

**Cultural Diplomacy in International Relations:
A Study of Russia-India Relations, 1991-2015**

*Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "*Cultural Diplomacy in International Relations: A Study of Russia-India Relations, 1991-2015*" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMMA	All Moscow Malayali Association
BBC	British Broadcasting Cooperation
CD	Cultural Diplomacy
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRCAS	Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies
CNN	Cable News Network
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DISHA	Developing Initiatives for Social and Human Action
ICCR	Indian Council of Cultural Relations
ISCUS	Indo-Soviet Cultural Society
ISKCON	International Society for Krishna Consciousness
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAM	Non Alignment Movement
RCSC	Russian Centre of Science and Culture
RRO	<i>Rossotrudnichestvo</i> Representative Office
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USA	United States of America

Chapter 1

Introduction: Cultural Diplomacy in International Relations, A Theoretical Framework

Culture assumes an important place in the lexicon of the discipline of International Relations (IR) in contemporary times as a foreign policy tool, a means of building political relationship, connecting people and encouraging dialogue in difficult times. Given the new kinds of threats such as terrorism, global financial crisis, climate change, etc and the unprecedented transnational character of international system driven by globalization and interconnectivity emerged in the post-cold war world order, cultural diplomacy has gained renewed attention as a factor in building international relations. In today's context of geopolitical transformation, changing power dynamics in the international system and socio-economic changes resulted by globalization, cultural diplomacy has become one of the main pillars of foreign policy in many countries for projecting the cultural identity of state abroad and promoting foreign policy goals and political and economic interests.

Russia-India relations generally characterized as “deep-rooted in strong civilizational commonalities” and “time tested” is one of the important cases that reflects increased cultural relations contributing to close cooperation, mutual trust and friendship since ancient times. Since the establishment of diplomatic relation between India and Soviet Russia in April 1947 on the eve of India's freedom from British colonial rule, cultural diplomacy played an important role in building bilateral relations to the level of a time tested, all weather relationship which does not have any major conflict of interests as of now. Today, the cultural amalgamation of Russia and India and the practice of cultural diplomacy

demonstrates eventually supplementing to elevate the bilateral relations to a “special and privileged strategic partnership”. Therefore, this study considers Russia-India bilateral relations a good case in point to understand the role and potential of cultural diplomacy in keeping a steady track of friendly bilateral relations, mutual understanding and political trust depicting a long-term synergy in the post-cold war era.

Profile of Problem

Cultural and civilizational connections between Russia and India have always been highlighted basis of close partnership. Regarding this, on the occasion of celebration of seventy years of diplomatic relations between both countries in 2017, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, “We are celebrating a significant date—the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and India. Over the years, a lot has happened and many things have changed, but the main thing in our bilateral relations remains: these are special, trusting, friendly relations between our countries and peoples” on 1 June 2017. Tracing the century-long cultural affinity linking Russia and India, Mr. Anatoly Kargapolov, Charge d’ Affairs of the Russian Federation in India, mentioned the pride of place India has in the minds and hearts of the Russian people. He said, “You ask any person in any street of Moscow, he/she would readily respond saying that they love India, and the people of India are their best friends” (Russian Centre for Science and Culture in New Delhi, 2018).

On the occasion of 70th anniversary Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote in *Rossyskaya Gazeta* on 31 May 2017 that “India-Russia relations have been the one constant in a in a world that has changed dramatically since 1947. They have withstood the test of time and grown from strength to strength. ... Our relations of course go well beyond the last seventy years. They are steeped in history.”

(*Times of India* 31 May 2017). Similarly he said in December 2014, during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India: "Even a child in India, if asked to say who India's best friend is, will reply it is Russia because Russia has been with India in times of crisis" (Simha 2014).

The above mentioned diplomatic statements demonstrate that Russia India relations is rooted in culture and history. Russia and India continues the legacy of past warmth in bilateral relations in contemporary times after a temporary stagnation of Russia-India relations in the immediate years after the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991. The geopolitical realities emerged in post-cold war unipolar world order initiated by United States as the sole superpower forced both Russia and India to think in terms of building an alternative architecture of international relations. Russia and India hold common positions on various global and regional issues. Commonality of both country's interests is a remarkable factor in their bilateral relations.

The current global order shows varied crisis such as rift in the US-Russia-Europe relations over Ukraine conflict, global oil crisis, neoliberal economic crisis, Euro zone crisis, conflict in West Asia, NATO military build-up and expansion to Russia's border, escalation of terrorist attacks in Europe, emergence of BRICS countries, Russia's shifting priorities to Asia-Pacific, and commencement of Eurasian Economic Union, China's "One Belt One Road" initiative, emerge reactionary non-state forces like ISIS, rebirth of fascism and US support to neo-Nazi and fascist elements. These developments expose the failure of unipolar order, decline of US influence and emergence of a multipolar/polycentric world order. The current crisis in world politics and failure of western policies effecting containment of Russia and resurgence of Russia as global power caused shifting priorities to Asia-Pacific region.

The discontent of Russia and India with the US led unipolar world order and the American foreign policy goal of global domination that generated multiple crises and instability shaped both Russia's and India's strategic commitment to transform the global order into multipolar which will be more democratic, equitable, prosperous and peaceful; and based on UN charter and international law. The India-Russia relationship has global dimension based on the belief that their enhanced role in the international system will bring global strategic stability, modernization, prosperity and a democratic multipolar world order. Cultural diplomacy and legacy of earlier cultural cooperation since ancient times found to have contributed in rejuvenating Russia-India relations and deepening their contemporary strategic partnership to new horizons. Thus, cultural diplomacy in Russia-India relations is rooted in the history of cultural relations between the two countries since ancient times and Soviet Union's cold war legacy.

The history of Russia-India relations testifies that people of both countries had cultural links from antiquity. The history of cultural exchange between Russia and India could be traced back to 12th-13th century, when the first Russian account of India was written with title "The Relation about India" or "The Story of India the Rich." (Naik 1995; Usha 2016). Russians used to consider India as a land of plenty and splendour during medieval period. It was through literary sources and trade contacts information about India reached Russia. Several Russian merchants, travellers such as Afanasi Nikitin, Gerasimn Lebedev etc came and stayed in India. Several Indian traders were settled in Astrakhan in the Volga basin by the 17th century.

Gerashim Lebedev who learnt Sanskrit, Bengali, wrote and staged Bengali drama

in Calcutta, is described as the first Russian Indologist in the *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya* (Usha 2018). When the first session of the Indian National Congress met in Bombay in 1885, one Russian traveller named Pavlovich Minaev was present in the hall and described congress as striving for the “development of feeling of nationalism in India, for unification of India. He had close relation with several Indian nationalist such as R. G. Bhadarkar, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Surendranath Banerjea and others (Mohanty 2017).

Intellectual exchanges, books and literature constitute an arena that demonstrates deep civilization co-mingling. The intellectual exchanges between Mahatma Gandhi and author-sage Leo Tolstoy are legendary. Rabindranath Tagore's works are popular in Russia. Russian literary figures like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Pushkin are highly respected in India. Painters like Nicholas Roerich who stayed in India for many decades and his art shows true collaboration of Indian and Russian culture.

During Soviet times, especially after Stalin's regime, cultural diplomacy played an important role in enhancing friendship and cooperation between Soviet Russia and India. Soviet Union considered cultural diplomacy as a means to sustain its superpower status and project its socialist economy abroad. A range of activities like regular screening of films, broadcasting in Radio Moscow, publication of books and magazines, establishment of friendship societies, cultural performances, art exhibitions, festivals, academic cooperation and exchanges and so on were in place to project understanding on Soviet society and culture in the international arena. Similarly Indian Council of Cultural Relations promoted cultural products in Russia as reflected in its diplomacy practices during Soviet period to promote understanding of Indian culture and values in Russia. Indo-

Soviet Friendship Society played a significant role to disseminate the Soviet socialist civilizational values and the goals of peace in India and vice versa.

Cinema was already a powerful tool for influencing politics long before the Cold War. Lenin himself called the cinema “the most important of all arts,” especially in a country with low literacy rate, such as Soviet Russia in the beginning of the 1920s, or 1950s India (Liehm and Liehm 1977). Bollywood film industry brought the two nations closer through cinema. Raj Kapoor’s films even today are popular and widely accepted in Russia. There was Soviet-India coproduction of films. Khwaja Ahmad Abbas’s film *Dharti Ke Lal* was the first Indian film to be dubbed in Russian language in 1949. Russian director Roman Karmen made a colour documentary travelogue about India entitled *Morning of India* that depicted “the dawn of the Indian independence after the evil black night of colonialism” in 1957 after spending six months travelling around the country for material collection. The film portrayed various Indian landscapes, important moments of Indian history. Jawaharlal Nehru was praised in the film for his struggle for independence. The film also showed recent historical development of the country, i.e., the contradiction between colonial underdevelopment and industrious independent India. It stressed the socialist character of changes in India, the importance of Soviet aid, and similarities between Russian revolution and Indian independence: acquisition of land by peasants as in the Soviet Russia; industrialization projects such as the construction of the Bhilai steel plant; students studying foreign languages and so on. A Delhi university student read *Eugene Onegin* by Pushkin in Russian.

Ideological influences also had influenced and strengthened mutual cooperation between Russia and India. Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx themselves studied about India and commented upon the oriental culture and British imperialism in

India. Lenin's or Stalin's or Comintern's attempt to engage with Indian nationalists was derived from their interest in making a communist country as part of larger Soviet international socialist influence while Indian nationalist-communist hoped for support in establishing socialist state in India independent of British imperialism. The Second Comintern Congress of 1919 gave platform for Indian thinker M. N. Roy to share his ideas on course of communist revolution in colonies as a critic to Lenin's proposal and which was accepted by sixth congress in 1928. M N Roy spent several years in Moscow and formed communist party of India there itself. Several other Indian revolutionary nationalist leaders including Bhagat Singh and Jawaharlal Nehru were impressed by socialist model practiced in Soviet Russia.

Close relation with revolutionary Russia helped Indian nationalists to deconstruct hegemonic control of superior western culture that British had established over Indian culture treating as inferior. This process of deconstruction was necessary step towards healthy development of cultural diplomacy by Indian state and people with other countries at equal footing and mutual harmonious understanding. The very fact that Indian communists refused communist Russia's suggestion to work with Indian liberal nationalist in order to achieve independence prove that exchanges of ideas between Indian and Russian communist was mutual and collaborative in nature rather than of hegemonic or imposing.

Russian and Indian literature were published in both countries. For instance, a short story collection, *A Journey from the Volga to the Ganges* was published in 1943. The literary society *Parichay Sahitya Parishad* was formed to actively cooperate with Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) in popularizing Russian literature in India. The People's Friendship University in Moscow was

opened on 17 November 1960 for enhancing educational cooperation and academic exchanges. Russian language instruction in Indian universities and teaching of Indian languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, etc. Russian universities were established as part of cultural cooperation. Cultural exchanges and cooperation and activities of friendship societies continued until the demise of Soviet Union in 1991.

After the disintegration of USSR cultural collaboration increased between India and Russia after a temporary stagnation in initial post-Soviet years. Russia established Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) in New Delhi, India to promote cultural cooperation. India established Jawaharlal Nehru Culture Centre in Moscow in 1989 after the phenomenal success of the festival of India in USSR in 1988. Today, both countries enhance cultural cooperation through a variety of platforms and practices such as academic, professional, cultural and student exchange programmes, conferences and lectures on economic and social problems, literature, film industry, theatre art, art exhibitions and performances, as well as dance and music concerts. Both countries succeeded in establishing the mechanism of a constructive dialogue and creating a positive image of each other among people.

At present it is more revealing that governments of Russia and India promoted intensive cultural cooperation between both countries. As a result at present more than 4,500 Indian students are studying in medical and technical institutions in the Russian Federation. Memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between news agencies Press Trust of India (PTI) and Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) to enhance cooperation on exchange of news and the right to use news items. Both countries organise various kinds of programmes which facilitates cultural understanding and exchanges between them. Days of Russian

Culture were held in India in November 2003, in Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai. “Days of Indian Culture” in Russia were organised from September to October 2005 in Russia. India will organise Festival of India in Russia in 2015.

Thus, it is clear that culture has been an integral part of mutual understanding, cooperation and friendship in the Russia-India relations before and after the disintegration of Soviet Union. Culture and mutual cultural cooperation stand as prelude to the elevation of bilateral relations to level of “special and privileged strategic partnership” between Russia and India today. Cultural diplomacy could be seen Russia and India using as a foreign policy tool for after the end of cold war. Both countries initiated in the last one and a half decades programmes of cultural exchanges, education programmes, and media collaborations as part of cultural diplomacy. Russia and India both are recognising the importance of cultural diplomacy and giving its due place in their policies as an important way of understanding the society and culture of each other and indirectly as a tool for the formation of positive public opinion abroad. However, not many studies are available on cultural diplomacy between Russia and India. Against this backdrop, the study examines the role of cultural diplomacy in Russia-India relations within the broader theoretical framework of cultural diplomacy in international relations.

Cultural Diplomacy in International Relations: A Theoretical Framework

Today, it is widely recognized that culture play an important role in international relations. Cultural diplomacy assumes significance in contemporary foreign policy practices of nation states and cultural discourse. In the past nearly two decades scholarly interest on cultural diplomacy has been increased among specialists in international relations and culture studies and a growing body of literature has investigated the notion of cultural diplomacy and its various aspects

(Huntington 1993, 1996; Arndt 2001; Leonard 2002; Cummings 2003; Dewey and Wyszomirski 2004; Jonsson 2005; Melissen 2005; Noya 2006; Villanueva 2007; Lenczowski 2007; Nye 2008; Singh 2008; Paschalidis 2009; Cull 2009; Mark 2009; Nye and Smart 2009; González-Chiaramonte 2009; Gienow-Hecht 2010; Feigenbaum 2010; Hayden 2011; Laos 2011; Statler 2012; Goff 2013; David, Cross and Melissen 2013; Barghoorn 2013; Hill 2013; Clarke 2014; Ang, Isar and Mar 2015; Zamorano 2016; Umińska-Woroniczka 2016; Clark 2016; Isar 2017).

Samuel Huntington (1996) points out that end of cold war is the beginning of clash of civilizations as a major source of conflict in the post-cold war international relations. He, therefore, insists that the discipline of International Relations (IR) should pay more attention to culture and religious beliefs, values and interests of other civilizations, especially when the non-Western civilization has been rising (Huntington 1993: 49 cited in Jahn 2000: 1). As Kozymka (2014: 9) observes there is a “growing recognition of culture’s role in promoting human development, fostering intercommunity dialogue and understanding, building peace, broadening education, achieving environmental sustainability, and even combating HIV/AIDS.” Thus, in the post-cold war new world order cultural diplomacy is a renewed phenomenon put forth by nation-states as an important form of diplomacy. Today diplomats are increasingly engaged in diplomacy aiming to promote national culture abroad in a culturally diverse international system through UNESCO, the main international agency for cultural diplomacy practices.

Traditionally cultural diplomacy is understood as using culture as an important component of diplomacy for promoting one nation’s culture abroad for the purpose of strengthening international relations, enhancing cooperation and

promoting national interest. The concept that has been expanding and progressively evolving is challenged and facilitated now “by the growing global interconnectedness that fast-developing information and communication technologies ... and the resulting shift in cultural exchanges from the public to the private sphere” (Kozymka 2014: 9). To conceptualize cultural diplomacy it is necessary to understand the definition of culture first.

Culture is defined various ways by scholars. Sarita Dash (2003: 02) defines culture as a system which affects not only human psyche but every single aspect of human lives, institutions and even government policies. She also argued that economic benefits may not seem directly associated with the culture but these benefits come as by-product of culture. Nicolas Laos also defines culture and explain the importance of culture in human existence. The quest for the meaning of being is the essence of culture. In other words scholar Nicolas Laos defines the term ‘culture’ as a human community’s attempt to live meaningfully, i.e, as a community of people who are characterized by a consensus on the significance of certain things. Thus, culture endows people with criteria by which they can evaluate things and they can decide on how things ought to be. Hence, culture is intimately related to the articulation of moral and normative judgements (Nicolas 2011). Culture is derivative of individual experience, something learned or created by individuals themselves or passed on to them socially by contemporaries or ancestors (Kevin 1998).

According to Karan Singh, former President of Indian Council of Cultural Relations “Culture has no boundaries and using it as a way to interact with the masses has been the most effective way to win hearts in the era of globalization” (Sahai, Paramjit S. 2013). Culture in the context of cultural diplomacy looks at a broader spectrum rather than not limited to performing arts. A globally accepted

definition of culture is given by UNESCO which is a key player of cultural diplomacy at the international level. Culture is understood by UNESCO as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO 2009). UNESCO also affirms “cultural diversity as defining characteristic of humanity and ...is a mainspring for sustainable development for communities, peoples and nations” (UNESCO 2005).

Nations have traditionally been defined in terms of their common cultural identity, values, languages and customs. Even as technology and sciences are instrumental in forging greater interdependence among nations and spreading cultural habits and thought around the world, the rise of nationalism, fuelled mainly by cultural claims, is simultaneously fostering disintegration in some countries and exclusivity in others (Payne 1995). So the very concept of nation and nationalism is dependent on identity and there is arguably common interdependence among each culture. Payne also argues that even technology and science which are consequence of modernity are harbinger of culture.

