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The *Novelty* of Europe as seen from the *Periphery*: Indian Perception of the 'New Europe' in a Multi-polar World

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The Puzzle

Recently, in course of my preparation of the text for this conference, a news item in an Indian newspaper caught my eye. "India", it said, "has stuck to its stand and outrightly rejected the European Union proposal for a tariff reduction in non-agriculture market access."[2] As frequent travellers to international policy conferences know only too well, tough talk, which is not always followed by action, forms part of the accepted idiom, and describes the contemporary relationship between India and the western establishment. Attitudinising of the kind I mention is thus very much business as usual. I thought, however, that seen through the eyes of the European and Indian mass publics, India's summary rejection of a proposal by the EU would surely appear out of character. How can India, despite the bomb, a third world country at best, address the collective voice of twenty-five European countries in such a haughty manner?

The paper, which forms part of the conference on the perception of Europe from outside, concentrates on the duality of the '*rational Self and the irrational Other'* as the

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[2] "India sticks to its stand, rejects EU proposal". The Hindu, Nov 9, 2005, The same paper also carried an item regarding an innovative effort to set up 'Assets Reconstruction Companies' that would seek to revitalise the banking sector through the restructuring of existing loans. The interesting point about this development is that India, which has long resisted the entry of foreign capital into the services, finance and insurance sectors of the economy has now agreed to a 49% stake for Foreign Direct Investment. http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/001200511091715.htm.

main explanatory device that has historically dominated Europe-India perceptions. The paper documents the evolution of these categories from the high point of colonial rule to the multi-polar world we live in today. It builds on the main foundations of Indian foreign policy, the institutional links between India and the European Union that have evolved over the past decades (see appendix 1), and the failure of their transmission to the wider public.[3] Based on this analysis, the conclusion suggests the necessity and the potential for the formulation of a reflexive and inclusive dialogue between India and the 'new Europe' of the twenty-five where the two parties can communicate effectively and to mutual benefit, without the form of communication distorting its contents.

Mutually distorting perceptions of the *Self* and the *Other*: A never-ending game of double mirrors?

Our perception of the Other is part of a strategy to define, and reinforce the Self. As such, the analysis of Indian perception of Europe requires a brief incursion into the evolution of Indian identity, and of India as a modern state with her multi-cultural society, democratic political system and her non-aligned foreign policy. The transformation of India's self-perception from colonial victim-hood to that of a free-standing actor in international politics with global ambitions that has incrementally grown over the past six decades since Independence is not yet common knowledge in Europe. In consequence, Indian perception of her environment and her consequent strategic choices occasionally become incomprehensible to her European interlocutors.

There are few nations, particularly in the time of globalisation which are so self-absorbed as to draw only their culture and context as the anchor of their self perception. As such, to understand the perception of the Self one necessarily needs to understand the Other which conventionally acts as the reference point of the Self. But, the relevant Other reflects even as it distorts.

Europe's popular media (reflecting mirrors for India and thus, stimulants of India's perception of Europe) are replete with contradictory images of India that juxtapose the legacy of Buddha and Gandhi with that of the Indian bomb, and the conspicuous consumption of India's *nouveaux riches* with her mass poverty, which feature regularly in European newspapers. In a similar vein, western opinion continues to be shocked by the stark contrast between Indian solicitude for peace and opposition to military intervention in any form, and her unwillingness to sign the NPT. Equally incomprehensible for western opinion is the hiatus of democratic India's self-perception as a force of stability and peace in South Asia and the perception of India as a 'regional bully' by her South Asian neighbours.

The perceptual gap between India and the new Europe of the twenty-five, epitomised by European reticence regarding the global ambitions of nuclear India, and Indian perplexity of exactly where to place Europe in a multi-polar world increasingly dominated by the United States and China, is constantly present in the media. The Indian perception is eloquently expressed by the analyst C. Raja Mohan:

> Talk of Europe and you get a big yawn in Delhi. India's annual summitry with Europe is always a cold dish amidst the warmth of India's exciting

[3] This discourse, of which the slogan *'Kinder statt Inder'* by a well-known CDU politician in Germany is only an extreme expression, forms part of everyday life in European countries .

> engagement with the United Sates and China. When British Prime Minister Tony Blair arrives here tonight on behalf of the European presidency for the sixth India-EU summit, public interest will be focused on Britain rather than on Europe. Blair's half-a-day visit to Shimla, the old summer capital of the Raj, will surely get more television coverage than the unreadable India-EU declaration. While Indian awareness of Europe as a collective has certainly increased over the years, Euro-pessimism in London, Paris, Rome and elsewhere on the old continent reinforces Delhi's frigidity towards Brussels.[4]

Raja Mohan succinctly expresses the core components of the Indian diagnosis of the European malaise:

> High unemployment, low growth rates, opposition to migration of skilled labour, and the apparent inability to deal with the imperatives of globalisation amidst the rise of India and China have made the European economic future uncertain. Europeans feel trapped between aggressive American capitalism and perceived Asian mercantilism. As America threatens to widen its technological gap with Europe, China takes away manufacturing jobs and India eats into the service sector employment. The stalling of the European project after the French and Dutch rejection of the constitutional treaty, the demographic decline, the challenge of assimilating a restive Islamic minority and the emergence of home-grown terrorism, reinforce the image of Europe on the decline.[5]

Reciprocally, the confusion regarding the identity, profile and intentions of the new Europe as seen from India are like watching Pirandello many times over. The confusion in the Indian mind about 'twenty-five characters in search of a voice'[6], or, what the 'sense of Europe' exactly means, derives not just from the content of policies, values and identity, but also from its form – one parliament, one executive, one currency, one agricultural policy claiming to speak for a multitude of voices. While one may be aware of Great Britain, and continental countries such as Germany, France, Belgium or Poland, Europe of the twenty-five, on the wake of the east-ward expansion, is a novelty. The Indian political scientist Rajendra Jain articulates his views on the difficulty of comprehending the new Europe in the following words.

> After enlargement, the EU decision-making processes would become even more complex and potentially more difficult for Indian policymakers to interpret and to influence. Indian foreign policy has tended to traditionally concentrate on four large member states of the European Union, viz. France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Italy, since they are major players in trade, FDI, joint ventures, industrial collaborations, and technology transfer. However, in the 'new' Europe, India needs to devote greater political energy and attention to developing closer linkages with some of the new entrants especially Poland (apart from, Spain). For many Indians, the

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[4] C. Rajamohan, "Lessons in chemistry: Why Blair may need to 'sex up' the India-Europe strategic cooperation", in the Indian Express, Tuesday, September 06, 2005. Seen at http://www.indianexpress.com/02.11.2005

[5] Rajamohan, op.cit.

[6] This is reminiscent of Luigi Pirandello's eponymous play – Six Characters in Search of an Author.

> enlarged European Union requires a re-profiling of mindsets about a changing European Union in a changing Europe, which in some respects will no longer be what it used to be.[7]

In the opinion of an Indo-European team of authors, the relative vagueness of the 'Idea of India' finds its match in the diffuse character of a sense of Europe in terms of the 55% no vote in France to the project of a tighter, binding, European constitution. They explain the diffused character of a 'sense of Europe' in the following words.

