAM), Nehru had become isolated and alienated from the demagogues and dictators that had risen to power elsewhere in the developing world (Sahgal 2010, 64–65). Nor did nonalignment triumph over “power politics” or displace the balance of power as a core institution of international society, and India itself abandoned the policy, if not the idea, soon after Nehru’s death in 1964.

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sometimes unwillingly—to the world economy, leaving behind some of its inherited socialist inhibitions about the supposed iniquities of global capitalism and entering into interdependent relationships which bring with them significant security challenges.

... AND BACK AGAIN?

This reshaping or normalization of India’s foreign policy has not gone unquestioned in India, where, as elsewhere, the principles by which it should be conducted are keenly debated (Narang and Staniland 2012). The establishment position, best described as ‘modified Nehruvianism’ and which has both facilitated normalization and provided a running critique of its development, is being challenged by other views. At one end of the spectrum is the militant nationalism of some elements of the Hindutva movement that finds political expression in parts of the main right-wing party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People’s Party, or BJP), and in other more extreme organizations, such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) (Ogden 2010, 2014). At the other end is the equally militant Marxism of the various communist and Maoist parties and groupings, who reject the strategic partnership with the United States and want what they regard as a truly ‘independent foreign policy’ (Declaration of the National Convention of Left Parties 2013). The middle is contested by a variety of political realists and conventional liberals, such as former external affairs minister and BJP stalwart Jaswant Singh or Congress Party politician Shashi Tharoor (see Singh 1999; Tharoor 2012).

Almost all of these different views include some space for ‘soft power’—a concept as popular in India as it is elsewhere in Asia (Hall and Smith 2013)—but few discuss in detail the normative agendas that their advocates prefer. In that sense, the publication of NonAlignment 2.0 in early 2012 was exceptional. Coauthored by eight prominent figures close to the then-Congress-led government—Sunil Khilnani, Rajiv Kumar, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Prakash Menon, Nandan Nilekani, Srinath Raghavan, Shyam Saran, and Siddharth Varadarajan—the document proposed a lengthy, seventy-page agenda for change in Indian foreign policy and international society. As Ashley Tellis has observed, it was ‘drafted with the blessings of senior national security officials in the current government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’ with the ‘express objective’ of promoting ‘a national consensus in support of a new version of nonalignment as the optimum grand strategy for a rising India’ (Tellis 2012, 8).

Above all, it emphasized India’s role as an example to others and the influence that India could have—through this ‘power of example’—on the rules of international society. It urged that India set aside domestic squabbles and nagging reservations about aspects of contemporary international society and instead act to ‘proactively shape’ global norms that align with the ‘highest human and universal values’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 36, 69).

NonAlignment 2.0 affirmed Nehru’s belief in India’s capacity to be a moral exemplar and his desire for ‘strategic autonomy’ as well as his conviction that norms matter in international society. But it also departed from Nehru’s understanding of nonalignment in crucial ways. It recognized that India cannot avoid closer engagement with the global economy—that ‘swadeshi, or ‘self-reliance’, is no longer a viable development strategy—and that such engagement is necessary to raising Indian living standards. It acknowledged that there are dangers in passivity or overreliance on moral argument in international society, urging that India ‘develop a repertoire of instruments to signal—and where necessary to establish—that there will be serious costs to attempts to coerce Indian judgements or actions’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 8, 10).

All of this aside, however, it remains the case that NonAlignment 2.0 conceived of a kind of ‘normative power India’. The document argued, as we have seen, that the ‘fundamental source of India’s power...is going to be the power of its example’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 7). Like Nehru, it conceived of India as a wellspring of ideas—‘If there is to be a common Asian century’, its authors wrote, ‘the flow of ideas from India will be vital to it’—yet it does not make clear which ideas the authors had in mind. It implied the ideas may be political, in talking of Asia as ‘a theatre of competition in ideological hegemony’ and ‘a region where battles over democracy are likely to continue’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 13). It discussed the need for India to help put its own region in order, ending conflicts, integrating economies, protecting human and minority rights, and addressing demands from external powers, including China (Khilnani et al. 2012, 15–17). It also talked of the need for reform in international institutions, especially those concerning the governance of the global economy and global security (Khilnani et al. 2012, 33–37). Last, but by no means least, the document argued that India should be, as its founding fathers wished it, ‘a site for an alternative universality’, standing for the ‘highest human and universal values’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 69).