Culture can be the glue that binds civil societies. It can provide for the common assumptions which undergird markets, laws and regulations. Conversely, cultural divisions can tear a society apart and make the same systems unworkable; at least partially. Thus, the configuration and evolution of culture is a legitimate concern of public policy, for it comprises both public and private goals. In liberal framework it might not be easy to see the benefits of collectivism but it strengthens even the sense of individualism by providing an identity. Culture influences individual's personality, their behaviours and their decision making capacity. Nations also influences people and get influenced by people in return.

Culture influences organisational and leadership behaviour in the process of formulating and implementing foreign policy. Hence, the cultural milieu has become a factor in which the nation-state and its foreign relations have been viewed. Foreign relations can not only be built up by a decision of policy-makers, but is also a product of the position of a nation-state in the international cultural milieu (Kumar 2002). So no nation-states can formulate their international policies without considering the fact the very context in which aspires to act. It is through diplomatic activities culture is being projected. Therefore, it is relevant to define diplomacy next as it bears definitional difficulty like culture.

The etymological meaning of “diplomacy” owes its origin from the Greek word “diplōma”. The literary meaning of the term “diplo” is “placed in two” and the suffix “ma” means “object”. Thus the meaning of the word diplomacy is a method of placing diplomatic objects in between. During antiquity in Rome they had a system of carving on copper plates which were used for the travelling purposes. In France the very word diplomat was used for the purpose of having state sponsored conversation. State-centric view of international relations, diplomacy is associated with the evolution of foreign policy. This kind of definition of diplomacy corresponds to Geoffrey R. Berridge’s definition according to which diplomacy is one of the important ways of developing foreign policy (Berridge 1995).

The concept of diplomacy in the public sphere is time and again used as a synonym to foreign policy (Berridge 1995). Another popular definition of diplomacy was given by Sir Harold George Nicolson, an English diplomat. According to him diplomacy is “the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by

ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist” (Nicolsan, 1954). All the definitions discussed above do not include all processes of diplomacy in modern times. A wider definition of diplomacy could be the process of communication between countries and international institutions through different state, non-states as well as international actors. The very meaning of diplomacy laden with cultural innuendo and therefore, culture always plays important role in any form of diplomacy, even in hard power diplomacy (Mark 2009). The term cultural diplomacy is as problematic and scholarly contested as the term “diplomacy” itself is. Fox argues that much of the difficulty in defining what cultural diplomacy lies in the terms “Diplomacy” and “Culture” and their semantic baggage’ (David, Michael. 2011).

In the discipline of International Relations (IR) there is a lack of scholarly attention to cultural diplomacy probably due to the lack of clarity about what precisely the practice of cultural diplomacy entails. There is a wide range of definitions of the term cultural diplomacy. Gienow-Hecht, Jessica C. E, and Mark C Donfried (2010) say that cultural diplomacy is popularly defined as ‘exchange of ideas, information, art, literature etc as important component of culture among different countries and their peoples in order to foster a more harmonious and peaceful mutual understanding. They further state that the “science” of cultural diplomacy describes the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions and beliefs in all aspects of our societies-such as arts, sports, science, literature and music-with the intention of fostering mutual understanding. They argue that “Cultural Diplomacy” is there in the very nature of international relations because the constituents of international world are nations and their existence is dependent on their culture and identity. Paramjit S. Sahai states that the core of cultural diplomacy is to promote understanding among people, who come from diverse backgrounds and carry different values,

through the medium of culture (Sahai 2013). Milton Cummings defines cultural diplomacy as “the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding” (Cummings, Milton. 2003).

Cultural diplomacy is not a new phenomenon when look at a historical perspective. The origin of cultural diplomacy could be traced back to 1870s. Paschalidis (2009) classifies development of cultural diplomacy into four historical phases: 1. Cultural nationalism (1870s-1914); 2. Cultural propaganda (1914-1945); 3. Cultural diplomacy (1945-1989) and 4. Cultural capitalism (1989-till date). Nation-states using culture to project country’s image was common among countries in advancing foreign policy objectives in a peaceful manner at least since nineteenth century. The advent of cultural diplomacy during the First World War, the emergence of nationalities and spreading of language and culture started happening during that period Paschalidis (2009). In the second phase the institutionalisation for the promotion and establishment of cultural diplomacy started. The political utility of culture has been identified in the post-First World War period and nations began to exploit the utility of culture for the first time showed a new commitment to design cultural policies, diplomatic activity national projection and international institution building (Ibid: 280).

In the post-War period cultural diplomacy has been recognised as diplomatic activity by superpowers, US and USSR and they established cultural institutions and appointed diplomats for this purpose. Cultural diplomacy during this period remained predominantly as the prerogative of great powers. The disintegration of Soviet Union and end of cold war led to changes in the cultural arena in many regions of the world. Culture became more complex, phenomenon linguistic

antagonism, relooking history by nations, etc is happening. Given the cultural diversity in the international system countries make different cultural policies, cultural institutes and diplomatic activity. By using culture some countries project “soft power” image, some are engaged in linguistic expansion, some others are for projecting political, economic and regional interests through projection of culture. According to Paschalidis (2009: 285),

Starting from the mid-1980s, there is a growing concern about national cultural projection and the world market-shares of the national cultural industries. Picking up noticeably in the 1980s, the growth of cultural trade was staggering during the 1990s. ... In the era of cultural capitalism, where all kinds of cultural resources, productions and experiences are commercialised, the Cultural Institutes that started their existence as cultural outposts begin to look more and more like cultural trading-posts (Rifkin 2000).

Using culture for diverse foreign policy purposes, therefore, is a dynamic and continuous activity in contemporary international relations. States are promoting cultural industries (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005) and cultural policies. The inherent contestation of soft could be addressed through cultural diplomacy because of the difference of philosophical discourse associated with it (Zamorano. 2016).

Cultural diplomacy could be approached in an interdisciplinary perspective integrating theoretical approaches from a range of disciplines such as International Relations, Culture Studies, diplomacy, legal studies, post-structuralism and approaches like realism/neorealism, liberalism/neoliberalism, constructivism and post-structuralism. The discourses in the international arena for a very long time were not even considering cultural diplomacy though it was implicit in the bilateral relations of the nations. The academic discourses in schools of thought like post-colonialism, post-structuralism, post-Marxism etc. have been grappled with Marxist or non-Marxist ideological orientation. But

ironically both group of scholars followed the positivist and structuralism, where they were looking international relations linking to economic structure.

In the discipline of international relations those who follow idea of 'Realism in international relation' dominated the field till late twentieth century. Some of the theories related to the field of international relations have and their understanding does not include culture. For instance, classical realism is overburdened by the concept of power and argues that all states strive for enhancing their power and reducing power of their counterparts. Neo classical realism did nothing to improve and change the basic premises of classical realism; it just changes the blame from states to international system. It states that the international system is anarchic and their struggle for power, it justifies the power relations among nation states. Realist school considers culture as a source of conflict rather as a source of cooperation. Samuel Huntington's (1997) clash of civilization thesis is an example.

Liberalism argues that states do not seek conflict and therefore they do not act to gain power. They basically want more peaceful and stable relations and therefore they create atmosphere of such kind by introducing international law and peace treaties. Liberalism does not provide methods and tools to achieve that situation where peaceful coexistence is possible. Liberalism became prominent in the post war era and before that realism dominated the international scene (John, Beate. 2013). The practise of liberalism gave space to the cultural relations because it free flows of information and economy. Cognitive theories do talk about shared values but restrict themselves to the level of psychological perception. Constructive theories talks about culture. It also takes into consideration the identity of a state and they try to form relationship on the basis of identity which certainly includes culture. It gives primacy to the individual's experience and

therefore takes into consideration cultural norms and valued in diplomacy. “A core notion of constructivism is that individuals live in the world of their own personal and subjective experiences” (Karagiorgi, Yiasemina and Loizos Symeo. 2005). Constructivist theory in international relation goes beyond the neo-liberal and neo-realist theory of international relation, which believes that the international relations are shaped by ideas, values and culture. Role of culture in foreign policy is constantly evolving phenomenon.

Cultural diplomacy is used as paradigms synonymous to “new diplomacy”, “international cultural relations”, “soft power” and so on. The “new public diplomacy” (Melissen 2005; Cull 2009; Crossand Melissen 2013; Hayden 2011) is a major paradigm shift in international political communication, about which there has been strong consensus. According to academics and observers in the business of government communication, globalisation and a new media landscape have challenged traditional foreign ministry ‘gatekeeper’ structures, and foreign ministers can no longer lay claim to being sole or dominant actors in communicating foreign policy. Borders for information flows are more porous, and more actors involved in international affairs and international politics.

The new technology is making us to think beyond traditional diplomacy (Pamment 2013). Mariano Martín Zamorano (2016) argues that geopolitical transformations, shift in power relations, attraction to financial and technological globalization, post-Fordism economic changes Therefore, governments view cultural diplomacy as part of their international cultural relations. It is generally carried out by a government through its foreign ministry allied institutions and instruments. The purpose of cultural diplomacy is to support foreign policy goals or diplomacy by using a variety of cultural manifestations (Mark 2008: 3). It also aims at projecting certain image and idea of nation in the foreign diplomatic

spaces, and among peoples and societies. It is also like branding nation and projection of cultural image for propaganda purposes.

Cultural Diplomacy as Soft Power

Cultural diplomacy is also understood in terms of part of public diplomacy and major source of soft power as the term coined by Joseph Nye in early 1990s. After the failure of the hard power diplomacy which was dominating the scene in International affairs until the cold war, when a new form emerged called Public diplomacy which was being practised at that point of time to garner support for the delicate balance of nuclear weapons and the ideological battle for the hearts and minds of people around the world. The changes in public diplomacy paradigm after September 11 terrorist attacks on US and credited media and technological revolution like internet, CNN International, BBC World, Sky News, and Al-Jazeera, to adding new dimensions in public diplomacy to the level of sharing and influencing, in which culture/soft power turns as an important tool (Gilboa, Eytan 2008).

Soft power and creative economy has been recently taken into consideration in International Relations especially during the post-cold war period. It has been viewed that International Relations cannot be limited to power as conceived only by realistic approach or what others calls hard power diplomacy, but it has moved beyond the social, political and economic dimensions. Contemporary scholars use cultural diplomacy synonymously with concepts like ‘soft power diplomacy’, and ‘public diplomacy’, etc. Soft power arises from the attractiveness of a nation’s values, culture, and policies. Soft power is primarily dependent upon the nation’s values and culture, therefore, the identity, which form after including all these aspects. If these issues which have been neglected so far is included and recognised as an independent form of diplomacy it can

give results more than what nations states are expecting in the changed circumstances at the world level (Nye 1990; 2004).

But cultural diplomacy cannot be equated with “soft power” diplomacy’ (Sahai 2003) because the primary focus of soft power ‘diplomacy’ is use of power to influence and dominate others through means other than military. In the case of cultural diplomacy, it is about ‘dialogue’ and that also on equal footing. Some aspects of soft power such as power, hegemony, dominance etc are not supposed to be entertained under cultural diplomacy because it works through dialogue with dissent in order to promote mutual understanding and harmony. Cultural diplomacy, unlike soft power, aimed not to reduce diversity, tolerance, dissent etc but instead opposite.

Cultural Diplomacy, National Interest and Beyond

Cultural diplomacy is extremely significance as far as national interest is concerned. It does help nation-states to create favourable environment for dialogues which can prove to be significant in the times of conflict. Cultural diplomacy successfully create positive image of a country abroad which in turn helps them to improve their business and trade. National interest cannot be ensured just by providing security to a country rather these days it encompasses many other areas including rights and interest of people in which cultural diplomacy plays an important role (Aung, Isar and Mar 2015).

Cultural Diplomacy and Security and Foreign Policy

Cultural diplomacy ensures security of nation-states because the very intent and objective of cultural diplomacy is to develop cross cultural influence in a positive way. The cross-cultural influence enhances understanding among the masses not only about other cultures but also about people which reduces the chances of

conflict. It is highly important in conflict resolution. It is evident from the foreign policies of Russia and India not to mention American foreign policy culture is being treated as an important element.

Culture as a strong tool in foreign policy gained importance during the cold war period. American cultural policy towards the Soviet Union and vice versa is a quintessential example of the usage of culture as a strong tool for pushing national interest forward. The utility of culture can, therefore, be gauged by understanding its role in the cold war period, as it has a power to change the course of war to a great extent if not totally. After the cold war the intention of the nation-states changed a bit toward the usage of culture and instead of maligning other nation-states through cultural means, it has been used to develop peaceful relations among nation-states. Since then the utility and importance of cultural diplomacy is reflected in the policies of countries in international relations. Since the beginning of information age where people to people contact is becoming easy and therefore cultural diplomacy becomes extremely important (Prevots, Naima. 2001).

Cultural Diplomacy Practices in the Era of Globalization

Cultural Diplomacy has been practised in international affairs in some form or the other from the very beginning, however, after post-cold war a new world order emerged, which gives culture a special treatment and cultural diplomacy is now practised by every single country in some form or the other. During the cold war era, the use of cultural diplomacy is very much evident and then after not only systematic and institutionalisation process but the cultural diplomacy has been included as an important element in the foreign policies. In the post-cold war world order and globalization era it is quite clear to note that culture has

assumed new status as a subject for government policies and diplomacy practices.

Cultural Policies and Diplomacy Practices of Russia and India

Culture has been taken as integral part of domestic and foreign policies in both Soviet Russia and India. Soviet Union had to disseminate the country's peaceful socialist culture and attract the diplomacy as in the case of Russia-India relations is becoming important in international relations for various reasons and it is extremely helpful in understanding peaceful resolution of conflicts, regional cooperation, and mutual trust, political and economic matters. The basic aim of cultural diplomacy is projecting the cultural identity of state abroad for promoting mutual understanding and gaining political and economic achievements. Since the days of Soviet Union, cultural diplomacy has played an important role in promoting friendship and cooperation between Russia and India. "India invested considerable resources in high-level dialogues, intellectual and cultural exchanges, and conferences of concerned parties, seeking to influence peoples as well as governments by using open diplomacy and moral suasion" (Hall 2012: 1089). Ian hall has said that India is moving forward and has been employing lot of methods in order to engage with the other countries to pursue its diplomatic relations.

The legacy of the relationship between the Soviet Union and India carried forward both the countries in the post-cold war era, despite structural change in the domestic and foreign policies. Cultural relations existed before which contributed in trust building between both the countries saved them from the reverberations of the changes in world scenario. In the post-cold world scenario international relations are greatly affected by it. There are many institutions established to promote cultural diplomacy between the two countries. Institutions

like Russian centre for Science and Culture (RCSC) functional in four parts of the country, establishment of Indian language centres in different Russian universities, full- fledged centre as Centre for Russian studies and Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies in Indian universities, mutual cultural festivals organised in both the countries, various media collaboration have contributed greatly in developing special privileged strategic partnership.

Focus of Study

The study focuses on the following aspects of cultural diplomacy in international relations in general and Russia-India relations in particular.

- Cultural diplomacy in international relations in era of globalization and the role of culture in developing mutual understanding, and strengthening political, commercial and economic ties
- The way cultural diplomacy operates in Russian and Indian national contexts
- Cultural diplomacy as an interest-driven governmental practice
- The role of non-state actors in cultural diplomacy practices
- The significance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening bilateral relation between Russia and India
- The cultural diplomacy policies of Russia and India
- The outcome/impact of cultural diplomacy between Russia and India

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions

1. What is the significance of cultural diplomacy in international relations in post-cold war era of globalization?
2. What is the role of culture as a tool for strengthening bilateral relation between Russia and India?

3. What are the institutional mechanisms for promoting cultural diplomacy between Russia and India, in both countries?
4. How far cultural diplomacy enables Russia and India to promote political, economic and commercial relations?

Hypotheses

The study is based on two hypotheses as given below.

- Cultural diplomacy plays an important role in strengthening bilateral relations between nation-states, advancing foreign policy objectives, and fostering mutual understanding through cultural exchange of ideas, information, knowledge, art, literature, philosophy, music and film.
- Cultural diplomacy played an important role to elevate Russia-India relations to special and privileged strategic partnership and helped promoting mutual awareness through people to people contacts, interactions and cultural cooperation and exchange programmes.

Research Methodology

The study is historical, descriptive and analytical in nature. The study employs various theoretical insights on cultural diplomacy and its application in international relations. For the purpose of analysis a broader theoretical framework using perspectives from international relations, culture studies, diplomacy and legal studies, etc. Culture is in the centre of various diplomacies including public and soft power diplomacy has been attempted to study and differentiate. It has also studies various isms which use culture as an important tool of diplomacy whether it is realism, liberalism or constructivism. In realist paradigm soft power is the most important diplomacy which uses culture therefore the study and comparison with cultural diplomacy is included. It has studied the neoliberal perspective of soft power by Joseph Nye in for analysis.