> In contemporary India, a sense of a Europe beyond or above its constituent nations is shadowy at best. Commerce may demand recognition of the European Community, finance, the Euro, and travel, the Schengen. But all these are associated with a Europe of nation states and only vague notions exist of the European Parliament, the European bureaucracy etc. – a situation merely complicated by experience when European institutions require engagement.[8]

I shall argue below that the infinite regress into eternally distorted images in a game of the Self-and-the-Other between Europe and India might be a possibility, but is certainly not inevitable. To that intent the paper asserts that in cross-cultural comparison and perception such as in the case of Indo-European relations, it is not just the lack of information that is the main problem but rather the terms of discourse, the irreducible building blocks of complex arguments that account for confusions and gaps in perception. Concepts, as we shall see below, are not politically neutral, but carry trails of resentment and a sense of unfinished history. Between Europe and India, divided and distanced by memories of subjugation and loss, any analysis of mutual perception must necessarily start with an analysis of the core terms of discourse, based on the duality of the *rational-Self-and-the-irrational-Other*.

This conceptual device, as Said (1993) argues, provided the ideological and moral justification for the subjugation of the natives at the height of colonial rule. However, whereas post-colonial studies begin and end their analysis with an allusion to the conflict of categories and the consequent infinite regress of perception and counter-perception like two reflecting mirrors facing one another, my analysis of recent developments in Indo-European relations will point towards the room for convergence of interests and the dialectical synthesis of the terms of discourse in a reflexive language.

The Parameters of Post-war Politics: Modernisation, Development and Good Governance as the Legacies of Orientalism.

Despite the growth of a multi-polar world where India and China vie with Russia, Japan and the EU – with the United States at the forefront of the competition – a 'third world' country such as India, speaking out of turn in the world arena, still comes across as a shock and surprise to the European public. Entrenched belief in the superiority of western science and rationality over eastern spirituality that constitute the core of the

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[7] Rajendra Jain, "India and the New Europe" in Khosla (2004), p. 84

[8] Joel Ruet, Pramit Pal Chowdhury and Hari Vasudevan, "India's Europe: Cultural Footprints and Conflict Resolution Process" in Khosla, 2004, p. 101

concepts of modernity, development and 'good' governance (which forms of the main ideological prop for the occupying forces in Iraq) continue to colour the perceptions of many in the West.[9] English, French and German genealogies of these categories, effectively internalised by the Indian middle classes at the high point of colonial rule as we learn from Nandy, epitomised this basic duality which had defined the relationship of India with her British master. The inter-locking of the colonial economy and politics with India's traditional society underpinned superior-subordinate developments between England and India. This has been described by Eric Stokes in the following words.

> The Industrial Revolution and the reversal it brought about in the economic relations of India with Britain were the primary phenomena [of British policy in India]. A transformation in the purpose of political dominion was the main result. Instead of providing a flow of tribute - a conception which survived at least until the end of the eighteenth century - the British power in India came to be regarded after 1800 as no more than an accessory, an instrument for ensuring the necessary conditions of law and order by which the potentially vast Indian market could be conquered for British industry. This transformation of economic purpose carried with it a new, expansive, and aggressive attitude, which the French, who were its later masters, termed *la mission civilisatrice*. The missionaries of English civilization in India stood openly for a policy of 'assimilation'. Britain was to stamp her image upon India. The physical and mental distance separating East and West was to be annihilated by the discoveries of science, by commercial intercourse, and by transplanting the genius of English laws and English education. It was the attitude of English liberalism in its clear, untroubled dawn, and its most representative figure in both England and in India was Macaulay.[10]

The English notion of the Englishman in the colony as a Knights-Errant, keeping God's law on foreign soil (Allen 1976), had a counterpart in French thinking which went on similar lines. Edward Said quotes the French advocate of colonialism Jules Harmand who said in 1910:

> It is necessary, then, to accept as a principle and point of departure the fact that there is a hierarchy of races and civilisations, and that we belong to the superior races and civilizations, still recognizing that, while superiority confers rights, it imposes strict obligations in return. *The basic legitimation of conquest over native peoples is the conviction of our superiority, not merely our mechanical, economic, and military superiority, but our moral superiority.* Our dignity rests on that quality, and it underlies our right to direct the rest of humanity. Material power is nothing but a means to that end.[11] (Emphasis added)

German thinking gave a further metaphysical depth to the Anglo-French ideology of dominance. It found a useful corner-stone in the notion of eastern spirituality as

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[9] That such outmoded shibboleths of colonial hegemony persist despite the contemporary political, economic and social developments is itself a puzzle whose analysis is beyond the remit of this paper.

[10] Eric Stokes (1959), pp xiii-xiv

[11] Said, (1993), p. 16

epitomised by the caste system of India. This argument was used with insuperable skill by Max Weber who found an explanation of India's backwardness in her traditional spirituality. Weber, who was aware of the glories of India's classical art, technology, traditions of manufacture and social differentiation of groups engaged in agriculture and trade, explains this puzzling coexistence of entrepreneurship and failure of a capitalist class to rise in terms of the role of the caste system as a transmission belt which transformed surplus wealth not into investment in productivity but into spirituality. We learn from Reinhard Bendix

> The people of Asia are notorious all over the world for their unlimited and unequalled greed.... But the point is that this "acquisitive drive" is pursued by all the tricks of the trade and with the aid of that cure-all: magic. In Asia the element was lacking which was decisive for the economy of the Occident, namely *the sublimation and rational utilization of this emotional drive which is endemic in the pursuit of gain*.... (emphasis added)[12]

The irreligiosity of the masses was reined in by the dominance of cultural and religious life by the small elite at the top.

> .... certain common denominators of Indian religion - the belief in reincarnation, the idea of retribution (*karma*), and the identification of virtue with ritual observance - influenced the masses through the social pressures of the caste system. Caste was the "transmission belt" between the speculative ideas of an intellectual elite and the mundane orientation of religious observance among the people at large....by its traditionalism, the caste system retards economic development and conversely, that inter-caste barriers become attenuated wherever economic activities attain an increased momentum. Thus, *the spirit of the caste system militated against an indigenous development of capitalism*. (ibid; emphasis added.)

Indian identity and the British *raj*: *'Reversing the Gaze'* on the *'Intimate Enemy'*

The internalisation of the norms of domination by the subjects of colonial rule (a fascinating theme in its own right which is beyond the remit of this paper) produced what Ashis Nandy (1983) describes in his inimitable phrase as the *Intimate Enemy*. The main idea behind this concept was that the dominated saw foreign rule as crucial to their own betterment. New research by Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph in *Reversing the Gaze* (2000) shows how the moral domination claimed by colonial rules was not as comprehensive as was once believed to be the case. Even at the height of British power, there was political and moral resentment, and visions of an independent political identity, even though it was confined to the private space of a diary. In 'reversing the gaze', the apparently powerless Self looks at the manifestly powerful Other[13]. In this process, the power relations go through a transformation. The result is a form of

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[12] Reinhard Bendix, ed. *From Bendix's Max Weber*, p195 (*Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie 1920-21*, edited by Reinhard Bendix, *From Max Weber*, vol 2, p 372).

[13] "Amar Singh 'reverses the gaze.' It's him looking at them, not them looking at him. This is not an account about a native subject composed by agents of the colonial master. It is a reflexive 'native's' narrative about the self, the master and the relationship between them." Rudolph and Rudolph with Kanota (2000), p. 5

liminality, which allows the self to transcend the boundaries of both the self and the other, and cast them as part of a larger whole.[14]

At the risk of compressing very large and complex social processes into their bare essentials, it can be argued that Indian reactions to British rule revolved around the crucial intellectual and moral categories of colonial domination. Students of decolonisation speak in terms of three forms of reaction to colonial rule. There were the so called 'Moderates' - creatures of Macaulay drawn from the Indian middle classes – who prized everything British and wanted to emulate them in every possible way. The 'Extremists' - radical opponents of this strategy – found in terrorism and Kali worship their chosen instrument of resistance to colonial rule. Mahatma Gandhi, with his insuperable mix of the two strands of Indian nationalism, founded the core categories of *ahimsa*, *swadeshi and satyagraha* that were later to guide India to independence, and resurface in the policy of *Panchasheela* (see below), the core concepts of her state formation, nation-building and foreign policy.