The problem with NonAlignment 2.0, however, was not so much the idealism or utopianism of this vision, as some of its realist critics have argued (Tellis 2012, 8–10), but rather that the norms and values for which its authors think India ought to act as entrepreneur and protector are not at all clear. Where nonalignment ‘1.0’ had obvious principles—anti-imperialism, racial equality, peaceful change, nonaggression, nuclear disarmament, and so on—the revised version does not. The report was ambivalent about democracy, for example, and reflects the generally antipathetic view of the Indian establishment towards democracy promotion. It reflected Indian pride in its own democratic institutions, its own version of ‘exceptionalism’ (Hall 2010), and the hope that India can be a model to others. But it is deeply skeptical of the idea that India ought actively to
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advocate democratic principles among its neighbors or to others. The authors write, ‘We are committed to democratic practices and are convinced that robust democracies are a surer guarantee of security in our neighborhood and beyond. Yet we do not “promote” democracy or see it as an ideological concept that serves as a polarizing axis in world politics’. They add that they hope that India might act as a ‘unique bridge’ between the ‘different worlds’ of the West and Asia, democrats and others, but leave the details of what that might entail unclear (Khilnani et al. 2012, 31).

This view fits with what others have observed about India’s fitful and uncertain engagement with democracy promotion since at least 2000 (e.g., Stuenkel 2013). While, as Jan Carright has shown, there has been a perceptible shift away from the Gujral Doctrine’s tolerant stance towards undemocratic and authoritarian regimes in India’s region,9 its efforts to support or promote democracy in South Asia have been selective and quiet. In Afghanistan and Nepal, India has provided tangible assistance; in the Bhutan and the Maldives, it has been more circumspect; and its role in the ongoing liberalization of Myanmar/Burma is not wholly clear (Carright 2009, 407–9). Elsewhere, India has been active, but not always obviously or prominently so. It became a founding member of the Community of Democracies in 1999—one of just ten—but has been somewhat reluctant to take leadership within that organization (Mohan 2007).

NonAlignment 2.0 was similarly ambivalent—and in places significantly more hostile—when it comes to the issue of human rights. Its authors observed that

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But they quickly added a considerable caveat; ‘[n]orms in the international system often mask the exercise of raw power’, they wrote, and the ‘enforcement of these norms is selective’. ‘Any discourse on norms not allied with prudence’, they counsel, ‘can be self-defeating’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 36). They observed too that ‘India is often accused of not participating in the creation of international norms and of free riding on the current system’ and that this charge ‘can amount to a tactic to pressure India to do the Western powers’ bidding’ (37). Finally, when they did come back to the point, they did admit that new norms like humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect are not necessarily bad. India must, of course, reiterate its ‘commitment to important values like human rights, democracy, and [the] prevention of genocide’ and its belief that armed intervention can be warranted in the right circumstances, as it was, for example, when India acted in 1971 to prevent abuses of the civilian population in what was then East Pakistan (37).

This somewhat tortured treatment of human rights, humanitarian intervention, and R2P neatly captures ambivalence about liberal norms in India’s establishment and the tensions that feed it. On the one hand, there is an abiding commitment to high ideals; on the other, lingering suspicion of the West and its motives hold the Nehruvians back from endorsing what many in the West consider to be emerging norms, as it did when it decided not to sign the Rome Statute in 1998 and as it did during the Libyan crisis in 2011 (Hall 2013). At the same time, there is the clear absence of any alternative account of how the normative order of international society ought to evolve. NonAlignment 2.0 insisted that ‘it is in India’s interests to proactively shape the evolution of . . . norms and the contexts of their application’ and note that this may ‘require considerable investment in diplomatic and intellectual capacity’. But then it moved on to say that norm generation and norm setting is occurring beyond states and international institutions, in ‘informal associations and networks’, as if to say that entrepreneurship should be left to the nonstate sector while India works out its position (Khilnani et al. 2012, 34–35).

When it comes to economic governance, this passive and reactive attitude is again suggested but not fully embraced. NonAlignment 2.0 urges India to engage with the global market, liberalization, and multilateralism in ways in which it has traditionally been reluctant. It criticizes India for going ‘missing in action’ since the global financial crisis of 2007–2008 and for not making more use of its place in the G20 (Khilnani et al. 2012, 35). Yet it remains unclear about how India might wish to reform the norms, practice, and institutions of global economic governance. The authors argue that the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as the UN, ‘require fundamental reform to reflect the new distribution of power in the world’ but do not indicate which principles ought to guide that process (Khilnani et al. 2012, 33).