The study has attempted to figure out the tools of cultural diplomacy and studied the relation between Russia and India through the application of cultural tools. The tools employed by different nation-states in the practice of cultural diplomacy are various but the most important ones have been studied which includes educational exchange programmes, festivals, movies, dance, language and literature and so on to analyse the effect of cultural diplomacy. The study has included people to people contacts before and after disintegration of Soviet Union and also the works and efforts of institutions, government agencies. It has attempted to study different programmes and policies taken by governments of both the countries to facilitate cultural diplomacy.

The study uses the contributions of authors like Milton Cummings, Joseph Nye, Paramjit Sahai, R.G. Gidadhubli, A. Appadorai, Anita Inder Singh, Mrutyunjay Panda, Ivo J. Lederer, Michael Mandelbaum, etc to analyse the various aspects of cultural diplomacy in international relations. It uses parameters such as educational exchange programmes, festivals, movies, dance, language and literature and so on to analyse the effect of cultural diplomacy. Historical and systemic backgrounds are also looked into in understanding cultural diplomacy approaches and power relations. It has taken historical trends, incidents, policies in a descriptive manner and analysed them in the light of the research questions.

History of Russia-India cultural relations, analysis of cold war and the usage of cultural diplomacy and post war developments are a few aspects that have been analysed in the study. Since culture and culture diplomacy has been defined and redefined in different periods the study has attempted to analyse the historical incidents involved from the perspective of the cultural diplomacy practiced by nation-states. The study has also attempted to analyse and capture the trends of

cultural diplomacy in the foreign policies especially in Russia and India. The methodology applied also look out for critical points in the historical trend of cultural diplomacy. The narrative of culture created and its relation with the political formulation and framework is essential and therefore the methodology of analyses also captures the reality behind the use of culture in cultural diplomacy.

The study uses both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include government policy documents, newspaper reports, speeches, interviews etc. Secondary sources include books, journals, articles and internet sources. The study mostly uses data available in English, Russian and Indian language sources, and English translations from Russian language. Discourse analysis is employed in the study for analysing sources such as interviews and speeches of policy makers, diplomats, and personalities in the field of culture and personal interviews students of the both the countries. The study has also analysed narratives of individuals such as stories, travelogues to capture the culture of each other countries. It has also studied meetings and speeches of government representative especially some important occasions like cultural festivals and special privileged strategic partnership.

Structure of the Study

The study is organized into six chapters. The first chapter formulates a theoretical framework on cultural diplomacy and introduces the theoretical underpinnings and philosophy in the historicity of the practise of culture diplomacy in general and between India and Russia in particular. This chapter tries to understand different perspectives on cultural diplomacy, its historical application and its usage and utility in different times and the reflection of cultural diplomacy in cultural polices.

The second chapter captures the historical exchange of culture between Russia and India prior to the upheavals of the decade of 1990s or the disintegration of the Soviet Union which has international ramifications. This chapter has attempted to capture in the chapter after introduction. This chapter has included the historical contacts people to people and the cross cultural influences on both the countries. It has also attempted to capture the two major incidents, social revolution in the Soviet Union and Indian independence and the cross cultural influences as a result of these incidents. The chapter analyses historically the role of culture in developing Russia-India relations. It has included all the ups and downs in the relations of the two countries and the significance of culture in the relations with the changing of time and circumstances

The third chapter endeavoured to analyse the policy of the governments of both the countries as far as cultural diplomacy is concerned. It is an attempt to capture the process of restructuring of system in Russia and India during the time of disintegration. Since culture is the basis of identity of a nation-state especially after the end of cold war, therefore this chapter has included the process of the formation identity and role of culture in it. This chapter investigates the change in the policies of both the countries as far as cultural diplomacy is concerned in Post-Cold War period in the context of changed world. The chapter also attempts to analyse the cross cultural influences as a result of cultural diplomacy practices and policies.

The fourth chapter analyses the major areas of cultural cooperation between Russia and India like education, media, art, literature, performance art, religion, etc in the post-Soviet period. This chapter tried to capture the role of cultural diplomacy and cultural cooperation in the post war era between Russia and India.

The chapter also attempts to understand the role of government in the functionality of Cultural diplomacy practiced through different tools.

Chapter five delve into the details of the cultural diplomacy between Russia, India and the role of cultural diplomacy in shaping Russia-India relations as privileged and special strategic partnership. Russia and India have shared great history of cultural exchange and cross cultural influences which is very much visible in the mutual trust they have shown to each other in political and economic matters. This chapter studies those political problems and incidents which are the result of trusted partnership as a consequence of cultural diplomacy practiced in different forms.

The final chapter is the findings and conclusions of the study. It also states that if the hypotheses have been tested proved valid or not. It is an attempt to present a summary of the whole study that answers the research questions.

Chapter 2

Role of Culture in Russia-India Relations: Historical Setting

History of bilateral relations between Russia and India is an epitome of cultural interactions in international arena and serves as an example of cultural diplomacy in international relations. World affairs which moreover are determined by the national interest of the actor states and present the picture of temporary symbiotic relationships. Imbalance in favour of the more powerful nation-states is the characteristics of the temporary symbiotic relations in terms of exchange of hard power. But Russia and India share a different history of equality, mutual trust and respect as the basis of their relations that are enriched by cross cultural relations and influences for many centuries. Both have the tradition of being anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial in their culture and ideas. Their early cultural interactions could be traced back to movements of traders and travellers at least since 12th-13th century as recorded. Mutual cultural and ideological influences could be seen in the revolutionary and Soviet period until 1947 and beyond as well. Soviet Russia supported Indian independence and India had drawn ideas and inspiration from Soviet Russia in her fight against British colonial empire. When India became independent in the post-WWII period and faced common global problems cultural diplomacy practices between both countries developed for more cooperation in many areas. Therefore, it is pertinent to have the history of cultural relations between Russia and India a better understanding of cultural diplomacy in both country's bilateral relations.

Ancient Cultural Interactions between Russia and India

History of Russia, India relations has numerous stages and references to claim old historical and deep cultural relation between two countries which has been

expressed many a times through speeches and addresses at variety of platform meant and shared by the concerned countries. The domestic and international geopolitical contexts are factors that shaped Russia-India cultural contacts since medieval period. Although the two countries had contacts due the geopolitical rivalry between Russia and British Empire, knowledge of Russia to Indians were not encouraged by the colonial government in India. There were cultural and trade contacts between Russia and India since antiquity.

The historical evidences for the cultural exchange between Russia and India could be back to 12th-13th century when the first Russian account of India was written with title “The Relation about India” or “The Story of India the Rich” (Nailk 1995: 1). Historically Russians consider India as land of plenty and splendour during medieval period. Several Russian merchants and travellers such as Afanasi Nikitin, Gerasim Lebedev and others came and stayed in India since medieval period is well documented.

Afanasi Nikitin

Russian merchant traveller Afanasi (Athanasius) Nikitin’s writings on India is considered as a testimonial depicting Russia-India friendship in the ancient times. Afanasi Nikitin visited India during 1466-1472. Scholarly literature documents Afanasi Nikitin as the first European to travel India through sea routes after French traveller Niccolò de' Conti even before Vasco da Gama. Nikitin’s travel record became an important source that explains early cultural interactions and friendship between Russia and India. His notes on India was published in 1960 in *Soviet Geografiz*, the State Publisher of Geographical Literature, in its special edition devoted to the *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasiia Nikitina 1466-1472* (Afanasi Nikitin's Voyage Beyond Three Seas, 1466-1472) (Knezevic 1994: 484). Gail Lenhoff, an American scholar says about Niitin’s writing that “One of the more

curious documents in the archives of Medieval Rus' is Afanasii Nikitin's tale of his journey to India (1466-1472)" (ibid). Nikitin was a Russian merchant from Tver, a town located on the Volga river around 170 kilometers away from northeast of Moscow. Early in 1466, Nikitin left his hometown for commercial purposes. After a long journey through land and Sea crossing many places such as Volga, Caspian Sea, Derbent, Crimea, Baku, Persia, Hormuz etc finally he reached India by Arabian Sea (Ibid).

His fate is recorded in the L'vov Chronicle:

In the year 1475 ... I received the writings of Afanasij, a merchant from Tver, who stayed in India for four years ... I could find no entry indicating the year of his departure for India or the year of his arrival from India, but it is said that he died before he could reach Smolensk. The account was written in his own hand and these *tetrati* were brought by merchants to Vasilij Mamyrev, secretary to the grand prince of Muscovy (quoted in Lenhoff and Martin 1989" 321).

Nikitin stayed in India for three long years. In the spring of 1469, Nikitin undertook a six week voyage on a frail ship across the Arabian Sea and first saw the Indian mainland in Gujarat, where he purchased indigo. He continued his journey by sea from Cambay before arriving in Chaul, a village that is in Maharashtra's Raigad district. (Kamalakaran, Ajay 2016). He stayed in India for 2-3 years. He visited many places in India including Calicut in South India which was one of the main ancient trade centres in the Indian Ocean region. Walther Kirchner claims that Nikitin describes as the distances between various cities, up to Calicut, Ceylon, and even China. Of Calicut he recounts that it was the center of all trade over the Indian Sea, and everything was He returned to his hometown with lot of feeling of warmth and enlightening information about India for Russians. On his way he died at Smolensk before reaching Tver, his hometown (Kirchner 1946: 52).

Nikitin documented his visit to India. His travelogue was published with title *Voyage Beyond Three Seas or Journey Beyond Three Seas*, (Kamalakaran, Ajay 2016). While he was neither a philosopher nor scholar, Nikitin's writings display a clear sense of observation. He analysed what he saw and made comparisons with Russia. Nikitin writes, "And this is where the land of India lies, and where everyone goes naked; the women go bareheaded and with breasts uncovered, their hair plaited into one braid," he wrote after arriving in Chaul (Dash, P.L. 2002). Nikitin also wrote about how the locals were fascinated with seeing a man of European appearance.

He wrote about how the ruling class in the sultanate had excess luxuries while the people remained poor. (Kamalakaran, Ajay 2016). His writings give a rare account of India at a time when the only existing chronicles were written by sycophants looking to impress their Muslim rulers (Maxwell, Jane Mary. 2006). Nikitin wrote "They (Hindu) did not hide from me when eating, trading, praying, or doing something else; nor did they conceal their wives" (Tillett, Lowell R 1966). Nikitin even went on a pilgrimage with Hindus to Parvat, a group of temples on the right bank of the Krishna River, 173 kilometres southeast of Hyderabad. (Kamalakaran, Ajay 2016). His diary published in 1960 contains text as Niitin wrote about Indian people and their religion. He wrote:

I . . . agreed with some Indians to go to Parvat . . . where their chief *butkhanah* [idol-house] stands. It took us a month to reach the butkhanah. The market by the *butkhanah* lasts for five days. And the butkhdnah is very large-half the size of Tver-and is built of stone in which the deeds of But are carved; in all there are twelve tiers of carvings that show But working wonders, or appearing before Indians in many shapes: first, in the shape of a man; second, of a man with an elephant's trunk; third, of an ape-like man; fourth, of a man having the form of a ferocious beast. He has always appeared before them with a tail, and his tail, which is carved is stone, is seven feet long. People from all over the land of India come together at the butkhdnah to see BuVs miracles. Near the butkhdnah, old wives and young maidens shave all their hair; beards and heads are shaved too.

Thereupon they go to the *butkhdnah*, each has to pay a fee of two *sheshkanis* [small silver coins] for the benefit of But, and horses are charged four fanams each. The number of those who gather at the *butkhdnah* is 20,000, and sometimes even 100,000. In the *butkhdnah*, Bid is carved in stone, and is very big indeed; his tail is slung over his shoulder . . . and he wears no clothing, save that his buttocks are wrapped in a cloth; his face is that of an ape. And the other butts are stark naked, they wear nothing, and their buttocks are uncovered; and But's wives are carved naked, in all their shame, and with children. And before But stands a huge ox carved in black stone and gilt all over. They kiss the ox on the hoof.... The Indians call the ox "father" and the cow, "mother".... (pp. 113-114) (quoted in Knezevic 1994: 486-487).

Niitin's travel diary remained unknown till it was discovered by the 19th century prominent Russian historian N. M. Karamzin. It was published in Russian in 1853. Thereafter English translations appeared in the 19th century. Karamzin gave him a hero's status when he stated:

Indians heard of Russia long before they heard of Portugal, Holland and England. At a time when Vasco da Gama was only thinking of the possibility of finding a route to India via Africa, our man from Tver' had already traded along the Malabar coast and discussed matters of faith and dogma with the inhabitants of the land (quoted in Vasudevan 2003: 80).

During Soviet period Nikitin's diary had been translated in various languages. His accounts had even been subject matter of a novel *The Visitor from Tver* by V. S. Pribytkov characterizing Nikitin as a hero of positive socialist realism. One Soviet Russian scholar wrote about his account:

Vast distances and the highest mountain ranges in the world separate the Soviet Union from India. But from old the peoples of the two great countries have lived in friendship, showing a keen interest in each other. More than once over the centuries Russian travellers, scientists, writers and artists have visited the far away southern country washed by the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. And we find many a heartfelt comment, full of sympathy for India and her people, in their diaries and recollections (quoted in Tillet 1966: 163).

According to Dmitry Shlapentokh Nikitin's approach to India and Western approach to Russia were similar in those days. He says:

It is clear from the narrative that Nikitin had often been much closer to the Indians and understood, or at least tried to understand, their culture, more than Europeans who often approached India in the same way they approached Russians. Europeans saw both Indians and Russians as alienated foreign bodies. They might be exotic and some aspects of native behavior appealing; but still the natives, similar to the representatives of the lower classes in European countries, were at best "children" whose socialization with "adults" (elite) should be limited and who would always need the supervision of the elite. Nikitin's approach to India was quite different, or, at least in the narrative one could find the understanding and appreciation of India that hardly could be found in the early modern European approach to India and Russia. As a matter of fact, both Russia and India were seen as belonging to the same realm as the lowest class of Europe - uncivilized and often brutal (Shlapentokh 2012: 179).

Nikin had both positive and negative images of India. He had negative image on Islam (Ibid). However it is also important to note that some western scholars claimed that actually did embrace Islam during his time in India, but such claims are disputed by many Russian historians (Shlapenlokh, Dmitry. 2012). However there cannot be a dispute that Nikitin adopted the Muslim name of Khoja Yusuf Khorasani in India. From his writings it is clear that Nikitin fasted with Muslims during the month of Ramzan. At the same time he also felt a bit guilty that he diverged from his Christian faith. Nikitin interacted with Hindus in Bidar and noticed that there were similarities between the Hindu community and Russian Orthodox Christians (Morris A. S. 1967). For example he noticed that both Hindu and Russian communities prayed while facing the East.

A statue of Afanasy Nikitin, which was unveiled by KPS Menon, Indian diplomat during Soviet period in the Russian city of Tver, and in the Indian village Chaul near Mumbai, where he reached in 1471, is probably the common thing that both Russia and India shares as a mark of the old Russia-India friendship. After Nikitin

another important Russian personality who contributed greatly to study India was Gerasim Lebedev.

Gerasim Stephanovich Lebedev (1749-1817)

Gerasim Stephanovich Lebedev visited India who learnt Indian languages such as Sanskrit, and Bengali, wrote and staged Bengali drama in Calcutta. He is described as a first Russian Indologist in the *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya* (Great Soviet Encyclopaedia 1926). He was born into serfdom on the Razumovsky estate in a family of clergyman in Yaroslavl in 1749. Though he could not receive proper education because of insufficient means of the family but he was a trained musician. He used to give training in music for the serfs as part of his duties. He organized his own serf orchestra and conducted private weekly concerts at Razumovsky's home. Since Count Razumovsky was a great patron of arts he inspired interest in Russian national music by promoting Lebedev's orchestral transcriptions of Russian popular songs composed for his serf orchestra (Swartz 2014: 7). He was also a composer and provided incidental music for stage shows. He was well known to the great musicians of his time like Mozart and Beethoven.

He left Russia for as a part of an envoy but travelling to other parts of the world he reached to India. On his way to Russian Embassy in Vienna, Lebedev disappeared. He was a member of group of musicians led by Ambassador designate Count Razumovsky. After disappearing from the group he travelled in many in Europe and found his means of living by playing violin. There he got a chance to join an English military band that was being sent to India in 1785. He immediately fell in love with the country. The ship arrived in Madras. He lived in Madras for a couple of years and then reached in Bengal (Sahni 2010; Kamalakaran 2016).

He stayed in Bengal for almost ten years. He learned Bengali, Sanskrit and Hindi during his stay in India. Bengali theatre owes him a great deal as he is known as the founder of the Bengali theatre. He then established European style Bengali theatre which later on became an important attraction in Bengal. R. K. DasGupta states,

On 27 November 1795 a theatre house in Calcutta presented its first play which was largely a Bengali translation of an English comedy called *The Disguise* by Richard Paul Jodrell (1745-1831). The advertisement of this performance published in the Calcutta Gazette on 5 November mentioned the house as 'Mr Lebedeff's New Theatre in the Doomtullah decorated in the Bengali style.' It added that the characters were 'to be supported by Performers of both sexes', that the performance would commence 'with vocal and instrumental music called the Indian Serenade' and that 'to these musical instruments which are held in esteem by the Bengallees, will be added European. The words of the much admired Poet Shree Bharot Chondra Ray, are set to music' (DasGupta 1963: 38).