In course of the Freedom Movement, the Congress party became the vehicle of this synthesis (Judith Brown, 1985, Bhikhu Parekh, 1999). Following its foundation in 1885 by a retired British civil servant- Sir Alan Octavian Hume – the Indian National Congress gradually acquired a complex character – of collaborator and competitor with colonial rule – combining participation and protest action as a two-track strategy of power. After independence, when its rival Muslim League left India for Pakistan, the Congress, complete with its party organisation, Nehru as Prime-Minister-in-waiting, its core ideas about planning, foreign policy and nation-building already shaped, was more than ready for succession to power. Mitra (2005) offers a dynamic 'neo-institutional' model of governance and society interaction where the new social elites, themselves the outcome of a process of fair and efficient political recruitment, played a two-track strategy and instituted processes of law and order management, social and economic reform and accommodation of identity in order to produce the modern Indian state.

This post-colonial state in India and its *Weltanschauung* came to be based on the mixed legacies of colonial rule, containing a number of elements important for our present purpose. These include the rule of law, bureaucracy, economic planning, citizenship, de-industrialisation, parasitic landlords (*zamindars*), modern political institutions, and, a two-track tradition of protest and participation. The state also succeeded in tapping into the requisite moral and intellectual resources to chart out an independent foreign policy which, as we shall below, was hobbled by the lack of power to back its core principles.

Panchasheela: The state, nation-building and foreign policy in post-independence India

India's policy-makers are often at a loss to explain her newly acquired nuclear capability and her self-image as a non-aligned country, committed to international peace and an international community based on justice. The issue was already anticipated in *Panchasheela*, the five principles of peaceful coexistence to which Jawaharlal Nehru

[14] "Amar Singh's interpretation of liminality, that the permeable boundary between forms of life allows him to place both British and Indian culture and roles, is betrayed by the ending of his first career. His borderline position is redeemed, on the other hand, by his second career in the princely state of Jaipur." Rudolph and Rudolph, with Kanota (2004), p. 19. We have a reverse scene in the concluding sequence in Forster's *Passage to India*, where Aziz and Fielding, finally together, cannot still re-unite as friends and equals, standing as they do across the divide of race and power. Also see the reference to Verma (2000) in fn 31 and 32.

gave an institutional expression in terms of the Non-aligned Movement. It provided a complete if not coherent statement of India's strategic doctrine at the height of the Cold War.[15] Following the decline of Nehru's Panchasheela, despite attempts by Indira Gandhi and Gujaral to formulate a general framework for India's engagement with the world, no single coherent doctrine has emerged. New generations of policy makers, voters, parties and major changes in the regional and international contexts have influenced the development of strategic thinking. Each of the major wars of South Asia, or war-like incidents has sparked off both bouts of doctrine elaboration by the government and political controversies around them.

According to Stephen Cohen, the Nehruvian origins of strategic thinking in post-independence India have been enriched by two additional currents which he calls, respectively, 'realists' and 'revitalists', to distinguish them from the overall idealism of Jawaharlal Nehru. The realists started as offshoots from the generally liberal, market oriented, pro-American Swatantra party in the mid-1960s. The realists hold a more pragmatic view of Sino-Indian and Indo-US relations and support increased economic openness and integration with the international market forces. The revitalists take a more regional perspective, stemming from their preoccupation with indianizing South Asia, which they see as essentially the main theatre of action for Indian foreign policy. They, like the realists deem nuclearization necessary. For Cohen the modern synthesis of realist and revitalist perspectives was Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's approach.[16]

Nehru saw himself first and foremost as a great moderniser and as such, social and economic development was the cornerstone of his political thinking. Defence as a political and strategic issue was mainly used to advance these objectives. Nehru was deeply distrustful of the military as such. Not surprisingly, no coherent security doctrine developed during the period of Nehru's stewardship, non-alignment being an overall guide to the ways and means of avoiding conflict rather than a strategy of the enhancement of national power and security.

Though the onset of liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991 prepared the ground for a rapprochement with the United States, the contradictory pulls within India's strategic thinking continued from 1990 to 1999. The collapse of the Soviet Union necessitated a radical change in policy, while economic reforms in India necessitated budget cuts, affecting the military adversely. This might have opened a window of opportunity for Pakistan, which, taking advantage of the onset of militancy in Kashmir, started supporting cross border insurgency in Kashmir and covert military operations. While on the political front the unilateralist Gujral doctrine and subsequently, the BJP initiatives for a diplomatic deal with Pakistan first of the Lahore bus trip and subsequently the Agra summit continued, the Pakistani military operated on more conservative lines and sought to take advantage of the perceived weakness of the Indian military establishment. One consequence was the war in Kargil in 1999, which, for the first time, gave the United States the locus standi as a mediator in South Asia.

Why did classical India's strategic tradition as documented by Singh (1999) fail to develop on the same lines as the modern state in the West? According to Singh, it arose

[15] See Mansingh (1984), pp. 13-25 for a brief review of the core principles of non-alignment and the modifications made to them by Indira Gandhi.
[16] Cohen (2001), p. 47.

in this form primarily because of the attribution of a non-strategic, spiritual culture to India by colonial anthropology. In its loose, idealistic formulation, *Panchasheela* appears to give institutional form to this non-strategic attitude. Singh, taking issue against this reading of Indian history, shows how, buried under the layers of spiritual rhetoric and rituals there was a strategic culture and appropriate institutions in pre-modern India. As a key member of the Hindu Nationalist led NDA government and one of its main strategists, Singh argued that the government was able to build on this basis in order to bring in a new institutional arrangement of security management. Singh asserts that the loss of autonomy in the wake of foreign invasion caused an internalisation of India's strategic culture, and an obsession with curbing the enemy within rather than combating external foes. The 'rediscovery' of India's strategic culture, of which the bomb is a symbol, has now become the mainstay of Indian foreign policy and her spectacular arms purchases in the international market.

At the height of the Cold War, *Panchasheela*, the 'five principles of peaceful coexistence', spelt out the ideal state of an international system from the Indian point of view. The ideal scenario for India was to be a world of largely status quo powers where just national interests would be mediated through international law, arbitration and fair use of the natural resources of the world. In such a perfect world, it was assumed by Nehru, India, whose commitment to the third way between the east and the west, communism and capitalism, hallowed by the legacy of Aśoka and Gandhi, would play an important role, one that the world would see as both natural and legitimate. Major powers would act responsibly to keep order and promote justice in their parts of the globe. International politics would be governed by mature and responsible states that would not meddle in the affairs of others.

During the Cold War India could afford to sit on the fence rather than entering a conflict or siding with one bloc or another, rationalising its non-engagement in moral terms. Similarly, in view of India's foreign policy establishment, India, a large, important and democratic power, did not need to join an alliance. However, the emergence of Sino-Soviet rivalry, the decline of global bipolarity, and most crucially, the humiliating defeat of India in the 1962 Indo-China conflict forced India to rethink many of the assumptions that went into the *Panchasheela*. The positioning of India in the international arena today requires nothing short of two paradigm-shifts, from non-alignment to a world based on alliances, and from a state-centric mode of thinking to an international arena where non-state actors are an increasingly important presence.