LEVERAGING BRAND INDIA

The most powerful alternative vision to that offered by India’s foreign policy establishment comes from the BJP and especially from Narendra Modi. Skilled and savvy in public relations, Modi promised Indians at the 2014 election a ‘strong, self-reliant and self-confident India’ capable of taking its ‘rightful place in the comity of nations’ (BJP 2014, 39). In part, of course, this would entail military modernization—indeed, the BJP promised to accelerate India’s nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, too. But in part also, this task would be achieved by restoring core values to Indian foreign policy. At base, Modi and the BJP argue in their 2014 manifesto, it should be grounded in the ancient Vedic concept of vasud-
advocate democratic principles among its neighbors or to others. The authors write, ‘We are committed to democratic practices and are convinced that robust democracies are a surer guarantee of security in our neighborhood and beyond. Yet we do not “promote” democracy or see it as an ideological concept that serves as a polarizing axis in world politics’. They add that they hope that India might act as a ‘unique bridge’ between the ‘different worlds’ of the West and Asia, democrats and others, but leave the details of what that might entail unclear (Khilnani et al. 2012, 31).

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haiva kutumbakam (Sanskrit for ‘the world is one family’) as well as in the national interest (BJP 2014, 39). They promised a ‘proactive diplomacy’ that would utilize India’s soft power—the appeal of its philosophy and religion, in particular, and its ‘principles . . . [of] . . . harmony and equity’. More tangibly, they insisted that foreign policy be approached pragmatically, with a sense of ‘enlightened national interest’; that India would not be ‘led by big power interests’, especially in its own region; and that it would continue ‘dialogue, engagement and cooperation’ with international institutions (BJP 2014, 40).

It is an open question as to where this vague agenda might lead. Modi’s foreign policy in the early stages of his government has emphasized good relations with India’s immediate neighbors and pragmatic engagement with both China and the United States. His UNGA speech in September 2014 reiterated these themes and the concept of vasudhaiva kutumbakam but did add some others. In a departure from Nehruvian aloofness on the issue, Modi observed and welcomed the progress of democracy as well as rising prosperity in the developing world. And it made calls for three changes in international society. First, Modi called for ‘genuine peace’, to be pursued by ‘genuine dialogue and engagement’ at fora like the UN, reform of that institution to make it more democratic and inclusive, fighting terrorism with a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and pursuing nuclear disarmament. Second, he called for ‘inclusive development’, with the caveat that international agreements on trade must ‘accommodate each other’s concerns and interests’—a not-so-veiled reference to the stalled Doha round of trade talks, at which India is insisting on protection for its farmers in particular. Lastly, Modi urged that sustainability be central to development (Modi 2014).

CONCLUSION

The prospects for a revivified ‘normative power India’ are mixed. As we have seen, India has a significant history as a diplomatic activist and norm entrepreneur, as a key shaper of the normative order of postwar world politics. It retains a constitutional commitment to the promotion of foundational norms; it also retains a diplomatic service that, despite some very significant capacity constraints and old-fashioned world views, emphasizes intellectual achievement and the centrality of moral principle to diplomacy (Tharoor 2012, 318–53; cf. Markey 2009; Chatterjee Miller 2013). And India retains significant instruments of public diplomacy and soft power, like its radio networks, established, widely distributed publications, and newer online tools for social networking. The difficulties for ‘normative power India’—at least as the authors of NonAlignment 2.0 or Hindu nationalists conceive it—lie not so much in these areas but in norms themselves.

Nehru’s vision of an anti-imperial, racially tolerant, rule-bound order has not been fully realized, but it has been surpassed by newer and more expansive understandings of the normative order that ought to prevail in international society. The Panchsheel vision of mutual respect of sovereignty, nonaggression, noninterference, equality, and peaceful coexistence was once a radical vision but is now regarded, at least by Western liberals, as a conservative relic. Yet it is central to both NonAlignment 2.0 and to the normative agenda of Hindu nationalists. To use English School language, in their attachment to these postcolonial principles, they remain ‘pluralists’ in the face of Western, ‘solidarist’ demands that they be relaxed or set aside in favor of expansive understandings of human rights, democratic promotion, and deeper international institutional engagement (Wheeler 1992).