He has also written a Bengali-Russian dictionary and a book on Arithmetic in Bengali. On his return to Russia, he has written a book called *Grammar of the Pure and mixed East Indian Dialect* which is about the Indian languages. He established a printing house in St. Petersburg where he died on 15 July 1817 equipped with Bengali and Devnagri scripts. An inscription in verse on his tomb in that city says:

'He was the first of the sons of Russia who went to India and having studied the habits of the Indian people, he brought their language to Russia. Although he was not highly educated he succeeded in fulfilling this important task and in publishing the knowledge he obtained from Indian philosophy' (quoted in DasGupta 1963: 50).

While the Russian tribute to him their first Indologists, for a Bengali he was the founder of the Bengali Theatre.

Indian Merchants in 18th Century Russia

After Nikitin it took two centuries to establish direct contact between Russian and Indian merchants. Although there were several attempts by Russian traders to

establish direct diplomatic contacts and trade relations with India in the 17th century it was only in last years of the century they have succeeded in that. Their earlier attempts were failed due to the regular harassment of Russian caravans by Qazaq and Turkmen nomads. Long distance and difficult terrain between Russia and India, Iran reluctance to permit Russian caravan through Iran to India etc were some of the failures. Levi says,

In 1676-77 a Russian embassy under the leadership of Muhammad Yusuf Kasimov, a Kazan Tatar, finally arrived successfully in Kabul, the gateway to the Mughal Empire. Kasimov was, however, unable to effectively negotiate a diplomatic relationship with Aurangzeb (1658-1707) and the embassy was turned away from the empire, probably because it was equipped with gifts for the Mughal emperor valued at a relatively trivial 800 rubles (Levi 1999: 533-534).

In 1696 Russian merchant Semyon Malenkiy came to India with a letter from the then Russian Emperor, Peter the Great to the then Badshah of India, the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. The content of the letter was a request to allow him to sell Russian goods in India, as well as purchase local products from India. He was allowed to conduct free trade from India. He stayed in India for six years (Rubchenko 2016).

Several Indian traders were settled in Astrakhan in the Volga basin by the 17th century. The first Indian merchant who travelled to Russia was Anbu Ram, who sought permission from the Emperor of Russia to allow Indians transit trade with China and west European countries via Russia. Permission was granted, and soon Indian merchants became frequent guests in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Russia's largest Makaryevskaya fair in Nizhny Novgorod, and even in Arkhangelsk (Murray 1868). Soon, a whole colony of Indian merchants, with more than two hundred people, was formed in Astrakhan city in Russia. Senate Regulations of 1720 ordered the Astrakhan Governor, Alexey Volyn, to provide the Eastern merchants, settled in Astrakhan, all the necessary assistance in their trade

businesses, and to protect their property. The Regulation mentions “to show kindness and goodwill ... and take care that no one would offend them.” A delegation of Indian merchants, led again by Anbu-Ram, in October 1722 visited Peter the Great, who was then staying in Astrakhan. Indian delegation received an edict from the Russian emperor which granted Indian merchants in Astrakhan the right to resolve property rights disputes “by the Indians among themselves, according to their custom and law”. This decree became the general legislative norm and, as such, was in use until the late 19th century (Mitchell. 1868).

The Indian merchants staying in Russia grant great importance to the religious freedom that they enjoyed in Russian cities. By 18th century the in Indian Gostiny Dvor in Astrakhan reserved three rooms for the construction of a Hindu temple in the city. Rich Indians even travelled with personal clergy members to Moscow and St. Petersburg. Dutch explorer Johann Gottlieb Georgi wrote a book in 1777 called, “Description of all people living in the Russian state and their everyday rites, customs, clothing, housing, faiths and other memorability” which described, in detail, the life of Indian merchants at the time in Astrakhan. Georgi writes “Indian merchants, from the time that Peter the Great granted them privileges, have always lived in Astrakhan and a few families even live in Kizlyar on the Terek River. They moved there from various western parts of India and have a community that numbers about 400 people” (Georgi. 1917).

An English traveller, John Bell, in his book “Journey from St. Petersburg to the Front Part of Asia,” published in 1716, noted, “Astrakhan is carrying out great trade with Persia, Khiva, Bukhara and India. The merchants of these nations have a common yard here, where they live and sell their goods. In Astrakhan, there are some Indian or Banyan people, who colour their foreheads with saffron juice or

some other plant. They are very good people, simple and humane and almost exclusively eat fruit.” (Ibid)

According to a Russian census report the number of Indian merchants in Astrakhan reached a total number of 209 by 1725. However, the number decreased to 51 in 1747. The reason is cited is due to their migration in other cities. The Indian merchant diaspora communities engaged in a commerce along the trade routes connecting India and Russia through Central Asia in the eighteenth-century. The Indian merchant community in Astrakhan had flourished in the seventeenth century and by 1684 a small community of Indians migrated to Moscow. However, as Russia expanded its Asian commercial frontier during the eighteenth century, it affected the Indian trading community. The adventurous merchant communities migrated to other places in search of opportunity for earning more wealth. Thus, they started leaving Astrakhan and migrated to Orenburg. They pursued economic activity mainly through the Iran-Caspian- Astrakhan line at that time. But Documents from the Astrakhan State Archive demonstrate that before 20 April 1735 the Russian administration had begun efforts to motivate Asian merchants to shift their trade routes through Central Asia to Orenburg (Levi 1999: 534).

According documents from the Orenburg State Archive Russia made efforts to attract indigenous merchants to Orenburg. For instance, Irnazar Maksiutov, a Bukharan merchant in 1745 communicated the Russian officials at Orenburg that he had done everything possible to attract “not only Bukharan traders, but also Indian traders, to participate in the Orenburg Fair. As a result Indians went to Bukhara with some sixty camel-loads of different goods worth about 300,000 rubles”. In 1751 the governor of Orenburg was directed to establish a commercial company at Orenburg aiming to improve Russia's trade with the Central Asian Khanates and India. In 1750 a new trade fair was opened in the Russian town

Troitsk, located between Orenburg and Omsk with prices listed in both rubles and rupees (Levi 1999: 534).

Literature, Books and Mutual Intellectual Exchanges

Russian School of Ideological Research starting from Gerasim Lebedev, who is considered a pioneer in this field, many outstanding Russian researchers had engaged in comprehensive and insightful research into the fields of Indian history, political structure, economy, culture, philosophy, religion, literature and arts. In February, 1880, The Times of India reported with great joy and celebration about the meeting of a Russian scholar Ivan Minayev (1840 –1890) with learned Indian Sanskrit pundits. Ivan Minayev deeply impressed Indians with his extraordinary and refined knowledge of ancient Indian language. Unlike many of his Western colleagues Ivan P. Minayev found contemporary India an equally important field of research. Minayev gained global recognition due to his seminal research works on the history of Buddhism and Pali philology, as well as translations of early Buddhist texts and studies of this doctrine and phases of its development. His major work is on “Buddhism. Research and Materials” (Volume 1, Edition One and Two), published in 1887, was based on a composite cultural, historical and social methodological approach to this phenomena. (Chelysheva, Irina 2010).

Russian literary figures like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Pushkin are highly respected in India. Legendary Russian author Leo Tolstoy had commented enthusiastically in 1877 on the publication of Minayev’s “Indian Fairy Tales and Legends, collected in Kumaon in 1875”. Despite the broad range of Minayev’s research and writings, most of his writings remain unfamiliar to Indians. He wrote a commentary on Nikitin’s visit to India titled, “Old India: Notes on Afanasy Nikitin’s Voyage beyond the Three Seas”. He compared situation during medieval India with the situation during the British colonial rule. (Chelysheva, Irina 2010).

Nikitin's travelogue is one of the most important sources for Russians to understand the situation in India during the medieval times. Tolstoy had long been interested in understanding the different aspects of life in the Eastern (Asian) countries. When Tolstoy was only 19 years old, his meeting with a Buddhist lama at Kazan hospital came as a shock for him. Tolstoy learned about the essence of ahimsa (non-violence) from the Buddhist Lama. (Drozdikov, Anton 2016). Leo Tolstoy considered his country Russia as the "great Asiatic nation."

The intellectual exchanges between Mahatma Gandhi and author-sage Leo Tolstoy have been legendary in essence. When Mahatma Gandhi was in London he wrote a letter to Tolstoy in 1909. In his letter Gandhi talks about his fight for equal rights for Indians in South Africa. Gandhi wrote five more letters to Tolstoy. Tolstoy replied to Gandhi "The more I live, and especially now that I am approaching death, the more I feel inclined to express to others the feelings which so strongly move my being, and which, in my opinion, are of great importance". Gandhi further writes in return "That is, what one calls non-resistance is, in reality, nothing else but the discipline of love unreformed by false interpretation. Love is the aspiration for communion and solidarity with other souls, and that aspiration always liberates the source of noble activities. That love is the supreme and unique law of human life which everyone feels in the depth of one's soul. We find it manifested most clearly in the soul of the infants. Man feels it so long as he is not blinded by the false doctrines of the world." Later in life Gandhi pointed out, "Tolstoy's views helped to give a stable form to the idea of non-violent resistance." A documentary film "Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi: a double portrait in the interior of the age" by Galina and Anna Yevtushenko summarised deep relation between Gandhi and Tolstoy by saying, "Tolstoy was a tree, Gandhi was the fruit" (Drozdikov 2016).

Rabindranath Tagore's works are popular in Russia. Russian composer Alexei Rybnikov set Tagore music from the verses from the novel "Shesher kavita". Tagore's famous poem *Gitanjali* was translated in Russian during the time of October Revolution. Many Russian scholar studied and wrote on Tagores works. Tagore visited Russia in 1930 (Prokofieva 2012).

By the late 18th century, India became a popular topic in the Russian press. The articles were, however, largely based on the materials from European sources. The Russian interest in the political economy of India intensified especially after the colonization of India by British. The "Bulletin of Europe" magazine, for example, published an article entitled "Why does England follow two politicians?" and "Why is it that what India respects as the legitimate right is called robbery in Europe?" The growth of anti-British sentiment in Russia led to even drafting of a joint Russian-French military expedition to India to pull India out of the British colonial control. (Drozdikov 2016)

Napoleon Bonaparte soon attracted the Russian Emperor Paul I to work on implementing the idea of ending colonial control over India. This plan caused the death of the Russian emperor as a result of a conspiracy organized by the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg. This was the starting point of the "Great Game". The term 'Great Game' is given to the bitter struggle between Britain and Russia for influence in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Lord Palmerston was the British foreign minister who was convinced in 1830 that the Russian advance in Central Asia would be an impetus for popular uprisings in India. These fears were not unfounded, because the Russian press regularly wrote about how Britain robs India. The most influential Russian magazine "Notes from the Fatherland" in 1844 published an article by Russian traveller Alexander Rotchev. Rotchev writes, "I was struck by the poverty and dire misery which afflicted three-quarters of the

Indian population." During the Mutiny of 1857-1859, Russia sharply activated its diplomatic efforts, having decided to open a consulate in India. As a result, the Russian diplomatic mission in Mumbai could only be opened in 1900 (Drozdikov 2016).

Although Russian Empire had close military engagement with British India twice in 1801 and during Afghan war in 1878 but no attempt was made by state actors to establish cultural diplomacy between the two countries. Whatever shared cultural history Russia and India experienced during pre-independence period was through people to people engagement. Russian king, Catherine the Great, ordered through a decree to publish Russian translation of the Bhagavad Gita. The book was published in 1788. Many scholars from Russia have visited India to study Indian tradition, culture and art including Gerasim Lebedev. During the period of 1780s, he studied Indian languages. In order to remember these great thinkers and scholars who have contributed to the relationship between the two countries, people in India celebrate their birth anniversary and revered them by paying tribute. "Leading Russian Ideologist such as Yuri Knorozov, Alexandr Kondratov, Nikita Gurov, Ivan Minayev and Eugene Chelyshev focused their research in understanding the Indus Script, Sanskrit and Indian literature" (Mahapatra, Debidatta Aurobinda 2014).

Woman traveler Elena Petrovna Blavatskaia (1831-91), also known as Madame Blavatsky who founded the Theosophical Society after settling in the United States was a good source of information on India in Russia. She wrote a series of articles for a Russian newspaper in the 1880s about her travels through India. Her account was later titled *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*. Blavatskaia used the male form of her last name, Blavatsky, in everyday life, rather than the feminine form Blavatskaia, and used a pseudonym, "Radda-Bai," meaning "Sister Success,"

in her newspaper articles, most likely deriving from Hindi (Katya 2011: 2). Since the area she travelled was also the territory of the "Great Game" between Russia and England: India and Central Asia she was constantly viewed with suspicion as a potential Russian spy, as the English feared the Russians might intend to challenge their power in India (Katya 2011: 5; Banerjee 2011: 619).

Blavatskaia was single, entirely independent, traveling to India as a founder and leader of the Theosophical Society. It was a movement originated in the late nineteenth century intending to make Indians aware of themselves about ancient ideas that had been recently embraced by Westerners, though regarded as backward by Indians themselves. Theosophy was a belief system based in great part on ancient Indian thought, but put forward mostly by Europeans. Blavatskaia's fame brought many educated Indians, likely at that point to emulate Western Europe, back to their own cultural riches. Gandhi who read Blavatskaia and returned to reading Vedic texts in the original is an example (Katya 2011: 7-8).

Blavatskaia constantly praises her hosts and local consultants and seeks to provide her reader with means to compare elements of Indian culture with Russian cultural and literary referents. She wrote about the landscape, local customs and lives of people of India. The "woman question" which was extremely important in Russia, was an important theme that she wrote to newspapers. She makes the subjection of Indian women a major theme in her account, as she agreed with the reformists and critics of both the status of women's rights in India and of the English governing system in India. She wrote to surprise her Russian readers that Indian women wear very little in the way of clothing (Ibid: 9).

Due to geopolitical rivalry between Russia and British Empire over India, she is regarded with suspicion and claims she is followed by a spy and as one herself.

She involved herself in local politics, “agitating among the natives against British rule.” Katya explains:

In patriotic anti-British fashion, she retells from the Indian point of view many events and circumstances pertaining to Indian history or British policy. A case in point is the Sepoy rebellion, or Indian Mutiny, which narrates from an anti-British or at least relativist perspective. In 1857 a local ruler, Nana-Sahib, who had been deprived by the British of his position and inheritance, and whose two young sisters had been raped by Englishmen, was trusted to help the English keep control when a revolt was expected in Cawnpore. Instead, seeking revenge for injustices done to him, he starved English male prisoners and shot those who had survived, allowed his soldiers to rape the Englishwomen, and then had the women killed, along with children. The bodies of the 250 women and children were thrown down a well, which later became a monument to the British lives lost in the rebellion (Katya 2011:17-18).

Blavatskaia emphasizes how cost the lives of many thousands of local people, who were the victims of the horrors of English rule was left out of the accounts and monument inscriptions:

Great and terrible are the sins of Nana-Sahib. But who would dare to assert that his acts were not governed by the bloody tears and groans of a population of 200 million, a people trampled underfoot by their conqueror, a people abused, dying of hunger by the hundreds of thousands in the course of the last long century? (Katya 2011: 18)

Interaction of Indian Religions and Russian Society

Ancient trade connections and cultural interactions between Russia and India happened to familiarise Indian religions in Russian society. Along with Indian traders their religious faith also spread to the region they settled in Russia. Buddhism was the most deep-rooted among the Indian religions in Russia. Petrova says:

It is a well-known fact that there were Indian communities in the South of Russia from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. The largest settlement (podvor'e), was concentrated around the Hindu temple in the city of Astrakhan and reached its peak under Peter the Great, who extended his patronage to the community.

This policy of religious tolerance was continued in the eighteenth century by Catherine I, who ordered that the sacred book of Vaishnavism Bhagavad Gita be translated from English into Russian. In the course of the nineteenth century the publication of books and translations of ancient Sanskrit texts in Russia continued unabated. These included translations from the Vedas and great Hindu epic poems Ramayana and Mahabharata. At the beginning of the twentieth century the teaching and practice of yoga also came into fashion in Russia and Europe. (Petrova 2013).

Presence of Buddhism and Hinduism, the ancient religions, is a testimony of a grand history of cultural relations between India and the Soviet Union.

Art and Sports

Painters like Nicholas Roerich who stayed in India for many decades and his art shows true integration of Indian and Russian culture. In the area of philosophy scholar like Nicholas Roerich have done remarkable work and studied Indian philosophy in the beginning of nineteenth century. He was greatly attached and motivated by philosophy of the Indian gems like Vivekananda and Ramakrishna. He stayed in India for long. He was fascinated by the Himalayas and the scenic beauty there. He also got influenced by the Rabindranath Tagore's poetry and one of the ancient Indian texts Bhagavada Gita. It is claimed that the appearance of Chess in Russia came from India (Vasudevan 2003).

Russian Revolutionary and Ideological Influences in India

Czarist Russia was interested in India primarily for economic interests and thus welcomed only merchants and moneylenders from India into her Central Asian provinces. Her authorities had no sympathy for Indian national revolutionaries. But individual travellers tried to understand the issues India was facing under British colonial rule and the political culture of Indian revolutionary activities in their fight against the colonizer.