India does not have much of a choice with regard to holding aloof from the world. Her declared status as a nuclear power invites an engagement by the world, which her poverty and peace-like gestures of an earlier period did not. Her commitment to liberalisation of the economy, while opening up opportunities for her vigorous and vibrant middle classes, also puts an obligation on the part of the government to engage with the rich, capitalist world. These constraints influence the role that India seeks to play in a multi-polar world.

India and Europe in a multi-polar world

Where does Europe fit in within the main framework of post-independence India's foreign policy? Appendix 1 gives the salient points in the chronology of this growing relationship. The concerns and conditions that account for this growing relationship are, respectively, the sheer volume of Indo-EU trade, the past pivotal positioning of the EU

with regard to Indo-US relations (which India often perceived as biased towards Pakistan, and China), Indian apprehensions regarding EU's protectionist agricultural policy, and most saliently, what Arjun Sengupta has called the 'natural affinity' of India and the new Europe.

As things stand at the moment, the EU is India's largest trading partner. It is the largest overseas investor in India, much of it in areas of high technology (23 percent of total exports) and investment (25 per cent of the total). Business summits have regularly been held to accompany the political summits. Europe, from the point of view of Indian strategists, provides a much valued chink in the western armour. Thus, Arjun Sengupta holds "that unlike the US, the EU cannot be considered to be a power that has an interest in dominating another country; it is not possible for the EU to think of pre-emptive strikes or of trying to dominate the policies of other states." (Khosla, 2004, p. 5). In the same vein, I.K. Gujral, a former Prime Minister and foreign policy specialist, holds that Europe is not merely an appendage to American power.[17] Not that there are no disagreements with the EU with regard to its trade policy[18] or attitudes towards India's traditional rivals.[19] Still, in the opinion of hardened observers of the international scene, the policies of EU still represent for India a comparative advantage. One can gather as much from the position taken by Arjun Sengupta.

> "… it should not be regarded as an either-or choice but within a system of alliances, some closer than the others. Unlike the US, the EU cannot be considered to be a power that has an interest in dominating another country. It is not possible for the EU to think of pre-emptive strikes. It is not possible for the EU to think of certain states as rogue states and certain states as friendly states. This is simply because the EU as such is not that kind of power which can ensure that all the states within the Union will see eye-to-eye with any of these propositions. I am not saying that they are incapable in intent. The British are equally capable of carrying out a pre-emptive strike if they could or even France at some point of time, but once they are within the EU, the equation changes. India has reached a stage where this kind of power relationship is very important. If you go through the documents of the US foreign policy you can consider how they have set up the whole global map and chosen which country should be more important than another and have built up a whole strategy to deal with that….If we look at the EU, we are not going to be bothered about that. This is a major advantage of our relationship with the EU. If you are familiar with the US conditions for becoming a partner state, whether it is Mexico or Canada or more recently the South Koreans, very categorically there is an undercurrent of conditions that the power dominance of the US has to be accepted. I do

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17 "Our economic relations with Europe are very good, larger than with any other region that I can think of. We look at Europe as a major powerhouse of technology with which we can cooperate and that is a very positive perspective. In addition, our past has revealed that when ever there have been difficulties with America, Europe has generally behaved differently. Therefore, whether it came to sanctions or other issues, we found a different and positive reaction from Europe and it was in our favour." I.K. Gujral, "Europe as seen from India" in Khosla, 2004, p. 13

18 Gujaral, ibid. p. 16 "We have sharp differences with Europe on agricultural policy. We have been told things are going to change, but they are not changing. Therefore, India is not in a position to really take advantage of globalization when it comes to agriculture."

19 Gujaral, ibid, p. 17 "The EU has a differential approach towards the two major states of Asia, i.e. India and China, in areas of trade and investment. Another power that is emerging on the Asian scene is ASEAN. How does Europe use the emergence of ASEAN as a factor in playing a role in Asia?

> not think there is any apprehension regarding a relationship with the EU being constrained by the difficulties of the international power situation."[20]

Sengupta holds that on the contentious Kashmir issue "…the EU's position in general has been much more impartial and helpful [to India] and [not] consistently pro-Pakistan." He warns, nevertheless, that India should not take it for granted that there will be no hostile mention of "human rights violations in Kashmir and there would be protests in the EU, because that is in the nature of their system." (p. 98) Building further on this, he recommends that India needs to become more confident about open markets.

> …from the Indian point of view, the challenges are much more severe because we have to genuinely believe in open trade. EU is one place where the commodities that are involved are diverse. They have different types of economies, practically at every point they have a face-to-face confrontation. So long as we are not prepared to open up and follow the principles of open trade, I do not consider it is possible for the EU to come forward. If, on the other hand, we are prepared, it is possible for us to plead for a special status. The EU has given special status to other countries outside Europe: not just African countries but also several countries in the Middle East. It started with Israel. In fact, EU-Israel had a special free trade arrangement long before the bilateral treaty arrangements were talked about. If we are prepared to accept the implications of free trade with the EU, this can be a very good way of beginning that. (pp. 98-99)

Finally, the EU, compared to the USA, is seen by Indian analysts as comparatively a 'no-strings-attached business partner', and, India will be well advised to assume the responsibility of an equal partner, rather than pleading for special treatment, as one can only expect from a subaltern.

> If we genuinely open up foreign investment and not bother about putting up constraints and bureaucratic hurdles, the EU is another source of investment that will be immensely beneficial to us. There is a big difference between the United States and the EU here. The US can also be a very good source of foreign investment for us, but the US has proved again and again that their foreign investment has to be very closely related to their mainland interest. This is the reason why the US is now telling the Chinese to revalue their currency because they are not importing sufficient products from American MNCs. The EU does not do that, not because they are selfless but because they are they belong to a particular group where they cannot do something to India which they cannot do to other members of the Union or associate states. (p. 99)

The argument regarding the 'natural affinity' follows from the fact that "this group of countries has experienced the benefits and the prosperity that comes through a Union of a multi ethnic, multi religious community, something very similar to our own experience" (Sengupta, ibid, p. 100). It took fifty years for the French to recognise the reality of l'Inde as compared to *les Indes*. It might take a while for the sense of Europe to replace an entity that contains but does not quite consist of England-France-

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[20] Arjun Sengupta, "Future Prospects", in Khosla, (2004), p. 94

Germany-Poland. Ruet, Pal Choudhury and Vasudevan suggest that Indian diversity finds an echo in the ambiguous identity of Europe.

> Various points of common interest and mutual understanding are evident. An important intra-EU divide exists between the erstwhile colonial and the non-colonial countries. India cuts across the line often and from its own unique perspective, it has a post-colonial understanding of the world. This allows the formal colonial powers and India to arrive at an understanding of major global complexities and it is often that, that counsels the pursuit of global multi-polarity. Inevitably, India's reflective ambivalence globally is a parallel to EU's own. It hesitates between rejection and the advocacy of external intervention, and the evolution of EU's external policy is a mirror of India itself. In this respect, it can be said that India needs a dialogue with former colonial powers as another self, even while it strongly desires support for a multi-polar world from the EU. (Ruet, Pal Choudhury and Vasudevan, in Khosla, 2004, p. 107)

Panchasheela redux[21]*:* role reversal of Europe and India

A comparison of the profiles that Europe and India project in their domestic and foreign policy stances creates an image of a curious reversal of roles. Beset with the problems of slow growth and domestic discontent, Europe, in its international politics chooses to repose her trust in multilateralism, international organisation and rule of law rather than unilateral intervention, much as Nehru's India had done. India, on the other hand, buoyant with robust growth, greater social harmony than the difficult 1980s and 1990s, has learnt to rely on her own military power as the key to her security. India's non-alignment of the 1950s had produced deep scepticism in the western-alliance dominated Europe. Today, with Europe, relatively free of the guiding role of the NATO, projects a profile that closely resembles that of India.