One of the most revealing aspects of NonAlignment 2.0 is the account it offers of American decline. At the ‘global level’, it argues, ‘the relative decline of the American alliance system is already evident’. The authors go on: ‘The U.S. has been aware of this reality for more than a decade and the challenge of finding a viable strategy has led to a lot of policy debate and even confusion in the various arms of U.S. government’ (Krishnani et al. 2012, 31). Passages like this, as Tellis has observed, must have ‘raised . . . eyebrows’ in Washington (Tellis 2012, 43). They point to an underlying preference in NonAlignment 2.0 and more broadly in New Delhi for a multipolar order rather than the unipolar one we have now—an order without the kinds of cosmopolitan norms about democracy and human rights that dominated international society since the end of the Cold War. This conservative, statist, noninterventionist order would be a realization of postwar Indian thinking and would embody significant and positive norms concerning aggression and noninterference but would also involve a winding back from the Western-built liberal normative order created since 1991.

NOTES

1. I am very grateful to Jamie Gaskarth for the invitations to contribute to this volume and to present at his ESRC-funded workshop in London. My thanks also go to Andy Kennedy and Chris Ogden for discussions about various ideas included in the chapter, as well as the workshop participants.


3. On Gandhi’s political ideas and their relevance for international relations, see Tercheck (2011).

4. On this aspect of nonalignment, see especially Rana (1969).

5. See, for example, the scathing reference to ‘neutralism’ as a ‘social disease’ in Scalapino (1954, 49).
haiva kutumbakam (Sanskrit for ‘the world is one family’) as well as in the national interest (BJP 2014, 39). They promised a ‘proactive diplomacy’ that would utilize India’s soft power—the appeal of its philosophy and religion, in particular, and its ‘principles . . . [of] . . . harmony and equity’. More tangibly, they insisted that foreign policy be approached pragmatically, with a sense of ‘enlightened national interest’; that India would not be ‘led by big power interests’, especially in its own region; and that it would continue ‘dialogue, engagement and cooperation’ with international institutions (BJP 2014, 40).

It is an open question as to where this vague agenda might lead. Modi’s foreign policy in the early stages of his government has emphasized good relations with India’s immediate neighbors and pragmatic engagement with both China and the United States. His UNGA speech in September 2014 reiterated these themes and the concept of vasudhaiva kutumbakam but did add some others. In a departure from Nehruvian aloofness on the issue, Modi observed and welcomed the progress of democracy as well as rising prosperity in the developing world. And it made calls for three changes in international society. First, Modi called for ‘genuine peace’, to be pursued by ‘genuine dialogue and engagement’ at fora like the UN, reform of that institution to make it more democratic and inclusive, fighting terrorism with a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and pursuing nuclear disarmament. Second, he called for ‘inclusive’ development, with the caveat that international agreements on trade must ‘accommodate each other’s concerns and interests’—a not-so-veiled reference to the stalled Doha round of trade talks, at which India is insisting on protection for its farmers in particular. Lastly, Modi urged that sustainability be central to development (Modi 2014).

CONCLUSION

The prospects for a revivified ‘normative power India’ are mixed. As we have seen, India has a significant history as a diplomatic activist and norm entrepreneur, as a key shaper of the normative order of postwar world politics. It retains a constitutional commitment to the promotion of foundational norms; it also retains a diplomatic service that, despite some very significant capacity constraints and old-fashioned world views, emphasizes intellectual achievement and the centrality of moral principle to diplomacy (Tharoor 2012, 318–53; cf. Markey 2009; Chatterjee Miller 2013). And India retains significant instruments of public diplomacy and soft power, like its radio networks, established, widely distributed publications, and newer online tools for social networking. The difficulties for ‘normative power India’—at least as the authors of NonAlignment 2.0 or Hindu nationalists conceive it—lie not so much in these areas but in norms themselves.