When the first session of the Indian National Congress met in Bombay in 1885, one Russian traveller named Pavlovich Minaev was present in the hall and described congress as striving for the “development of feeling of nationalism in India, for unification of India. He had developed close relation with several Indian nationalist such as R. G. Bhadarkar, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Surendranath Banerjea and others (Mohanty 2017). Pavlovich Minaev also attributed great importance to the translation and publication of ancient Indian texts. He had excellent command over several Indian languages such as Pali, Sanskrit, as well as many contemporary Indian languages and some Pahari dialects. He travelled across India, Nepal and Ceylon in 1874-75 and Burma in 1885-86. (Chelysheva, Irina 2010).

After the October Revolution, the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic became a haven for Indian revolutionaries who turned to it for help in fighting for the independence of their own country. But it is important to note that Indian national revolutionaries were not yet prepared to appreciate all the ideas of the Revolution. (Persits and Ulyanovsky 1973).

Bolshevik Literature in India

Bolshevik literature written by Lenin and others attracted the attention of Indian national movement’s leaders. In the advancement of a world socialist culture intelligentsia could play a significant role. It is not clear how and when how revolutionary Marxist literature reached India. It was actually Lenin who laid the foundations of close friendship between India and Soviet Union.

Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx themselves studied about India and commented upon the oriental culture and British imperialism in India. Lenin himself was interested in developments in India and the progress of National Liberation Movement. Regarding development of fight against British imperialist oppression

and slavery of Indian people Lenin recorded his observations on socio-economic and political situation in India at that time. He wrote on the oppressive measures of British government on Indians: “In India lately, the native slaves of the “civilised” British capitalists have been a source of worry to their “masters”. There is no end to the acts of violence and plunder which goes under the name of the British system of government in India. Nowhere in the world—with the exception, of course of Russia—will you find such abject mass poverty, such chronic starvation among the people?” Lenin 1973: 183 quoted in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1908/jul/23.htm>).

Lenin further says about the injustice and suppressive actions on agitators for freedom and justice:

The most Liberal and Radical personalities of free Britain, men like John Morley—that authority for Russian and non-Russian Cadets, that luminary of “progressive” journalism (in reality, a lackey of capitalism)—become regular Genghis Khans when appointed to govern India, and are capable of sanctioning every means of “pacifying” the population in their charge, even to the extent of *flogging* political protestors! *Justice*, the little weekly of the British Social-Democrats, has been *banned* in India by these Liberal and “Radical” scoundrels like Morley. And when Keir Hardie, the British M. P. and leader of the Independent Labour Party, had the temerity to visit India and speak to the Indians about the most elementary democratic demands, the whole British bourgeois press raised a howl against this “rebel”. And now the most influential British newspapers are in a fury about “agitators” who disturb the tranquillity of India, and are welcoming court sentences and administrative measures in the purely Russian, Plehve style to suppress democratic Indian publicists. But in India the street is beginning to stand up for *its* writers and political leaders. The infamous sentence pronounced by the British jackals on the Indian democrat Tilak—he was sentenced to a long term of exile, the question in the British House of Commons the other day revealing that the Indian jurors had declared for acquittal and that the verdict had been passed *by the vote of the British jurors!*—*this* revenge against a democrat by the lackeys of the money-bag evoked street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay Lenin 1973: 183 quoted in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1908/jul/23.htm>).

He noticed the development of mass consciousness on the need to resist against the British brutality and slavery. He wrote:

In India, too, the proletariat has already developed to conscious political mass struggle—and, that being the case, the Russian-style British regime in India is doomed! By their colonial plunder of Asian countries, the Europeans have succeeded in so steeling one of them, Japan, that she has gained great military victories, which have ensured her independent national development. There can be no doubt that the age-old plunder of India by the British, and the contemporary struggle of all these “advanced” Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy, will *steel* millions, tens of millions of proletarians in Asia to wage a struggle against their oppressors which will be just as victorious as that of the Japanese. The class-conscious European worker now has comrades in Asia, and their number will grow by leaps and bounds (Lenin 1973: 183 quoted in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1908/jul/23.htm>).

Lenin, who assessed the oppressive unjust and slave-like conditions of Indians under British colonial rule very carefully was confident that Indian freedom struggle would ultimately meet success in future. In his speech at the First Congress of Working Cossacks on 1 March 1920 on the political awakening that was happening among Indian masses Lenin said:

“In every country of the world, even in India, where 300 million people are oppressed and treated as labourers by the British, minds are awakening and the revolutionary movement is growing from day-to-day. They all look towards the one star, the star of the Soviet Republic, because they it made tremendous sacrifices in order to fight the imperialists and that it has withstood the most severe trials” (Lenin 1963: 390).

In India victory of October revolution was considered in positive light as a hope for oppressed nations. Many expressed positive opinions. Even Mahatma Gandhi, a critique of Bolshevism acknowledged the progressive ideals of it. He said: “the Bolshevik ideal had behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctioned by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain” (Gandhi 2009: 33).

Admiring Soviet socialism Rabindranath Tagore said, without a visit to Soviet Union “my life’s pilgrimage would have been incomplete” (quoted in Chopra 2005: 237). In 1927, Nehru observed: “Russia is our neighbour, a giant sprawling over half over Asia and Europe and between such neighbours there can be either amity or enmity. Indifference is out of the question” (quoted in Joshi 2005: 165). Jawaharlal Nehru noted that as Soviet Russia and India face same kind of socio-economic problems and nationalist leaders devoted hope in the Soviet success. They thought they could draw the correct tactics and strategy from Soviet Union for their anti-imperialist struggle against British Empire in India. It is reflected in Nehru’s speech he gave in Lucknow Session of Indian National Congress in 1936. He said, “If the future is full of hope, it is largely because of Soviet Russia and what it has done. This new civilization will spread to other lands and put an end to the wars and conflicts which capitalism feeds” (Ibid).

Jawaharlal Nehru travelled to Moscow on the invitation to participate in the tenth anniversary of Russian Revolution in 1924 from the Soviet Society for Cultural Relations with foreign countries while he was in Berlin along with his family members. He went with father Motilal Nehru, Kamala and Krishna. Nehru was received in the Kremlin by Mikhail Kalinin, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR. He attended the Moscow court proceedings, visited factories and went to museum of the October Revolution, Bolshoi theatre and saw a famous Soviet producer’s film ‘The End of Saint-Petersburg., Nehru took part in a ceremonial meeting on 8 November dedicated to the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Nehru and his father were given a standing ovation when they were introduced to the audience. He got very much influenced with a lasting impression of Soviet Union and her people on him (Mohanty 2012).

V.D. Chopra (2003) discusses about the cultural interaction between India and the Soviet Union and impact of different situation and incidents on each other culture.

For instance, 1857 struggle against British invoked in India it has received recognition in the Soviet Union and people in the Soviet Union were very sympathetic towards the cause of the Indian people. After the Great October Revolution the understanding and cooperation between the people of India and Russia became closer and deeper. Their mutual cultural ties were also strengthened. As Indians were engaged wholeheartedly in their own freedom struggle they greatly admired the Soviet people for speedy reforms in economy, education and culture which they were able to bring about in such a short time (Batra 2003).

Ideological influences also had influenced and strengthened mutual cooperation between Russia and India. Lenin's or Stalin's or Comintern's attempt to engage with Indian nationalists was derived from their interest in making a communist country as part of larger Soviet international socialist influence while Indian nationalist-communist hoped for support in establishing socialist state in India independent of British imperialism. The Second Comintern Congress of 1919 gave platform for Indian thinker M. N. Roy to share his ideas on course of communist revolution in colonies as a critic to Lenin's proposal and which was accepted by sixth congress in 1928. M N Roy spent several years in Moscow and formed communist party of India there itself. Several other Indian revolutionary nationalist leaders including Bhagat Singh and Jawaharlal Nehru were impressed by socialist model practiced in Soviet Russia.

Soviet Russia-India Cultural Relations During 1922-1953

Soviet Union was formed in 1922¹. The understanding of culture in Soviet Union was based Lenin's idea of culture and Cultural Revolution. Soviet policy also has

¹“The First Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. took place in Moscow on December 30, 1922. There were present 1,727 delegates from the R.S.F.S.R., 364 from the Ukrainian S.S.R., 91 from the Transcaucasian Federation and 33 from the Byelo-russian S.S.R. The

the aim of spreading of socialist culture worldwide and achieving victory of world revolution. Creating a genuine proletarian culture for winning class struggle between the haves (the bourgeoisie) and the have-nots (the proletariat). He paid particular attention to public education based on Marxist-Leninist ideology in the spirit of class struggle to sensitize the labour class and development of a genuine proletarian culture by dialectical negation of bourgeois culture. However, According to A. Arnoldov, Lenin noted that “socialist culture cannot be built from the scratch, by discarding the cultural achievements of the past, including those of capitalism; that critical assessment of these achievements is indispensable for the cultural revolution of socialist society, a society of working people free from any oppression whatsoever” (Arnoldov 1974: 76).

Lenin wrote: “No matter to what extent culture has been destroyed, it cannot be removed from history; it will be difficult to restore but no destruction will ever mean the complete disappearance of that culture. Some part of it, some material remains of that culture will be indestructible, the difficulties will be only in restoring it” (Lenin Vol. 27 quoted in Arnoldove 1974: 76). Lenin thought of the method of building capitalism after the abolition of capitalism, “We must take the

congress discussed J. V. Stalin's report on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, it ratified the Declaration and the Treaty of Union on the Formation of the U.S.S.R., and elected the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.

“The Conference of plenipotentiary Delegations of the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukrainian S.S.R., the Byelorussian S.S.R. and of the Transcaucasian S.F.S.R. took place on December 29, 1922. The conference examined and adopted the Declaration and the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. J. V. Stalin made a report to the conference on the order of proceedings at the First Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. The conference instructed J. V. Stalin to deliver at the congress the report on the formation of the U.S.S.R. In the morning of December 30, the plenipotentiary delegations signed the Declaration and the Treaty on the Formation of the U.S.S.R.” (<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1922/12/30.htm>)

entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with it. We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art”. However, not in a utilitarian manner, but on the basis of “a consistently class-conscious, truly scientific assessment of history and culture of the peoples” (Ibid). Thus, Cultural Revolution in socialist society that Lenin suggested consider class consciousness, historical approach and Marxist in content.

Lenin pointed out that the culture of the new socialist society is the product of continued creative development of all the values of earlier civilization. He wrote in the draft resolution, “On Proletarian Culture”:

Marxism has won its historic significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, it has, on the contrary, assimilated and refashioned everything of the value in the more than two thousand years of the development of human thought and culture. Only further work on this basis and in this direction, inspired the practical experience of the proletarian dictatorship as the final stage in the struggle against every form of exploitation, can be recognized as the development of a genuine proletarian culture (Lenin 1965: 153).

Thus, the cultural progress was political in content as the objective was freedom of the oppressed working class from exploitation by the bourgeois.

In order to make foreign peoples acquaint with the new political and economic life and culture institutions established to promote study on Soviet Union by 1925. Already public organization during famine to contact for foreign humanitarian assistance existed during this period. There was a society was formed by an initiative group in May 1925 known at the time as the “Foreign Aid Commission,” for the purpose of establishing contacts with foreign countries. The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (known by the initials “VOKS”) was approved by the Decree of the Council of People's Commissaries of the Soviet Union on 8 August 1925. The aims and

objectives were set forth in Article 1 of the Statutes: “The U.S.S.R Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries has for its purpose to cooperate in the establishment and development of scientific and cultural relations between institutions, public organizations and individual scientific and cultural workers in the U.S.S.R. and those of other countries” (Kameneva, 1928: 6).

In order to fulfil the Soviet objectives several activities such as publishing, the exchange of scientific works and materials, translations, the organization of exhibitions, the supply of information and photographic illustrations to the press, and the exchange of artistic forces. There established special commissions and sections consisting of representatives of different scientific and artistic circles, the technical work of which is executed by an apparatus composed of bureaus and departments to direct the activities of this Society. There were several sections to hold responsibilities at various spheres of international relations such as Literary Section, Musical and Theatrical Section, Cinema Section, Exhibition Section, Department of the International Press Exhibition, Juridical Section, Dept. of Art Industry and Architecture, Photographic Section (Russ-Photo), Book Exchange Department, etc (Kameneva 1928: 6-8).

The press department published “Information Bulletin’ in main foreign languages and articles on Soviet literature and culture. The Foreign Reception Department helped foreign visitors in the U.S.S.R. The guest were also assisted to get acquainted with Soviet cultural achievements gained within the shortest possible period. Moreover, it established personal contact between individual Russian scientists and artists and their foreign colleagues. "Rapprochement Evenings” were organized in Moscow to inform Soviet public about the culture and social conditions in foreign countries. Foreign scientists were encouraged to participate in Soviet scientific expeditions. VOK facilitated research and publications using

Soviet archives, student travel and the participation of Soviet scientists in international conferences. By 1928 there were 20 societies for cultural relations with U.S.S.R. in various countries (Kameneva, 1928: 8).

Like culture, ethnic diversity in society was another important thing Soviet leaders had to address for achieving unity and social cohesion. Soviet Union was a multiethnic, multi-national and multi-cultural society. Several ethnic groups, languages and religions were the features of Soviet Union. Therefore, the issues related to group identity and inter-group integration was connected with nationality question. Soviet cultural policy as part of nationality policy was aimed to achieve a cultural renaissance (Sharma 1989: 91). Similarly, India also harbors high extent of social and cultural diversity. Different castes, thousands of languages, a number of religions are characteristic to Indian socio-cultural milieu. Culture in Indian national integration policies were important as in Soviet case.

Soviet's influence over India began to appear after the victory of October Revolution in Russia overthrowing the Russian Empire. Thereafter, Soviet Union attracted Indian nationals as it promoted the national self-determination of oppressed nationalities and national liberation movement. They saw the October Revolution in Soviet Russia as a harbinger of a new era in human history. Soviet Russian Revolution was to fight against global imperialism, and to stand for the cause of freedom and national independence. Even the British Indian rules admitted influence of Russian revolution on Indian political awakening. In the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918, noted, "The Revolution in Russia was regarded in India as a triumph over despotism. ... It has been given impetus to Indian political aspirations" (Nath 1993: 181).

The Soviet Union and India shared good deal of culture relations even before revolutions but after the revolution in the Soviet Union, the foreign policy saw a

dramatic change, where they started spreading their ideology, philosophy through different means like art, literature and painting, it was not like it was their state's effort only to spread ideology but Russian people always had interest in Indian culture and religion (Avaladov 1974). Bolshevik literature began spreading in India through intellectual contacts.

Very few attempts have been made to promote close relation between the Soviet Union and Indian people and their culture. But if we accept exchange of ideas as part of cultural diplomacy, Second Comintern Congress of 1919 in USSR gave a platform for Indian thinker M. N. Roy to share his ideas on course of communist revolution in colonies. Roy spent several years in Moscow and formed communist party of India there itself. Roy criticised the Lenin's understanding and proposals for colonies in third world in their course of liberation and establishment of proletariat government. Roy believes "it was not through a labour movement that Indian national revolutionaries advanced towards Marxism, as a rule,—they were not connected with it at all and, for the most part, failed to see its significance— but through an anti-imperialist liberation struggle and through their affection for the Soviet system of State power which had become the world's most important anti-colonialist' force and a real base of support for the liberation movement of the peoples of the past". He further adds, "In the Eastern countries," he adds elsewhere, "it was principally the national revolutionary and revolutionary democratic intellectuals that made the first Communists and formed the first Communist groups that gave rise to a Communist movement". (Persits and Ulyanovsky 1973).

Lenin spent so much energy and so much time for his discussions and disputes with Roy. Lenin saw Roy as a typical representative of Eastern emigrant revolutionaries who were turning to Marxism. Lenin also believed that Roy's

outlook have some typical features of a leftist system of views which many of the budding Communists of the Asian countries were developing at the time. V. I. Lenin's and the Comintern were struggling hard to assert the fundamental principles of Communist policy in the Eastern countries. They were trying to educate Asia's pioneer Communists in the Marxist way, and get them to rectify their "left" or other errors is a matter of pressing and direct interest to the present Communists of the Asian countries (Persits and Ulyanovsky 1973).

M N Roy's plans for colonised countries was initially rejected but accepted by sixth Comintern Congress in 1928. Several other Indian revolutionary nationalist leaders including Bhagat Singh and Jawaharlal Nehru were also impressed by socialist model practiced in Russia. Close relation with revolutionary Russia helped Indian nationalist to deconstruct hegemonic control of superior western culture that British had established over Indian and Asian culture as inferior. This process of deconstruction was necessary step towards healthy development of cultural diplomacy by Indian state and people with people and state of other countries at equal footing and mutual harmonious understanding. The very fact that Indian communist refused communist Russia's suggestion to work with Indian liberal nationalist in order to achieve independence prove that exchanges of ideas between Indian and Russian communist was mutual and collaborative in nature rather than of hegemonic or coercive.