Almost six decades after Independence, the state in India has come to its own. With a Sikh Prime Minister, the reputed father of India's liberalisation who nevertheless depends on communists for his political survival, a Muslim President who carries the awesome reputation of being the 'father of the Indian bomb' and presiding over both in her capacity as President of the Congress Party, the Italian born widow of Rajiv Gandhi, the trade mark panchasheela is enjoying a second coming. Analysed critically, the recent statement by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at Asian-African Conference,[22] evocative of the heady days of the Bandung spirit not seen since the 1950s euphoria of panchasheela and Afro-Asian solidarity, reveals an important, new and potentially enduring mode of discourse between India and the world. Once one gets past the familiar litany, one finds a fine balance of national self-interest and idealism in the current evocations of panchasheela in Indian foreign policy. The idea of Afro-Asian solidarity is pragmatically adapted to the imperatives of our times. The commitment to justice and solidarity is tempered with the imperative of change to a world based on competition and opportunities. "We must adopt concerted measures, both at the national

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[21] redux: led back, indicating return to health after disease. *Webster's International Dictionary*. From John Updike, *Rabbit Redux* (New York: Alfred Knopf; 1971)

[22] Delivered on 23.4.2005, seen on 5/2/2005 at http://meaindia.nic.in/speech/2005/04/23ss01.htm.

and the international level, for an equitable management of increased global interdependence of nations. At the national level, the state must be modernized to create an environment conducive to creativity and growth and also to ensure that the fruits of growth are fairly and equitably distributed."[23]

The difference in tone and content of the new Panchasheela from the old is remarkable. Whereas its invocation during the earlier phases started, continued and ended with idealistic evocations of Afro-Asian solidarity and abstract goals of peace, an instrumental approach to abstract goals triumphs in the current form.

> At the global level we must devise instrumentalities to deal with imbalances built into the functioning of the international political and economic order. We should aim to expand the constituency that supports process of globalization…. To meet these challenges and constraints, we must respond in a manner worthy of the Bandung spirit. Just as that historic meeting redefined the agenda for its time, we must do so once again here today. The declaration on a new Asian African Strategic Partnership outlines guiding principles for joint action to achieve our goals in a changed global environment. With his insuperable command over the technical aspects of the international political economy and the newly acquired aura of confident actor in international politics, the Prime Minister outlines a series of specific measures that should be at the top of the international agenda. These measures are to include the demands to phase out trade-distorting agricultural subsidies in developed countries and to remove barriers to 'our' agricultural exports; lowering of tariff barriers to 'our' other exports; to balance the protection of the environment with the development aspirations of the developing nations; urgent measures to generate additional financial resources for development especially for the least developed countries and the highly indebted poor countries.[24]

Towards the end of the speech, the Prime Minister made a thinly disguised demand for India's fair share in the UN system in the name of 'democratisation of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

> Jawaharlal Nehru has said that when we march step in step with history, success will be ours. The breathtaking pace of change in our times gives an opportunity and a responsibility to act decisively. We can transcend past rancour and take new initiatives to create new cooperative mechanisms and regional partnership. In this spirit, in cooperation with our neighbour Pakistan, we have embarked upon a journey of peace and good neighbourly ties. I appreciate the positive sentiments expressed by President Musharraf yesterday which I fully reciprocate. We are sincere in our desire to resolve all issues in a mutually acceptable manner. This will surely bring benefit to our people and to our region. The Bandung conference of 1955 followed the awakening of Asia and Africa. We meet today in similarly historic circumstances, at the threshold of change that place us centre-stage-globally.[25]

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[23] ibid
[24] ibid
[25] ibid

India's current security posture reflects the debates taking place between the four major lobbies in the Indian strategic policy community. The first are the advocates of 'firm India' who argue that India should project itself as a firm, powerful state and be able to use force freely was the dominant strategic theme in Indian policy. The line of thinking, powerfully introduced into Indian politics by Indira Gandhi, continues to be actively represented by those who advocate the bomb as a symbol of national power. They hold that India has evolved a 'will to act' to preserve its vital national interests. With regard to the crisis in Nepal caused by the King's dismissal of multi-party democracy in the backdrop of the Maoist onslaught on the state, India has shown both the capacity and will to act in concert with other major powers of the world, to restore democracy but simultaneously, preserve the integrity of the state. The second major voice in India's strategic community is the peace mongering "conciliatory India" lobby. These leaders and specialists question the strategies of defence-led economic development, a boastful military profile, and too quick intervention in the affairs of neighbours. They would prefer to deal with Pakistan and China by territorial compromise and negotiation, displaying military power only to supplement diplomacy. The third trend advocates the projection of a "Didactic India", of India as a 'civilisational' state who see India's culture as a resource, a part of her inherent greatness, a valuable diplomatic asset, and that others must become cognisant of the moral quality of Indian foreign and strategic policy. The efforts to tie in the Indian diaspora for the promotion of Indian culture abroad are part of this strategy. There is considerable evidence of a large-scale governmental effort to use the American-resident Indian community to advance Indian interests. The process was begun in 1970, when lobbying efforts of both Indians and sympathetic Americans were coordinated from the Embassy in Washington. More recently the Indian government has created a ministry for "persons of Indian origin" (PIOs) and "non-resident Indians" (NRIs). The fourth group combines many of the ideas of all the above lobbies but is pragmatically inclined towards building up a strong relationship with the USA as the means for best ensuring an appropriate security and economic environment for India.

In sum, when compared to the final years of the NDA, under the new management, India exudes remarkable policy stability with regard to the international political economy, and a new confidence with regard to international diplomacy. Not hobbled by the taint of communal violence (anti-Sikh riots under Rajiv Gandhi, Ayodhya under Rao and Godhra under Vajpeyi), Manmohan Singh's regime has boldly charted out a new course, and found in the global campaign against terrorism a useful political base. Seen in the context of its second coming, Panchasheela holds the potential to draw the various strands of India's doctrinal thinking and produce an internally consistent and effective basis on which to engage the world.

Conclusion: Old wine in a new bottle? The *Natural Affinity* of EU-India and the room for two converging non-alignments

A reflexive mode of discourse ensues when the Self and the Other "engage each other, sharing the conversation built into a script" leading to "reciprocity and mutual determination".[26] The hiatus of structure/agency, culture/power, self/other gets

[26] Amar Singh, a reflexive diarist writing about his culture from within, realizes a more symmetrical relationship by conflating self and other. He can be participant, observer, narrator, and author rolled into one. He writes the play and speaks its lines; it is his text, his script, his performance." Rudolph and Rudolph with Kanota, 2000, p. 43

subsumed in an inclusive, non-distorting language of discourse.[27] One might believe that the potential for such a development between India and the new Europe, following their natural affinity, based on their countervailing cultural diversity, modern institutions grafted on ancient customs, adherence to multilateralism and belief in orderly rule based on international organisations, must be vast. Free at last of memories of colonial rule, and, at least so far, free from binding military pacts, India and the new Europe must discover their shared world views and, partnership in the new world order.