Nehru’s vision of an anti-imperial, racially tolerant, rule-bound order has not been fully realized, but it has been surpassed by newer and more expansive understandings of the normative order that ought to prevail in international society. The Panchsheel vision of mutual respect of sovereignty, nonaggression, noninterference, equality, and peaceful coexistence was once a radical vision but is now regarded, at least by Western liberals, as a conservative relic. Yet it is central to both NonAlignment 2.0 and to the normative agenda of Hindu nationalists. To use English School language, in their attachment to these postcolonial principles, they remain ‘pluralists’ in the face of Western, ‘solidarist’ demands that they be relaxed or set aside in favor of expansive understandings of human rights, democratic promotion, and deeper international institutional engagement (Wheeler 1992).

One of the most revealing aspects of NonAlignment 2.0 is the account it offers of American decline. At the ‘global level’, it argues, ‘the relative decline of the American alliance system is already evident’. The authors go on: ‘The U.S. has been aware of this reality for more than a decade and the challenge of finding a viable strategy has led to a lot of policy debate and even confusion in the various arms of U.S. government’ (Khilnani et al. 2012, 31).

Passages like this, as Tellis has observed, must have ‘raised . . . eyebrows’ in Washington (Tellis 2012, 43). They point to an underlying preference in NonAlignment 2.0 and more broadly in New Delhi for a multipolar order rather than the unipolar one we have now—an order without the kinds of cosmopolitan norms about democracy and human rights that dominated international society since the end of the Cold War. This conservative, statist, noninterventionist order would be a realization of postwar Indian thinking and would embody significant and positive norms concerning aggression and noninterference but would also involve a winding back from the Western-built liberal normative order created since 1991.

NOTES

1. I am very grateful to Jamie Gaskarth for the invitations to contribute to this volume and to present at his ESRC-funded workshop in London. My thanks also go to Andy Kennedy and Chris Ogden for discussions about various ideas included in the chapter, as well as the workshop participants.


3. On Gandhi’s political ideas and their relevance for international relations, see Tercheck (2011).

4. On this aspect of nonalignment, see especially Rana (1969).

5. See, for example, the scathing reference to ‘neutrality’ as a ‘social disease’ in Scalapino (1954, 49).
6. There are a number of studies of Menon, but the best remains George 1964.

7. Sunil Khilnani is the director of the India Institute at King’s College, London; Rajiv Kumar is an economist and former member of the Indian Prime Minister’s National Security Advisory Board (2006–2008); Pratap Bhanu Mehta is the president of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi; Lt. Gen. Prakash Menon is the military advisor to the National Security Council Secretariat, New Delhi; Nandan Nilekani cofounded Infosys and is the chair of the Unique Identification Authority of India; Srinath Raghavan is a senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi; Shyam Saran is the chair of the National Security Advisory Board, New Delhi; and Siddharth Varadarajan is the editor of The Hindu newspaper.

8. This has irritated realist critics, who argue that NonAlignment 2.0 misunderstands the nature of contemporary international relations. See, for example, Rajagopalan (2012).

9. The Gujral Doctrine, named after Prime Minister I. K. Gujral (PM 1997–1998), held that India should not seek reciprocity in relations with its neighbours but give without expectation of gaining in return; South Asian states should not allow themselves to become proxies of other powers; noninterference was inviolable; mutual respect was crucial; and all disputes should be resolved peacefully (Gujral 2011, 407).

SIX

China’s Search for Normative Power and the Possibilities of the Asian Century

David Kerr

Economic analysis is divided into two branches: positive and normative economics. Positive economics is concerned with measuring change and asks volume questions: what accounts for change to volumes of prices, output, or productivity in an economy? Normative economic analysis is not concerned with volume change but assesses economic values or purposes: what is the value or purpose of international aid, public health care, or a minimum wage?1 Rising powers analysis has taken on some similarity to the two branches of economics. There is much discussion of new volumes of power, their expansion, and their diffusion so that the rising powers debate is often cast as a new global geopolitics (Brzezinski 2012; Kupchan 2012; Layne 2012). There is rather less discussion of the possible normative consequences of rising powers—the values that rising powers want to promote or how they might want to redefine the purposes of power. This seems best explained by an elasticity issue between positive and normative power—the established powers seem to have command of both positive and normative power, but rising powers seem most focused on accumulating power volumes and less confident or interested in defining new values or purposes for power. This connection between volumes, values, and purposes of power—and their relative distribution globally—is especially important because successful power systems tend to assume a political and social identity. The terms used in international power analysis—Chinese world order, American hegemony, Western international society—not only express the interaction of