Jawaharlal Nehru was deeply impressed by some aspects of socialist and Marxist ideology practiced in the Soviet Union (Kumar 1960). He adopted Five Year Plan based on Soviet model. He observed that the Soviet experience provides certain valuable lessons for countries like India. His presidential address at the Lucknow Session of Indian National Congress in 1936 testifies his high regard for Soviet political system. He said:

Russia is not supposed to be a democratic country after the Western pattern, and yet we found the essentials of democracy present in far greater degrees amongst them than anywhere else. The six hundred thousand towns and villages have a vast democratic organization, each with its own Soviets, constantly discussing, debating, criticising, helping in the formation of policy, electing representatives of higher committees ... scores of millions of people, men and women, are constantly taking part in the discussion of public affairs and actually in the administration of the country. There has been no such application of the democratic process in history (Nehru quoted in Kaushik 1983: 176).

But in the field of art, literature and cultural exchanges the relation between India and Russia was of least importance at least till Stalin died “Almost every major Soviet political document since the death of Stalin has contained a statement stressing the value of “contacts” and “exchanges” (Barghoorn, Frederick. 1958). It is claimed that whatever cultural contacts India and the Soviet Union had during Stalin regime was due to Nehru effort. Nehru government came harsh on IPTA and other Socialist-Marxist oriented theatre groups because they were also sceptical about the fate of communist regime. Nationalisation of radio was done with similar purpose to keep communist-socialist oriented artist out of the public imagination. Even though the reign of Indira Gandhi is considered as age when India-Russia relation was closest and strongest but it was the same period of Indira Gandhi’s prime ministership, that she approved the discontinuation of scholarship for Indian students being awarded through the communist dominated Indo-Soviet Cultural Society. She broke the monopoly of people to people interaction between Indian and Russian people under auspices of ISCUS by setting up parallel Friends of the Soviet Union association, much to the discomfiture of the some staunchly pro-Soviet leaders of her own party.

Soviet Union and India that have shared common cultural values laid the foundations for mutually productive and enduring relationship during Stalin’s period although Stalin’s apprehensions about the political positions of leaders of

national liberation movement in India. Cultural relations has played an important role in promoting friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and India since Independence with ups and downs. India's anti-fascist culture and fight against it and the victory of Soviet Union defeating Nazi Germany gave impetus to the independence of India in 1947. All India Association of the Friends of the Soviet Union led a movement in support of Soviet Union in India.

All India Friends of the Soviet Union (AIFSU)

All India Association of the Friends of the Soviet Union was formed by Indian revolutionaries to support Soviet Union international issues in 1941 in Bengal inspired by Rabindranath Tagore. A second annual conference was held in Calcutta in April 1944, under the leadership of an eminent congresswoman Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta. The organisation became national when the all India congress happened in Bombay University on June 3 and 4, 1944. The session was presided by Vijaylaxmi Pandit sister of Jawaharlal Nehru. The chairman of the reception committee was Sir Abdulla Brelvi editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*. Sarojni Naidu prominent woman leader of Indian freedom movement was elected as its first President (Overstreet and Windmiller 1959: 407).

In the tradition of anti-fascism struggle, India could associate with the Soviet Union because India had been under the colonial rule for a very long time. Indians therefore were incredibly and sympathetic towards the Soviet Union's struggle against the attack of Nazi Germany. "More significantly, the masses in India were even then deeply convinced that the Soviet Union was their most dependable and powerful ally in anti-imperialist struggle" (Mitrokhin. 1977). In the year 1940, the letter sent to Mahatma Gandhi by Jawaharlal Nehru expressed an anguish over the situation in Europe as Nehru wrote with great pain in the letter that the most serious problem emerging in Europe is "Consolidation of the Imperialist and fascist

powers to fight Russia” He further wrote that “the position is likely to grow much more complicated soon if the western powers mobilise against Russia” (Bombay Chronicle. 1945 cited in Mitrokin 1977). He emphasised many a times that Russia is the only barriers between Europe and Asia and as far as fascism concerned he said that the Soviet Union is “the only effective barrier in Europe and Asia to fascism and the anti-democratic forces” (Socialist Congressmen. 1967 cited in Mitrokin 1977).

As far as fascism is concerned, fear of Jawaharlal Nehru on Germany’s intensions stands true as in connivance with the western imperialist powers fascism emerged as a very powerful force and created enough death and destruction. Indians were way too supportive to the struggle primarily because of their own experience against Imperialist powers and another reason they genuinely believe the Soviet Union as their natural ally. The millions of Indians who joined the countrywide movement of solidarity with the USSR and the campaign for the opening of the second front and the thousands of Indians, who perished in battles against axis armies, provide a measure of India’s contribution to the common struggle of mankind against fascism (Mitrokhin. 1977). In the continuity of support to the Soviet Union a Manifesto has been sponsored by the Progressive Writers’ Association of India, which was sent to the Peace Conference convened by the Romain Rolland on September 3, 1936, at Brussels, as also to the conference in Defence of Culture in Paris. This Manifesto among other men was signed by Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, Munshi Prem Chand, Prafulla Chandra Ray, Jawaharlal Nehru, Pramatha Chowdhury, Ramananda Chatterjee and Nandlal Bose (Ibid).

...today the spectre of a world war haunts the world. Fascist dictatorship has revealed its militarist essence by its offer of guns instead of butter and the lust for empire building in place of culture opportunities. The methods resorted to by Italy for the subjugation of Abyssinia have rudely shocked all those who cherish a faith

in reason and civilisation...On our own and on behalf of our countrymen, we take this opportunity to declare with one voice with the people of other countries that we detest war and want to adjure it and that we have no interest in war. We are against the participation of India in any imperialist war for we know that the future of civilisation will be at stake in the next war (an excerpts from the Manifesto quoted in Mitrokin 1977: 6).

Support to the Anti-Fascism struggle was not only limited to politics. Rabindranath Tagore a poet described it in 1926 as “a menace to the whole world and religiously cultivated aggressive spirit of nationalism and Imperialism” (National Archives of India 1945 quoted in Ibid). Under the leadership of Tagore “An Indian Committee of the League against Fascism and War” (Indo-Soviet Journal 1947 cited in Ibid) was setup in Calcutta in 1937. Tagore and Nehru exposed fascism and provided scientific analysis to it. In a letter written to Indira Gandhi on June 22, 1933, Nehru expressed his ideas about the circumstance and other conditions which were the reasons behind the genesis of fascism. Doing his scientific analysis Nehru wrote in the letter that the lower middle class is the backbone of the “fascist movement....and the ruling class resorts to fascist methods when it cannot put down the workers in the ordinary democratic way” (Saha 1947).

India and the political forces working against imperialism noticed the festering of fascism and opposed it and supported the movement of the working people and the democratic forces of Europe. Jawaharlal Nehru said in his Presidential address to the Lucknow Congress in April 1936,

“In Europe an aggressive fascism or Nazism steps continuously to the brink of war and vast armed camps arise in preparation for what seems to be the inevitable end of all this. Nations join hands to fight other nations, and progressive forces of the world, to those who stand for human freedom and the breaking of human and social bonds, we offer our full cooperation in their struggle against imperialism and fascist reaction, for we realise that our struggle is a common one”

Nehru played a prominent role in giving shape to the anti fascist stand of the Indian National Congress, which was powerfully expressed in a resolution passed at the Lucknow session. Later in Allahabad in April 1937 and in October 1937 Congress Committee meeting in Calcutta have condemned strongly the Italian Aggression against Ethiopia, Nazi Germany's moves to deprive Czechoslovakia of its independence and the Japanese invasion of Manchuria (Mitrokhin. 1977).

In 1942, the fascist forces of Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union under the garb of fighting communism and took ugly turn as it created havoc by destruction and death. This phase was considered as the second part of the World War II and the German fascist forces under the cover of anti-communism united against the Soviet Union, which later on turn out to be a uniting cause against the German fascist forces as the world started fight against the fascist and the imperialist forces. The Bardoli resolution of the working committee of Indian National Congress said "the astounding self-sacrifice and heroic courage of the Soviet people in defence of their country and freedom" (All India Congress Committee (AICC) 1942 quoted in Mitrokin 1977). It further stated that "the Soviet Union has stood for certain human, cultural and social values which are of great importance to the growth and importance of humanity" (AICC. 1942 quoted in Mitrokin 1977).

The expression of association and unity shown by India with the struggle and fight of the Soviet Union during one of the difficult time in the history of humanity was incredible and showed its historical association and brotherhood with the people of the Soviet Union. The Indian Press expressed unstinted support and sympathy for the Soviet people in their defeat of great peril. Mitrokhin quotes for the secret report of the Government of India report on press for the second half of October in 1941 which states that "The Indian Languages papers are now beginning to ask

why Great Britain has not yet opened another front to take away some Nazi divisions Russia” (quoted in Mitrokin 1977).

During the time of war the closer ties between the Soviet Union and India as both the countries came closer than before because of the anti-fascism struggle made them to come close as they got to understand not only their relationship but also the cultural values they follow. “The Soviet Union’s entry into the war on the side of the allied powers and some restriction in the old restrictions on people to people contact between the two countries” (Mitrokhin. 1977). There were lot of Indian’s who served the Soviet Union which includes engineers, Researchers, Iraq and Iran. The Cordon Sanitaire thrown by the British colonialists around the Soviet Union had to be somewhat loosened. “Soviet literature and films began to reach India and a Soviet journalist, TASS correspondent P. Gladyshev, and the trade representatives of the USSR were for the first time officially allowed to stay in India” (Mitrokhin. 1977). The effects of the war felt by the Indians as well as they knew very well that the future of humanity is totally in the hands of the outcome of the war. Rabindranath Tagore described it as a struggle in defence of the torch of freedom and civilisation. The anxiety felt in India was not without a reason because Hitler’s secret directive no 32, later decoded as Orient plan which had a plant to overpower India. This secret directive was under preparation when the Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union diffused Hitler’s attack on the Soviet Union they have killed any possibility of execution of the Orient plan.

India was going through the pains of imperialism and therefore could understand the agony of the people in the Soviet Union. Indians have expressed their unconditional support to the Soviet Union in their anti-fascist struggle. Seeing the tendencies of the fascist attack, India became highly conscious and therefore

supporting the Soviet Union in India became order of the day for all the democratic forces. Victory of the fascism would have led the world in extreme danger. Leaders in India make sense to the condition going on. The fascist forces by its very nature would have curbed all the democratic voices and therefore defending struggle against such kind of force was essential. Indian writers, teachers, artists and men of all walks of life have supported the Soviet Union.

There were many organisations which are working to annihilate fascism. Few of the organisations, who have supported the cause of the struggle of the Soviet People, were the Indian Progressive Writers' Association (IPWA), the All India Students' Federation (AISF), the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and the All India Kishan Sabha (AIKS). The Friends of the Soviet Union (FSU), was founded in these circumstances with the objective to oppose fascism and support democratic voices and defend the Soviet Union.

Deep in the Siberian mine
Keep your patience proud
The bitter toil shall not be lost
The rebel thought unbowed.
The heavy hanging chains will fall
The wall will crumble at a word
And freedom greet you at the night
And brothers give you back the sword

Alexander Pushkin

(The Student, vol 1, Nov-Dec. 1941, No 12, page 53).

In all these activities the Communist Party of India (CPI) played a very significant and important role. There were many sections, political parties, groups who were constantly engaged with the activities which reflect the continuity of struggle and support for the Soviet Union. In 1941, Progressives in Bengal lead by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray issued a manifesto wanting India to extend full "sympathy

and solidarity with the USSR”. The moment people came to know about the fact that Hitler has attacked the Soviet Union across the country people started issuing such documents. They have started extend their support to the Socialist state which certainly continued to gain momentum under the leadership of the FSU society. In an article, *FSU Movement and Our People* General Secretary of FSU R. M. wrote. “Hitler’s perfidious attack against the peace-loving peoples of the USSR in June 1941 was a signal to all friends of the Soviet Union in our country to close during the latter half of 1941, the FSU movement grew spontaneously and almost simultaneously in the middle of 1944, it was convince.

The congress elected as President of the All India FSU Mrs. Sarojni Naidu –one of the foremost leaders of our people with an international vision who laid the foundation of In supervise Indo-Soviet lift. In 1943, Hiren Mukerjee very aptly expressed the feelings o find the Indian Friends of the Soviet Union and their devotion to the cause of both Indian freedom and victory over fascism. The same feelings were expressed by Pandit Rahul Sankrityayana, a great scholar and anti fascist writer in a letter sent to Leningrad, USSR (dated July 14, 1943), he said in the letter “I do not want to be a mere spectator in this great struggle against fascist barbarism. The fate of humanity is going to be decided. At least my pen and speech can of some use there. But as passport in needed before I start to the USSR.....I am trying to get it but it will take time” (NAI. 1943 quoted in Mitrokin 1977).

FSU movement is one of the most important movements with the clear cut intention to support anti-fascist movements. “The growth of the FSU movement must be ascribed further to the fact that the Soviet Union, from the very first days of its existence, fought for peace based on the inalienable right of all nations to equality and self-determination” (Mitrokhin. 1977). FSU movement in India was “the child of patriotism that out of its own experience learnt to relate it to the international forces fighting for a new world of freedom and equality of nations”

(NAI. 1943). The aims of the FSU are (a) to develop friendly relations and solidarity between the Soviet people and the people of our country. (b) to maintain solidarity with the Soviet Union in its heroic struggle against its enemies. FSU played a great role in intensifying the solidarity of the struggle and it has given further impetus to the relations between Russia and India.

German Invasion and Condemnation in India

The Nazi fuehrer fancies
This round earth to be a football
That he can dribble
And kick in any direction,
And loft as he likes
In wanton self will,
With the tips of his booted feet
This son of Cain
This fratricidal maniac,
This Hitler –is a curse
Not to Germany alone
But to the history and civilisation of man
For all times to come

(Bimal Chandra Ghosh. 1969)

Bimal Chandra Ghosh a Bengali poet wrote much before the attack on the Soviet Union. He has warned about the havoc Hitler is capable of spreading. As a reaction to the attack on the Soviet Union newspapers had condemned the attack across the country. Some of the editorials that appeared in leading newspapers on June 25, 1941, three days after the war between fascist Germany and the Soviet Union began, agreed that the “democracies” must unite with the Soviet Union. The Hindustan Times said that, “This perhaps is the very last chance which this war is likely to offer for the nations anxious to preserve their freedom against the tyranny which Hitler seeks to establish throughout the world. If Hitler’s attack on Russia becomes the rallying cry for the anti-Nazi forces throughout the world, democracy

may yet survive...” *The Leader reported*, “While Britain and the United States have unexpectedly got a powerful ally, Germany has by Hitler’s fatuous action become practically isolated” (Mitrokin 1977).

According to the media reports of that time, it has been observed that the people across India have been in great support. In Madras for instance they believed that Hitler made a great blunder and that the Soviet Union. The *Andhra Prabha*, a Telugu paper usually considered a strong pro-congress organ, said that “it was the duty of India to give every assistance to the war effort in the interest of Labourers and worker of India and of the world” (N.A.I. 1941). As it was in Madras, other parts of the country were also showing same sort of reaction. In the Poona press, the German invasion of Russia was unanimously condemned by public opinion in Maharashtra. Bengali’s have different opinion because they think that the entry of the Soviet Union has changed its intrinsic character. Same thing was going on when in Nainital the Hitler’s attack on the Soviet Union is condemnable. It was stated that “the might of the Red Army has been much advertised by Communists and Left wing Congressmen, who look upon it as their ally against British Imperialism, and among a large, and among a larger section of the people the idea is a widespread that is approaching his waterloo....(ibid).

Among the first statements in favour of the Soviet Union, a capable from the then General Secretary of the All India Students Federation Mr M. Farooqui’s should be taken. On the cable addressed to the Soviet Ambassador London Ivan Maisky on June 28. The well-known poet of Andhra, “Sri Sri (Srirangam Srinivasa Rao) sent another moving message of greetings to the Soviet people in June 1941.

Roar, Russia, Roar
Blow thou the conch of Parjanya (Thunder God)
Destroy the forces of daurjanya (Evil)
Arise, Advance, oh Russia!

“Restorer unto the individual his birth right of freedom,
Refuge of all the fallen, downtrodden people of the earth,
Grand architect of the Golden mansion of the future,
Arise! Come!
Peasants and workers the enslaved and the beaten down
Rise, roused to rebellion like wave on dancing wave
Millions of voices are greeting thee!
Millions of arms are eager to embrace thee!
The world is ripe for thy advent!
Prepare to strike for victory!
Arise, advance, Oh Russia

(Srirangam Srinivasa Rao. 1941)

On July 21, 1941, the demonstrations held in the province of Bengal, United Provinces, Bombay, Bihar, Malabar and elsewhere. This day was recognised as the day of solidarity with the people of USSR. The organisation played great role in accomplishing the task is Trade Unions, the Kishan Sabha, Friends of the Soviet Union and FSU. In the publication of the month of July of a journal of the progressive people which was known as ‘Hansa’ it is mentioned that the “the humanity will never again embrace, the age of darkness! Long Live Soviet Union, the creator of a new culture”. In 1941, there is a resolution passed by Kanpur workers which condemned the invasion of Germany. The other leaders those who are all the part of the resolution were Mr Khan, Ghulam Mohammed Khan, member of the All India Congress Committee. On the eve of the celebration of Soviet day, about 70 leading intellectuals of Calcutta wished Soviet Russia well. In a statement (*Modern review*. 1941). They said:

The Nazi attack on the Soviet Union has opened a new and momentous phase in world history. It is urgent that the attention is drawn to the massive, moral and material achievements which the Soviets have to their credit. Some of us have been critical of some aspects of the regime: some again do not support the theory of Marxism which the Soviet Union has attempted to put into practice. But when one remembers the dark legacy of Czarist misrule, which has followed for four years by a disastrous civil war and the intervention against this infant Soviet

(state) by nearly all the powers on earth, the Soviet achievement can only be described as magnificent (Quoted in Mitrokin 1977).