Is this scenario, as the hard boiled and sceptical neo-realist would argue, a mere throw-back to the heady days of Wilsonian idealism with a touch of Nehruvian nostalgia, indicative more of the penchant for fantasy and wishful thinking that the Orientalists expected from India than rational and strategic calculations? Or, is there, underlying the contemporary juncture of messy multi-polarity, a compelling argument for two converging non-alignments that one has not taken on board merely because of its novelty to the circles of foreign policy-makers, pessimists of the neo-realist school, addicted to short-term calculations?

Starting with its limited objective to document Indian perceptions of Europe, and analyse the gap between perception and reality, the paper has moved in the direction of uncovering the proximity in the profiles of the two, and to explore the potential for a reflexive term of discourse. What evidence might one find in the structure and process of Indian politics and the ontological foundations of her identity to give this quest a sense of reality?

With Manmohan Singh holding forth on the Bandung spirit very much in the Nehruvian mode, and the stream of international visitors calling by, those with long memories of the early years after independence might ask if Indian diplomacy is back to its well worn, noble minded but effete grooves. Such broad similarities between the past and the present are deceptive. Beyond the constants of Indian politics such as familiar faces in high places, and familiar rhetoric, Indian diplomacy has acquired a new pragmatism and a tone of confidence that distinguish it from its earlier avatars. The 1998 tests which brought India opprobrium from all possible quarters, deftly handled in its conceptualisation, implementation and subsequent damage-limiting-diplomacy have produced an environment conducive to a new sense of realism in Indo-US strategic relations, which, in turn, has become a leading element in similar arrangements with the EU, Russia, China, and Pakistan.

However, laudable as it is, pragmatism on its own does not constitute a doctrine. By keeping one's options always open, riding on a bandwagon when it suits one's convenience and getting off at the slightest sign of trouble (Republican circles in the United States see India's position on Iraq exactly in this light, as indeed they do of France and Germany) can invite the charge of cynical opportunism masquerading as high principle. These reservations continue to hobble transactions such as the purchase

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[27] Ensconced in a culture more powerful than the self, the Self might not be as powerless with respect to the Other as one might have thought. Where as Srinivas (quoted here) holds that "Every life mirrors to some extent the culture and the changes it has undergone," it is perhaps more appropriate to hold with Scott, if we are to stick with the mirroring image, the lived-in life is a distorting mirror, which transforms in a manner suitable to itself that which it reflects.

"Amar Singh's ethnographic propensities arise in part from his youth. Between twenty and twenty-seven (1898-1905) We find him shaping an identity by making cultural judgments and choices and learning from the meaning and consequences of speech and action. What kind of person does he want to be as son and husband, soldier and sportsman, courtier and Rajput, princely subject and raj feudatory? Should he adapt to English models and if so why, when and what models? The diary shows him making minute and major judgments as he positions himself among quotidian practices and moral differences. As he writes his diary day by day we see culture in the making as well as in the doing – how agency and structure interact, how culture shapes self, and how self shapes culture."

of dual use technology[28] or the oil pipeline issue with regard to Iran that could, otherwise, be smooth. In consequence, though there is some recognition of mutual compatibility, US-Indian relations continue to be an uncertain pas-de-deux. This is where the role of EU as a counter balance to too close an identification with the United States is of crucial importance to India.

India's role in world politics is changing in an international context where "rules of international conduct on issues of technology and multilateralism are being re-written" (Bertsch et.al. 1999, 269), roles have reversed as superpowers and supplicants of an earlier period reverse roles and a new coalition of major powers is at the forefront of efforts to reorganise the Security Council. Once again, like at the height of the Cold War, fortuitously, Indian policy has gravitated towards placing her interests in the international arena with the right combination of structural realism and national identity. Rather than being self-consciously unique and aloof, this policy is drawing on national identity (culture and ideology), and liberal values of peace and plurality. Perhaps, the time has now come for Indian diplomacy to play a trump card, whose implications they have not yet thought through, in their possession. India is alone among the main powers in the international arena today to not have been a party to the Second World War, and as such, not to have been traumatised by the devastating power of ideologies. That describes the *other face* of Indian pragmatism which gives Indian thinking a *heuristic capacity* to understand ideology – both their own and those of other societies - and the intellectual resources to negotiate across cultures.

Much more than the United States or China, it is with new Europe that India has a natural affinity and can look forward to sharing a reflexive discourse. Democratic, plural, endowed with countervailing interests and identities, and essentially non-aligned, these two entities share a lot of resources on which to build. European pacifism of the 1930s stood for something similar, before the rise of the Third Reich gave ideology a bad name, and conferred on the victorious allies an enduring right to suppress everybody else's ideology except their own, which gradually acquired the aura of an inexorable transition to development, modernity and democracy. The forces arrayed for and against the America-led invasion of Iraq helped reveal the interests that underpin this unproblematic view of the world. In its second coming, Panchasheela as a *doctrine* should be able to build heuristically on the innate, universal desire for peace, understanding of difference and respect for the dignity of man. The Indian search for identity can then join the European Union, also engaged in looking for a third way beyond the triumphal self-profiling of the world's only superpower and the effete bickering of those who are opposed to it. But, once again, in making this assertion, one has to be very careful so as not to fall into the trap of wishful thinking, which has Nehru's foreign policy could never detach itself from.[29]

In order to look for resources that could go into the making of reflexivity one needs to look beyond the realm of institutional politics of India and explore the deeper recesses of her culture. Continuously enriched, this fund of wisdom carries the legacies of her ancient civilisation as well as that of the recent encounter with typically western values such as rationality and individualism. The Indian novelist Nirmal Verma sums this up in terms of the *complementary character of India and Europe* in an evocative language where Upanishadic maxim *tat tvam asi* – literally, *thou art that*, redolent of the

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[28] Bertsch et.al. (1999, 264)

[29] The 1961 integration of Goa by India through military intervention, and India's refusal to conduct a plebiscite in Kashmir as resolved by the United Nations are often pointed out as examples of India's moral posturing.

connectedness of the universe – meets its equivalent in the concept of romantic love, centred on the idea of seeing the 'other' as itself. Verma asserts, "For the first time through European poetry and music, and the literature of European romanticism, the Indian witnessed the 'hunger of the soul', neither [is] fully divine, nor entirely carnal, [but] seeking fulfilment in the fusion of both."[30]

Seen from this angle, India and Europe, partners in trade and politics, stand at the threshold of a relationship that remains unconsummated at a deeper level. Raja Mohan, commenting on the unfinished agenda of Indo-European relations, captures the sentiments of Verma:

> While India and Europe say they need each other, they are yet unprepared to pursue the logic to the end. If India needs to rise rapidly and Europe wants to say relevant, they need to exploit, quickly and intensely, the economic, technological and demographic complementarities. The values of Enlightenment – of scientific reason and individual freedom – that India and Europe share, have re-emerged as the bedrock for constructing any credible world order amidst the challenges of religious extremism and anti-modernism. In order to capture the public imagination in both Europe and India about the prospects of strategic cooperation, they need to send clear political signals and unveil visible mega projects. Europe needs to acknowledge much like the Bush Administration that a stronger India is in the interest of global peace and stability. And in practice, Europe needs to go beyond the legalistic framework of non-proliferation and open the doors for long-term high technology and defence cooperation with India.[31]

To conclude, I will quote the Indian novelist Verma again, for to my knowledge, nobody expresses the natural affinity, and reciprocity of India and Europe better than this restless mind, equally at home in both continents, far in advance of his time, and, one might hope, harbinger of the state of things to be. I quote:

> Two traditions, Indian and European, are still seeking a sort of completion in one another, not through a philosophical discourse or mutual cross-questioning, but by creating a 'common space' within which the voice of the one evokes a responsive echo in the other, feeling the deprivations of one's own culture through the longings of the other. There are needs, primal and primordial, which may remain submerged or unexplored in a certain tradition for centuries, and like the keys of a piano, they wait for the right moment and just the right pressure of some 'other hand' to be able to discover the notes, strange and mysterious, though always within us, but never heard before. Such 'listening' is both a discovery and a revelation, a discovery of the other within ourselves and a revelation of ourselves

[30] Verma (2000), p. 52. I would like to thank Kate Sullivan for bringing the work of Nirmal Verma to my attention, and for her stimulating comments on what India has to offer to Europe.

[31] Raja Mohan's concrete suggestion to move beyond the rhetoric of the 'natural affinity' and into the concrete act deserves careful consideration. He says, "While Europe is desperate to sell nuclear reactors and advanced arms to China, it remains squemish about genuine strategic cooperation with India. If Blair, on behalf of Brussels, recognises India's role in shaping a new, long overdue post-Yalta intenational system, there will be no reason for him to 'sex up' Europe in his India sojourn. If he can get Brussels to loosen its controls over high technology trade with Delhi, Blair will find it easy to turn India on." Raja Mohan, op.cit.

> through the other. These utterances have, of course, been made by anthropologists, historians and philosophers on either side; perhaps the time has now come, for both India and Europe, to pause a little and listen to one another in silence – may, indeed, be as 'sound' a method of discourse as any other.[32]

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[32] Verma (2000), p. 52

Appendix 1
A critical chronology of India-EU Relations

1963 India establishes diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community (EEC).
1970 EC contributes EUR i 47 million to Operation Flood programme in the area of dairy development in India.
1971 EEC introduces general tariff preferences for 91 developing countries including India under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) scherhe.
1973 India and the EEC sign Commercial Cooperation Agreement.
1976 EC contributes EUR 6 million, for drought prone areas in UP and Gujarat, this marks the beginning of a regulär Development Cooperation programme with India.
1981 India and the EEC sign a five'-year Commercial and Economic Co-operation agreement (16 November).
1982 The Council of EEC Chamber of Commerce is set up.
1983 EC Delegation in India established at New Delhi.
1985 Commercial and Economic Co-operation Agreement is signed between the EEC and India.
1988 EC-India Joint Commission meeting held (March).
1988 Second meeting ofEEC-India Industrial Co-operation Working Group held in New Delhi (March).
1988 Mr. Cheysson, member of the European Commission, visits India (24, 25 March), meets Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, confirms that the EC was commirted to contributing to Phase III (1987-94) of the Operation Flood programme. The aggregate total of the EC's aid to India comes to EUR 1000 million. .
1988 Mr. M. Arunachalam, India's Minister of State for Industrial Development, visits the Commission (June).
1988 Mr. Dinesh Singh, India's Commerce Minister visits the Commission (September).
1989 Euro-India co-operation and exchange programme (EICEP) for exchange of faculty from managerhent schools is launched.
1990 Mr. Inder Kumar Gujral, India's Minister for External Affairs, visits the Commission, new economic prospects opened up by the single market (March).
1990 EC-lndia Joint Committee meeting held in Brüssels (May), India's Minister for Commerce, Mr. Arun Nehru, confirms India's commitment to strengthening the multi-lateral trading System.
1991 Following the assassination of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi the European Parliament condemns terrorism and political violence in India and salutes the government's determination to continue with the elections.
1991 Mr. Andriessen visits India, has talks with the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, on the Uruguay Round and the textiles agreement.
1991 European Community Investment Partners (ECIP) scheme is launched in India to provide financing facllity to provide EU-India joint ventures among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (November).
1992 Technical Office of the EC opened in Nepal (under the Charge of the India Delegation).
1992 Fifth meeting betweenthe EC Troikaand India held in New Delhi, Mr. Matutes, member of the European Commission represents the Commission, participants welcome the sweeping economic reforms in India (March).
1992 Indian and European businessmen launch a joint initiative, Joint Business Forum (October).
1993 EC supports a major Sectoral programme in Education (District Primary Education Programme DPEP) with a funding of EUR 150mMlion(15 June).

1993 Software Service Support and Education Centre Ltd. (3SE) set up in Bangalore, with the support of the EC, to promote EU-India joint ventures in Information Technology (November).
1993 EC and India sign Joint Politieal Statement, simultaneously, with the Co-operation Agreement on Partnership and Development (20 December).
1994 New GSP scheme for industrial products introduced (l January).
1994 The EC Vice President, Mr. Manuel Marin, visits India (27-29 March), meets the President of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma. 1994 The European Parliament adopts a resolution on economic and trade relations between India and the EC calling on India to continue its economic reforms..
1994 EU Troika meets the Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, in Paris (6 April).
1994 Commission presents the EU's proactive policy towards Asia in a communication—Towards a new strategy for Asia (13 July).
1994 EC-India Co-operation agreement on Partnership and Development comes into force (l August).
1994 Eighth meeting of EC-India Joint Committee held (10, 11 October).
1994 Setting up of Technology Information Centre (TIC) in Delhi.
1994 Co-operation Agreement signed with Nepal (20 November).
1995 Vice President of the European Commission, Sir Leon Brittan, visits India (December).
1996 Sir Leon Brittan inaugurates the European Business InformationCentre (EBIC), at Mumbai (January).
1996 Visit of the EU Troika, including Vice President of European Commission, Mr. Manuel Marin (March).
1996 Commission signs a new protocol on administrative cooperation, with the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (S A ARC) (10 July).
1996 Comission adopts the communication on EU-India Enhanced Partnership (26 June); the Council approves the Communication (6 December).
1996 India Trade and Investment Forum held in Brüssels, on 25 & 26 November, jointly chaired, by the EC Vice President, Mr. Manuel Marin and the Indian Minister of Commerce, Dr. B.B. Ramaiah
1996 EU-India Economic Cross- Cultural programme is launched (26 November).
1996 EC supports another major Sectoral programme, in Health and Family Weifare sector with a funding of EUR 200 million.
1997 EC-India Joint Committee meeting held in New Delhi (May).
1997 EU-India troika ministerial meeting at Luxembourg (2 September). Indian side led by Ms. Kamla Sinha, Minister of State for External Affairs.
1997 Members of the European business community in India launch the Euro Club aimed at promoting business in and with India.
1998 EU-India Economic Cross-Cultural Programme elicits over 400 proposals; 28 projects selected for funding.
1998 Asia-Invest is launched to promote business and mutual understanding between Asia and the European Union (March).
1998 The EU Troika and the Commission take pari in a meeting withrepresentatives of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), on the sidelines ofthe UN General Assembly session, in New York (23 September).
1998 Annual ministerial level meeting between the EU Troika, Mr. Marin (for the Commission) and India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Ms. Vasundhara Raje takes place in New Delhi (November).