People and organisations initiated appealing for the observance of Soviet day on 21 July 1941, and Kishan leaders were first of them who have demanded to observe this important day because of the Germans attack on the Soviet Union. They said that “the immediate objective of all progressive forces should be to destroy fascism and the Soviet has now taken upon itself, by force of circumstances, the task of fighting fascism to its ultimate end” (Herald. 1941; Ibid).

Friends of the Soviet Union observed the July 21, 1941, as a day of solidarity and the objective is to spread it to the cities, Hiren Mukerjee narrated a moving story about the establishment of FSU and according to him, the initiative of forming FSU came directly from Bengal almost immediately after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union and an organising committee was set up, with Dr Bupendra dutta (a veteran freedom fighter and a Marxist scholar and a brother of Swami Vivekananda) as chairman of FSU. Hiren Mukerjee was appointed as secretary and Rabindranath Tagore the greatest admirer of the Soviet Union as its patron. The affects of the formation of FSU and India’s connection and sympathetic attitude towards the Soviet Union reflected in the fact that Delhi the capital city the streets were painted before the day of the Soviet day with slogans in Hindi and Urdu, Students were with the huge placards and shouting slogans. Chandni Chowk a part of the old Delhi was flooded with red flags (Mitrokin 1977).

There were lot of suggestion given to the FSU and many of them accepted and executed for instance formation of a cultural society, which was accepted then. When the organisation spread in all the parts of the society and on every branch, there was a debate to form a national body as there are lot of people who will be greatly benefitted by it. On November 16, 1941, an all India conference was held

near Calcutta. The conference decided its mission and the functions. Aims and objectives of FSU are as follows

- (a) To study and enlighten the public in general regarding the condition of Life and the work of reconstruction in the USSR particularly among its backward people.
- (b) To study and enlighten the public in general regarding the causes, character and progress and the result of the present war against the Soviet Union.
- (c) To give as direct and practical aid as our conditions and interests allow to the Soviet Peoples in their fight against fascism and reaction”.

Jawharlal Nehru, who had lately come out of Jail with a view to persuading to accept to the Chairmanship,. The student, of august 1941, said in an editorial “Black reaction would spread over the whole world with the victory of fascism. Day of the Russian Revolution was celebrated in India on the 24th anniversary of the great socialist revolution. In December, 1941, prominent Indians and members of the Indian national congress issued a joint statement in Banaras (Ibid).

Consolidation of Anti-Fascist Forces in India

“Soviet entry into the war against fascist Germany and the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition influenced the regrouping of the social forces in the colonial and dependent countries” (Mitrokhin. 1977). After the attack on the Soviet Union all the colonial countries felt associated with the problem of the Soviet Union. India is a country was going through the colonial rule for a very long time. In the beginning the threat from Japan to occupy India was great and therefore the consolidation against the fascist forces was natural to India. This political situation led the countries to consolidate against these fascist forces. There are many organisations which were ready to or working to spread their political ideas which were certainly in favour of colonial India. The communist party of India naturally characterised what was till the Soviet entry in it, an imperialist war, as the anti-

fascist people's war. Satyendranath wrote "The day the treacherous Nazis attacked Soviet Russia, the same day the face of the Imperialist war changed."

Another report from Bihar, February 6, 1942, stressed: "Leaders of the communist group in Patna students' union have decided to form committees in each college to explain to students a new war policy of the AISF. On January 18 and 19 an anti-fascist students' and youth conference was held in Purulia. The last resolution passed in the conference was that the war against Japan and Germany is India's war of Liberation. The resolution said that "The war waged by the Socialist Soviet Union, Nationalist China, Great Britain, the United States of America and other countries against the axis powers is a peoples' war against the fascist enslavers, against the spearhead of world imperialism" (Ibid). In short it ceases to be a fight between two power blocs for the hegemony the moment it includes the Soviet Union, it becomes a fight and contestation between the two groups, one is spreading fascism and another group fighting against it.

Many in India believed that the victory of Soviet union against Nazi Germany is not only the victory for Soviet people alone but for whole humanity. It is also the harbinger of national liberation of India in 1947. Although Nehru was fascinated by Soviet achievements Stalin showed a cool approach to him due to political differences. Stalin was more interested in "socialism in one country" and were sceptical of Indian bourgeois nationalist leadership. Stalin was hostile to non-communist world. He tilted to China which was a communist country. Nehru government was considered in Soviet union as puppet government in the hands of businesses. This had been reflected in the writings of a Soviet commentator. He wrote:

It is no secret that Birla is particularly close to Sardar Patel, the generally recognised leader of the congress right wing, Minister of Home Affairs in Nehru government, and the man who is regarded as the moving spirit in that

government...There are numerous facts which indicate that the all-powerful Minister for Home Affairs, whom many regard as India's future dictator, owes his career to the unfailing support of the firm of Birla Brothers Ltd.

The Tata Family is another of the pillars of the Indian National Congress...Dr John Mathai one of the directors of Tata Sons Ltd, was before during the war, a top administrator in the government of India, Dr Mathai is the Minister of Transport and Railways in the Nehru Cabinet (Naik 1995: 33-34).

There spread a rumour also that Nehruvian policies were anti-Soviet. Broadly, during Stalin Russia-India relations remained at a slow pace.

There was a *zhtdanovshchlina*, (censorship policy)strong control over intelligentsia and censorship policy over the content of writings of scholars under Stalin. The impact of the *zhtdanovshchlina*, both on scholars and memoirists, was enormous. The totalitarian model is, in fact, primarily a model of the late Stalin period (1946-53), at least as far as culture is concerned (Fitzpatrick. 1976). Stalin's period was a period of censorship, controlled production of image. Scholars have tried to interpret the time when the Soviet Union was not that productive in terms of arts and culture as it was during NEP. There are various reasons but primarily it was related to the totalitarian leadership of Stalin. In this period party controlled all sorts of production of culture and Stalin controlled the party. Ministry of culture of the Soviet Union was a set up of strict administrative control which had the responsibility to control and overlook the production of culture. The parameter was the ideology of the Soviet Union and the party could control and direct culture and art and Stalin's regime has completely rejected the idea of professional autonomy (Fitzpatrick. 1976).

The censorship was not only restricted to the arts and culture but pervades media and education. This started since last phase of Lenin's period in which the party restructured artistic vigour. The intention of art was clear to produce "socialist

realism” and promote “communism”. During World War II, restrictions were lifted to some extent because then it was allowed to direct arts towards enemy and therefore it has been used for propaganda purposes (Mulcahy. 1984). It was a time of strict execution of policies with the use of force and the culture was used mainly for the purpose of propaganda.

Stalin believed Indian Independence as a sham and Gandhi and Nehru as counter revolutionary forces. Despite the relations which had a long cultural history could not stop even if Stalin’s regime was not very supportive. During the Stalin’s period India and the Soviet Union have great economic and trade relations and culture though was not to be celebrated that much but cultural relations between the two never stopped. Jawaharlal Nehru paid visit to the US for food requirements but denied but when they submitted the same request to the USSR, it has been granted immediately (Kashin. 2012).

However, after the death of Stalin, when Khrushchev assumed power, things changed in favour of increased Russia-India cooperation to strengthen to a very close level. Cultural relations also began to flourish at the backdrop of past interactions.

Chapter 3

Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Russia-India Relations During the Cold War Period, 1953-1991

India achieved independence in August 1947 when the cold war era unfolded in the world order in which two competing power blocks led by US and Soviet Union were struggling for power. The bilateral relations between Soviet Union/Soviet Russia and India in the cold war era has generally been viewed as a success story. The close Indo-Soviet relations without any sort of serious confrontation and conflict of interests had even turned as a hallmark of cold war international relations. The commonality of civilizational values, influence of political ideas and past cultural interactions are highlighted as factors that promoted such a close cooperation between the two entities since 1947. In the cold war era, the identity of the nation-states undergone transformation and culture became highly significant in determining identity of the nation-states. The impact of the cold war was felt most by the Soviet Union/Russia had to struggle between dichotomy of old identity and new identity. Cultural diplomacy practiced by countries reflects majorly in the foreign policy of the nation-states and its relation with the domestic representation in the cultural diplomacy practise.

In the cold war era, the identity of the nation-states undergone transformation and culture became highly significant in determining identity of the nation-states. The impact of the period of cold war was felt most by the Soviet Union, which reflects in the policies, Institutionalization and practices of cultural relations. The Soviet Union underwent a great struggle between dichotomy of old identity and emerging new identity. India also faced the same challenges in different form

which made them to do complete overhaul of the system. Cultural diplomacy practiced by the Soviet Union and India reflects majorly in the foreign and cultural policy and practise of the nation-states and its relation with the domestic representation in the cultural diplomacy practise.

The Soviet Union and India, both the countries incorporated new elements in its policies during cold war and accordingly tried to present themselves to the world. India's efforts after independence to present their new image consist of its cultural practises and the Soviet Union after socialist revolution had same situation. Cultural diplomacy has been adopted by both the countries not only in their policies but established through institutional framework. There were many institutions which are carrying forward cultural diplomacy between Russia and India. Institutions like ICCR and RCSC are actively engaged and contributing in the practice of cultural diplomacy by taking programmes.

Cold War Era and Great Power Cultural Diplomacy

Cold war period was an important period as far as cultural diplomacy is concerned because two power blocs engaged in rivalry unprecedented in history utilised cultural diplomacy to overpower the other and hegemonies international relations. Cold War used passive way of addressing hostility between two superpowers through cultural diplomacy. Cold War used passive way of addressing hostility between two powerful ideological blocs (David, Mcknight. 2008). It was fought without any use of direct physical violence against each other.

Although the international system became more stable the repercussions of cold war were severe for the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union got disintegrated and lost its existing legacy of being a superpower. After the disintegration the identity of the Soviet (as the successor state was in jeopardy and in the new

setting Russia has to evolve a new identity and pursue domestic and foreign policies in terms with the existing world scenario (Chepesiuk, Ron. 2005). All the economic, political and policy changes were the result of the situation which occurred due to its disintegration. During the same period of history India was also undergoing systematic changes and brought massive changes in its economic system which also affected political and social order.

Contestation based on ideological premises led many nations to join one bloc or there and that certainly hampered their development. The experience of small nation-states was more terrible than the big ones. The understanding of the nation-states based on national interest was about to fail. The identity of small states was reduced to two camps led by the USA and USSR. Nation states though were sovereign were not independent as they have no identity of their own and their relationship were basically were guided by the ideology they were supporting. When the cold war ends, craving of the nation states to form independent identity started manifested. The world was turning into multipolar rather than bipolar (Nadir, Christine Leila. 1994). In the pursuit to form an independent identity they started to assert their culture and started forging relationship based on culture rather concentrating only on military relationship.

The importance of cultural diplomacy which was earlier undermined popped up on the screen as one of the most essential way developing relationship. Many regional corporations have been started in which nation found space to assert their identity. It has been observed that the relation solely based upon the will of the government is not feasible and it required a public diplomacy where the role of public is equally important. After cold war the era of globalisation begins and with the advancement of technology communication became easy and people started learning about other societies and nations (Nadir, Christine Leila. 1994). It has been realised that even economic trade is a result of cultural understanding.

Though there are countries which use culture as form of power and try to manipulate and apply it as propaganda. Cultural diplomacy has long been treated as a tool which assists hard power or it has no independent significance and therefore the concept of soft power where hegemony of one culture over the other has been propagated.

The very nature of the cold war was to enhance the hegemony of one power bloc over the other. The contestation between the USSR and USA was mainly over the superiority claim of one's scientific knowledge, military skill, cultural values, ideological beliefs etc over the other. The fight between the USSR and USA was over the issue of, who will first go to space, who will first land on moon; every newly decolonised nation will establish socialist/communist or capitalist government in their country etc. "ideology thus defines first of all the ultimate purposes to which policy must aspire" (Brzezinski, Zbigniew. 1960). In 1960 itself, the author has stated that the very nature of policies were to seek conformity with the ideology which became highly important during the cold war. It reflected in the cultural policies as well. Whatever cultural relations both the countries would establish with newly emerged nations was intended to create ground for their ideological, geopolitical, and economic interest in newly decolonised countries. Sometimes these cultural interactions partly intended to culturally re-colonize them.

Under the rivalry of superiority, the culturally, ideologically, politically and economically diverse world has been reduced into two poles. "The post-war cold war had generated a bipolar world of two religious-type ideologies - capitalism and communism. Each side claimed to represent "god and goodness" while consigning the opposite side to the "devil and wickedness"" (Naidu, M.V. 1991). Naidu has said that the communism was being treated their as a religion and over a period of time, it was impossible to question the political ideology practised

through policies. The intention of both the blocks was to vilify the other, which could be successfully accomplished through ridiculing culture of the opposite.

Joanne Salle Kernitz has expressed the horrors of wars in an article written in 2004. All the world literature and philosophy was very much affected by the horrid experience of the World War II. The very existence of human race was in jeopardy and people were craving for peace. “I look forward to the days and months that are to be. What will the world be like tomorrow, or next week, or next year, I wonder? Will peace be any nearer? Will we be any safer, any freer? Where will hope be?” (Kernitz, Joanne Salle. 2004). So the wars did great devastation not only to the resources and lives, but also to the morals and psyche of the humans at the more subtle level. Cultural diplomacy in international relations in general and specifically in Russia, India relations has provided an opportunity to counter the political conflicts.

In the understanding of the historicity of the shaping of the world and its relations gives a glimpse of forms of diplomacy and changes it incorporated over the period of time. “Is the ' new world order ' a euphemism for Pax Americana or a real attempt to reshape the world order towards a. more equitable, more co-operative and more progressive system” (Nanjundan, S. 1991). S Nanjundan questioned the very concept of peace in the unilateral power is bequeathed with the responsibility of establishing peace. So the Global world order which emerged after the cold war seems equally unfit because the very basis of the establishment and origin of global world order was based upon power and hegemony. In the dichotomy of the establishment of peace through using coercion and force lies the reason for the marginalisation of cultural diplomacy

The intensity and volume of human casualties and wastage of resources in several bilateral and multilateral wars and arms hostility during modern age is unimaginably vast and rapid in comparison to pre-modern period. The

devastation caused by two world wars followed by several small wars and cold war as a result of rivalry between communist and capitalist block gradually compelled leading thinkers and diplomats to look for a peaceful and more humane world, beyond the conception of mode of production or government system which are based on power relations (Fess, Simeon D. 1923). Many horrific incidents in our history contributed being us suspicious at its extreme. Our psyche is overburdened by the turbulence of two world wars and many other substantially devastating minor wars. The experiences of cold war made nation-states, essentially more suspicious and hostile to each other in everyday working or in the functioning of diplomacy. The development of relations between different nations are therefore affected by their historical experiences of wars, threats and suspicion which narrowed down the possibility of anything other than military alliances and essential economic relations or both.

Cultural diplomacy uses music, drama, literature, art dance, cultural exchange programmes. Defining culture is a difficult task but as far in relation to nations are concerned culture gives nations identity, it reflects the society, their beliefs and traditions and suggest the common ground through which nations can build relations. A nation in a word, is a “cultural system,” and international relations are interactions among cultural systems. (Iriye, Akira. 1979). UNESCO defines culture as the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or a social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs”(Banerjee, Utpal K 1997). Cultural diplomacy thrives on the cultural history nation-states share, values, policies and economic and political collaborations.

The cultural policy of the Soviet Union was no less than propaganda. Jean Francois Fayet analysed the Cultural diplomacy practised by the USSR since the

beginning of 1920s and the author stated that the intention of the cultural diplomacy then was to promote the controlled image of the Soviet Union to the outside world which was working through different means, and event those organisation which are not promoted by the government were indirectly supported and controlled by the government (Fayet 2010).

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through policies. The intention of both the blocks was to vilify the other, which could be successfully accomplished through ridiculing culture of the opposite.

In the midst of superpower rivalry and the ideological blocks they led India chose to be neutral and not align with any block and followed the policy of non-alignment. Scholars observed that the greatest threat of dividing the world into two power blocs is to put under threat the vibrant cultural interaction between different cultures, within national and international boundaries. Civilisations developed with its cultural identities and they evolve by interacting with other cultures as evident from history (Sharma 2003). Any attempt to disrupt the process of cross cultural interactions, is a threat to civilization itself. The centrality of power affected the world structure to a great extent and refrained regional interactions for a long time.

Regionalism as a world order emerged after the end of power contestation between the two power blocs. “While their progress is necessarily informed by geographical, political, economic, strategic and cultural concerns that are region-specific” (Fawcett, Louise. 2004). Louise explaining the regional history and framework explicitly informs the essential elements and norms of regionalism which are positive and negative and the author is critical towards the forced regionalism which are basically security based.