1998 Asia-Urbs is launched to promote co-operation between the municipal authorities in Asia and European Union.

1999 European Parliament endorses the Commission's Communication on "EU-India Enhanced Partnership" (12 March)

1999 "EU-India Partenariat" organized in New Delhi where more than 300 European Small aiid Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) met more than 400 India SMEs in one-to-one business meetings over two days (15-16 March)

1999 The Indian Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Jaswant Singh, visits Brüssels and meets the EU Commissioner for External Relations, Mr. Chris Patten (September)

1999 The Indian Minister for External Affairs, Mr Jaswant Singh, participates in EU-India ministerial meeting held in Helsinki where the proposal to launch an EU-India Round-Table is formally adopted (December)

2000 The European Commissioner for Trade, Mr. Pascal Lamy, visits Mumbai and New Delhi (3-7 March) and meets the Indian Ministers for Trade and Commerce, Finance, Foreign Affairs as well as business groups, and the academia besides the Governor ofthe Reserve Bank of India in Mumbai

2000 Mr. Pascal Lamy, Member of the European Commission responsible for Trade, announces agreement on proposal for additional textile imports from India (May)

2000 *The first-ever EU-India Summit* held in Lisbon, 28 June 2000. The Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, travels to Lisbon along with a high-powered team including the Ministers for External Affairs, Finance, Trade and Commerce and Information Technology and meets the Prime Minister of Portugal, Mr. Antonio Gueterres, assisted by the Secretary General/High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Mr. Javier Solana, and the president of the European Commission, Mr Romano Prodi. The Portuguese Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Science and Technology and the deputy Minister for Economy,and the European Commissioners for External Relations, Trade and Research also participated in the Summit. The summit issued a Joint Declaration along with an Agenda for Action. The EU-India Civil Aviation Cooperation Agreement was signed. 2000 The European Union Film Festival held in New Delhi (6-13 October) and Calcutta (19-25 October). The festival which had participation on the theme of "The city" with entries from all the 14 of the 15 EU Member States present in India was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, in New Delhi on 6 October.

2000 Continuing on the theme of the film festival ("the City"), the first-ever India-EU Conference, titled "Cities of Tomorrow: India-EU Meet on Sustainable Urban Development" was organized by the tnissions of the EU Member States and the EC Delegation in'lndia, in collaboration with the New Delhi Municipal Council, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi and the. Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi (16-18 October). This joint initiative saw the participation of more man 20 European architects, urban planners and scholars with about 600 Indian participants including eminent architects and authorities. The meet was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Urban Development, Mr. Jagmohan, and the Valedictory Session was chaired by the Chief Minister of Delhi, Mrs. Sheila Dixit.

2001 The EU Commissioner for External Relations, Mr. Chris Patten, visits India (Jan 25-30) and inaugurates the EU-India Round fable along with the Indian Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Jaswant Singh (Jan 29). Mr. Patten also meets the Indian Minister for Finance, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, addresses the Indian parliamentarians and the business community and delivers the Jean Monnet lecture organised by the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

2001 On 26 January a devastating earthquake rocks Gujarat in which several thousand people are killed. The visiting commissioner, Mr. Patten passes on a note of condolence from the President of the European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi, to the Indian President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan. The ECHO announces an emergency humanitarian assistance of 3 million euros.

2001 Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the earthquake in Indiä (29 January)

2001 Commission announces a further 10 million in humanitarian assistance for victims of India earthquake (01 February).

2001 The eleventh Session of the EC-lndia Joint Commission, co-chaired by Mr. Prabir Sengupta, Commerce Secretary, Government of India and Mr. Guy Legras, Director General for External Relations, European Commission, takes place in New Delhi (6 February 2001).

2001 The EU Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr. Franz Fischler visits India from April 16-18 and meets the Indian Minister forAgriculture, Mr. Nitish Kumar, Mr. Fischler also visits the Punjab Agricultural University at Ludhiana.

2001 Commission allocates 3.2 million for disaster prevention and preparedness programs in South Asia (26 July).

2001 The second meeting of the EU-India Round Table held in Brussels (l6-17 July) 2001 Humanitarian response to the flooding in Orissa—Commission announces Büro 2 million (27 July).

2001 EU-lndia Think Tank seminar held in Brüssels (15-16 October)

2001 Second EU-India Summit held in New Delhi (23 November). The Prime Minister of Belgium, Mr. Guy Verhofstadt, and the President of European Commission, Mr. Romano'Prodi, met the Indian leadership led by Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. The Summit issued a Joint Communique along with an Agenda for Action, and a Declaration against Terrorism. The EU-India Vision Statement on Information Technology and the EU-India Agreement on Science and Technology were highlights.

2002 European Commissioner for Enterprise and the Information Society, Mr. Erkki Liikanen visited India from 10-12 January. He participated in the CII Partnership Summit at Bangalore and also met with a number of key personalities both from the Government and the private sector.

2002 European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Poul Nielsön paid an official visit to India from 28 January-2 February. During this visit he toured Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, besides New Delhi, and took stock of EC supported development and humanitarian programmes in the region.

2002 Ninth European Union Film Festival was held in New Delhi from 5-12 March, followed by Chennai from 12-19 March and Kolkata from 22-31 March. All the 15 Member States of the EU participated in the film festival with films representing a wide variety of themes and cinematographic techniques.

2002 The meeting of the EU-India Sub-Commission on Trade was held in New Delhi on 9 April, 2002. Mr. S.N. Menon, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry headed the Indian Delegation and the EU side was led by Mr. Robert Madelin, Director, DG Trade, European Commission.

2002 Mr. Chris Patten, the European Commissioner for External Relations visited New Delhi on 24 May, 2002 and met his Indian counterpart, Mr. Jaswant Singh, Minister for External Affairs. Mr Patten arrived in New Delhi from his visit to Afghanistan and Pakistan. He also met Mr. Brajesh Mishra, the National Security Advisor and Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition.

2002 The European Commission presented Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006 for India, which aims to chart out the course for development and economic cooperation between India and the European Commission for the perjod 2002 to 2006. It is expected that the Budget Authority will make available some € 225 Mio for the forthcoming five-year period for EC development and economic co-operation.

2002 The President of the Party of European Socialists (PES) in the European Parliament, Mr. Enrique Baron, visited India from 30 September to 01 October, along with a parliamentary delegation of his group. They met Indian Prime Minister, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee and other Indian Ministers and Mernbers of the Civil Society.

2002 The third EU-India Summit was held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 10 October. India was represented by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, assisted by Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, and Minister for

Disinvestment, Mr. Arun Shourie. The EU was represented by the Prime Minister of Denmark, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, in his capacity äs President of the European Council assisted by the Secretary General/High Representative for CFSP, Mr. Javier Solana, and the President of the European Commission, Mr Romano Prodi. The Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Per Stig Moller, and the European Commissioner for! External Relations, Mr. Christopher Patten, also participated in the Summit.

2003 EU Troika meets Indian Foreign Minister in Athens (11 January)

2003 The fifth EU-India Round Table held in Bangalore, India (8- 10 March, 2002)

2003 EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy visits Indiaon 13-14 March to -discuss bilateral trade issues äs well äs the World Trade Organisation's negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda vvith the Indian Leaders.

2003 EU Cultural Weeks 2003 organised in New Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chandigarh (22 November 04 December)

2003 The Fourth EU-India Summit between India and the EU was held in New Delhi, India on 29th November. 2003. India was represented by Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Biliari Vajpayee. He was assisted by External AHairs Minister Mr. Yashwant Sinha. The EU was represented by the Presidency ofthe European Council, Italian Minister of State for External Aflairs, Mrs. Margherita Boniver. President ofthe European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi. Secretary General/High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Mr. Javier Solana and the Commissioner for External Relations, Mr. Chris Patten.

2003 The Sixth meeting of the India-EU Round Table took place in Rome on 16-17 December.

2004 EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy visits India on 19 January to enhance trade lies with the EU and to boost the WTO negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda.

2004 EU Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten visits India on 16 February for a series oi' iluropean Union (EU) Ministerial Troika (I) meetings. The Troika is led by the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Brian Cowen, accompanied by Dutch Minister for Foreign Aflairs, Dr. Bernard R. Bot.