It was the political development at the international politics and domestic issues at that time that shaped foreign policy priorities of Soviet Union and India. The priorities of foreign policy were entirely different from what the Soviet Union used to proclaim. Notwithstanding the Marxist principle of the dream of world revolution the successor of Stalin have diluted the core of their foreign policy. Khrushchev’s interpretation of peaceful coexistence is an evidence of the dilution of the long cherished goal of the Soviet Union.

Ulysses in an article in 1962 pointed out the meaning of peaceful existence to the world, means that the Soviet Union's desire to have peaceful relation with non communist nations "a-relationship of mutual tolerance, excluding not only military conflict but also hostile action" but Khrushchev's interpretation implies that "the "policy of peaceful coexistence" is only a new form of the struggle against the non-communist world" (Ulysses, 1962). The core of the Russian foreign policy is different for instance the foreign policy document of 2016 talks about democratic institutionalisation, international peace, national interest, strengthening of economy, assistance to neighbouring states, improvement in bilateral relations, human rights, stability of international system and most important focus on culture, its promotion in the form of language, history, identity etc (MFA, Russian Federation. 2016).

Therefore, deviation in the foreign policy priorities from the Soviet Union era to Russia (present time) evidently portraying the two different images. The vivid picture of the scenario of two different regimes pinpoint that the understanding of the international relations have changed drastically in Russia. In the matter of culture and its accommodation in Russian foreign policy, the very core of the policy of the two regimes and their comparative analyses makes the picture clear. Soviet Union's formulation of culture was very narrow and that two put forward by the elites in power. It was not the representation of the mass culture, which has given space to the every community which later became the reason for disintegration.

New economic reforms bring forth the debate of national which was greatly influenced by the Russia's economic concerns as analysed by Peter Rutland in the book where he argued that the economic reforms affected the ideology of nationalism in Russia (Rutland, Peter. 2016). The nationalism which was

changing because of new economic reforms and political rights the culture in it was taking a new course which reflects in the cultural policy of Russia.

Russian foreign policy recognises the culture in the form of national identity. It has no desire to have confrontation with the other cultures in the name of international communism. Russian foreign policy talks about the mutual understanding of two different cultures and promulgation of Russian culture in order to enhance understanding, and mutual sharing of values is a step in the direction. Policy priorities on nation-states is largely depended upon the image and perception as in 1990 authors Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley studied the public response in choosing individual priorities and found that the soviet Union's communism and its desire to expand is a serious security threat to the country like the US "perceptions of threat can come from many sources, including the military prowess of the USSR and, as well, from beliefs that the Soviet Union is a nation determined to expand its influence" (Hurwitz, Jon and Mark Peffley. 1990).

In the wake of new Russian foreign policy priorities, the perception against it also changed. The importance of cultural diplomacy becomes essential in such an ambience, where the perception works against nation-state in international arena. Cultural diplomacy can alter this image and make positive public opinion in the world. Russia's new policy documents show their tilt towards the propagation of their culture in order to create positive attitude. Their fight against terrorism, assistance and aid to other nations is also a part of the same project.

Indian foreign policy also had undergone change during the cold war period. Similar to Russia, India had to shrug off the ideological yoke in international relations. Once the leader of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) which believed

in the independent and sovereign existence with the idea of peaceful coexistence, India has now turned towards gaining economic stability and achieving national interest. H.K. Paranjape in 1988 stated that the liberalisation in small doses, which have been done by the government since 1960s will not work and it needs complete change and structural reforms “Every time a basic structural change which would lay down clear-cut guidelines and rely on macro-instruments has been suggested, those in power have defeated it (Paranjape, H.K. 1988).

Structural changes meant to change the whole formulation of foreign policy. It was the time of economic primacy, which encourages India to redefine its image, policies and relationship with the world. Supporting the cause of international economic organisation, relying on regional cooperation and engaging with the world was the order of the day. The national identity had to be created because the traditional identity India was in jeopardy.

The liberalisation effort, structural changes were for the stability of the economy and an effort to come to terms with the world economy. Kamal NayanKabra argued that the changes brought were a clear sign that the orientation and priorities are changed and they are outwardly “It means recognising that the purposes, priorities, agents, instruments and processes of growth of the economy have been changed in a market-friendly, externally-oriented direction” (Kabra, Kamal Nayan. 1996). The ideological traits of the foreign policy were no more defining the Indian foreign policy. India could not depend upon the aid of international community. National interest became important but with the slight deviation with the existing notion of nation interest as support to the peace effort, cultural understanding, and support to the international peace efforts, fight against terrorism became the integral part of the Indian foreign policy.

Itty Abraham analyses the uniqueness of Indian foreign policy and what it can offer in the future. He states that India is increasingly become powerful and there is lot of potential and India was among those few who have been outspoken in matters of racial privilege, unequal distribution of power in international relations, colonialism etc but in the contemporary times they no longer speak the same language (Abraham, Itty. 2007).

In international relations, India's experiment with the Non-Alignment Movement was a strategic policy with the content of culture. There were strategic reasons behind the movement for sure but the very nature of the movement and the philosophy it proposed was cultural in nature. The Non-Alignment Movement to some extent intended to recognise world with diversity in every aspect. India's experience of experimenting with mixed economy in post-independence period was an attempt to go beyond the bipolar rivalry (Gopal, B. 1991). But it is believed that, despite India disassociated itself from joining either of the two camps; India was more close to communist camp at least till early 1980s. Non-Aligned Movement was an extraordinary experiment in promoting cultural diplomatic relations.

It had recognised the cultural identity of nation-states in International arena and tried to go beyond agreements, trade and military relations. Non-Alignment Movement not only advocated peace and disarmament it also raised voice against other forms of exploitation. "It [Non-Alignment Movement] raised its voice against colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, racialism and exploitation in various forms of the newly independent nations" (Gopal, B. 1991). The concerns of the movement suggest it's serious towards recognition of independent existence and identity of nation-states in international relations. However the movement could not grasped the intrinsic contradiction of international relations

existing then, as a consequence of post war environment and therefore moved to oblivion over a period of time (Jayaramu P S. 1991).

Despite the fact that non-aligned movement could not accomplish what it intended to, but it was India's first institutional experiment of cultural diplomacy. The integration and interaction resulted from Non alignment was exemplary and facilitated regionalism which is essential for the development of cultural diplomacy. From independence till cold war, India had maintained its separation, from two blocs of power and endeavoured to forge an alliance based of the principle of Panchsheel and peaceful coexistence of those countries that do not wish to join any power blocs dominant then in international politics, led by the US and the Soviet Union (Manoranjan, Mohanty. 2005).

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communist nations “a-relationship of mutual tolerance, excluding not only military conflict but also hostile action” but Khrushchev’s interpretation implies that “the "policy of peaceful coexistence" is only a new form of the struggle against the non-communist world” (Ulysses, 1962).

Russia-India Cultural Relations/Diplomacy

Russia and India gave due importance and place to culture in their foreign policies as it became the part of political system in the new world order. Russia-India relations during the cold war could be seen in three phases of important leaders of both countries: 1. Khrushchev and Nehru; 2. Brezhnev and Indira Gandhi and 3. Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi.

Khrushchev-Nehru Era

In Nikitin Khrushchev’s period drastic changes took place because after the death of Joseph Stalin, de-Stalinisation process has been initiated by Khrushchev. It was period of liberalisation from the perspective of arts and culture. Restrictions have been uplifted, censorship removed and many prisoners have been freed from captivity for not being compliant with the will and wish of Stalin. This policy was known as ‘Thaw’, it was very popular at the time, because it completely changed the scenario in the Soviet Union. This policy not only opened up new avenues for the artists and institutions to propagate culture, which is not so much restricted only to follow some ideology. As far as India is concerned, not much liking was there initially and therefore no special treatment but owing to the history of cultural relations, the scenario changed and Jawaharlal Nehru and Nikita Khrushchev could build up relations beyond the initial hesitation and political inhibition.

India's relationship with Soviet Union began to flourish in the Khrushchev era with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Soviet Union in 1955. Convergence of Indian and Soviet views on a broad spectrum of issues like Korean question, China's UN membership, US military aid to Pakistan, Soviet support to India on Kashmir and Goa issues, Soviet neutrality on India-China conflict of 1962, Soviet negotiation in India-Pak conflict in 1965, etc. shaped Indo-Soviet relations. In 1955 Soviet Union accepted the position that Kashmir is integral part of Indian Union (Pant 2013: 2-3 quoted in Usha 2016). By late A. R. Chakraborty in engaging in the debate of Russian literature and language in 1966 or in the soviet era states many reasons behind the study of Russian language in India for instance the political orientation and implication, practical purposes etc and he raises question also about the situation of the study of Russian languages in India as according to him there are many institutes which teach the language but the lacks full time and comprehensive teaching on the same subject (Chakraborty, A.R. 1966). A centre for Soviet studies began in Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Brezhnev-Indira Gandhi Era

Brezhnev policy and especially his cultural policies are important because the policies presented then were part of the transition phase in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union started feeling the tremors of a great earthquake, which could change the whole political landscape. Education is one important area where almost all the leaders have their intervention. Since the time of Stalin, when education became highly corrupt and moralistic where even pupils had to observe strict rules and they have to study separately, No matter what but the whole exercise of policy making to a great extent was associated with the ideology the Soviet Union.

The cultural policies of the Soviet Union could not be separated from the ideology they follow. In the period of Brezhnev education is one important area where his government wanted to make necessary. So the very intention of all the policies is to make the last person be a part of it. Progress in developing the education Students accepted into universities increasingly came from professional families rather than worker or peasant households. This trend toward the perpetuation of the educated elite was not only a function of the superior cultural background of elite families but also, in many cases, a result of their power to influence admissions procedures (The Soviet Heritage, ch. 5).

Leonid Brezhnev in a forward to a book 'Pages from his Life' that

“Like all Soviet People, I have deep respect and affection for the people of India. I have been lucky to visit your country twice and have seen the splendid monuments of your ancient culture created by gifted masters as well as your modern cities and building projects which are symbols of present India.

(Brezhnev. 1979)

He further mentions that the “Friendship of our peoples has its roots in the remote past. As long ago as the fifteenth century the Russian explorer Afanasi Nikitin came to India” (Brezhnev. 1979). Leonid Brezhnev said that “the people of India, its outstanding leaders Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, the great write Rabindranath Tagore and many others, showed a deep interest in our country. The Soviet- Indian Treaty of Peace, friends and cooperation signed in 1971 is a formal expression of all that we had. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971 Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was another landmark event in the relation between the two countries (Imam 1987). The significance of this Treaty is reflected in the words of K.P.S. Menon: “I have never known a measure which was greeted with such a widespread enthusiasm by my countrymen as the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The immediate reaction was

one of instantaneous relief. It was as if one has been walking alone through a dark forest infested with snakes and robbers and suddenly emerged into a sunlit glade” (quoted in Sahai 1990: 12; Menon 1971 quoted in Usha 2016). This treaty had become the legal foundation for Indo-Soviet relations. Since then Indo-Soviet relations strengthened with defence, energy, trade, metallurgy, culture, strategic and diplomatic relations as the priority areas of cooperation.

A far as literature and the arts is concerned, creative phase feels like work. There were varieties of creative works, relate to arts started popping up. The availability of literature and other forms of art as this is when people are aware of the situation and they have witnessed the phase of Stalin, where they have seen censorship. New forms and experimentation was possible in the Soviet Union only after the decade of 1970s which was not at all possible earlier. The regime loosened the strictures of socialist realism; thus, for instance, many protagonists of the novels of author Yuriy Trifonov concerned themselves with problems of daily life rather than with building socialism.

In music, although the state continued to frown on such Western phenomena as jazz and rock, it began to permit Western musical ensembles specializing in these genres to make limited appearances. But the native balladeer Vladimir Vysotskiy, widely popular in the Soviet Union, was denied official recognition because of his iconoclastic lyrics. In the religious life of the Soviet Union, a resurgence in popular devotion to the major faiths became apparent in the late 1970s despite continued de facto disapproval on the part of the authorities. This revival may have been connected with the generally growing interest of Soviet citizens in their respective national traditions.

Gorbachev-Rajiv Gandhi Era

The Soviet Union and India both have witness change in the leadership almost at the same time. In the Soviet Union Gorbachev came in power, likewise in India Rajiv Gandhi ascended to power and both the leaders came to power when they were to be a part of the unprecedented happening in history. “After the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, after the assassination of Indira her son Rajiv Gandhi took over as the Prime Minister of India. The death of Soviet leader Chernenko, made Mikhail Gorbachev, took hold over the reins of the Soviet Union” (Gohar. 1987). "Jawaharlal Nehru bequeathed to us a foreign policy, which Indira Gandhi so creatively enriched [and] I shall carry it forward” (The Times of India. 1984). The newly elected Prime minister of India declared through these words, his political will and ideology to carry forward the legacy he became part of Indian foreign relations.

As far as foreign policy is concerned, Rajiv Gandhi was determined to follow the same path as Indira Gandhi which means to develop dialogue with Pakistan, follow the path of non-alignment and develop relations with the US (Gohar 1987). He expressed his ideas about the relationship with the Soviet Union as "We highly value the wide-ranging time tested relationship with Soviet Union, based upon mutual cooperation, friendship and vital support when most needed" (The Times of India. 1984). It was assumed in the media or even by scholars, that the new leadership in the hands of Rajiv Gandhi would be pro-west. His love for the transformation of technology was admirable and it also justifies the claims that new leadership. “Soviet Union's stress was more on continuity rather than change, and with them it was just a question of further strengthening the already warm relations existing between the two states” (Gohar 1987).

Although Rajiv Gandhi determined to become part of the legacy and try to develop relationships between Russia and India is not as new as it should be (Gohar. 1987). lows:

"Indira Gandhi attached much importance to strengthening friendship and developing comprehensive cooperation between the USSR and India. On this day the Soviet leadership reiterates the Soviet Union's constant striving to strengthen relations of friendship with the Republic of India". Rajiv Gandhi responded to the Soviet overtures initially in his first policy statement on 10 November. Then reiterated his preference in an interview to Time Magazine: "I see a strong relationship between India and the Soviet Union. We have been friends for a long time. They have been friends when we had needed them. And there are many issues in which we think alike".

The ideas and sentiments expressed in it confirm anew that Soviet-Indian friendship has deep and strong roots and traditions, that it faithfully serves the interest of the peoples of the USSR and India and accords with the noble goals of peace and security in Asia and all over the world. Vladimir Lenin, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru stood at the source of Soviet-Indian friendship. Indira Gandhi, that great daughter of the Indian people, who determinedly and consistently pursued a course of close friendship between India and the USSR, made an immense contribution to the strengthening and development of Soviet-Indian cooperation.

India's interest was in promoting global peace and stability, comprehensive Asian security, promoting the principles of non-violence, humanism and preventing threat of a new war and opposing racism and neo-colonialism. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to India in November 1986 and the signing of 10 point Delhi declaration by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Gorbachev on principles of nuclear weapons-free and non-violent world was a historical event in Indo-Soviet relations (Subrahmanyam 1987; Usha

2016). Gorbachev stated that Soviet people had special feelings for India, considering them as old friends and reliable partners. Lenin and Nehru are figures guided to shape mutual policies towards each other. In his interface with the journalists in India Gorbachev said that “Lenin was guided by respect for Indian people, when he insightfully predicted India’s important role in international affairs. The idea of Lenin motivated our policies and actions in regard to India. Many generations of Soviet and Indian leaders have worked hard so that we might see our relations in such a state today” (Subrahmanyam 1987: 37; Sahai 1990: 5; Usha 2016).

The basic principles for which India and Soviet Union stood for articulated in the Delhi Declaration of 1986 in defence of humanity stands relevant even today twenty-five years after the disintegration of Soviet Union. The principles were: “1. Peaceful co-existence must become the universal norm of international relations; 2. Human life must be recognized as supreme; 3. Non-violence should be the basis of community life; 4. Understanding and trust must replace fear and suspicion; 5. The right of every state to political and economic independence must be recognized and respected; 6. Resources being spent on armaments must be channelled towards social and economic development; 7. Conditions must be guaranteed for individuals’ harmonious development; 8. Mankind’s material and intellectual potential must be used to solve global problems; 9. The ‘balance of terror’ must give way to international security; 10. A nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world requires specific and immediate action for disarmament” (Sahai 1990: 17-18; Usha 2016).

Rajiv Gandhi emphasized that Delhi declaration is a historic document which embodies a comprehensive new framework for international relations based on freedom, equality and non-violence and is a major contribution to a cooperative

and peaceful world order. Its international significance will be seen in time (Sahai 1990: 22). However, before fulfilling the objective in the direction specified in the Declaration, Soviet Union became part of history leaving a more difficult situation to emerge in the international system, the solution for which India and Russia has to work together at the backdrop of the past civilizational, deep rooted, time-tested and friction-free relationship.

On the visit to Delhi Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi signed an agreement which was to reach the trade between the two countries by 150 percent by 1992. Gorbachev announced the credit of one billion to India for helping it to alleviate its technology in the sectors of power, oil, coal, ferrous metallurgy and machine building sectors. In the eleventh session of the Inter-governmental commission on economic and scientific-technical cooperation which held in the capital city of Moscow in June 1987. It focussed on the cooperation in the area of trade, business, economic and technical collaboration and to ensure the implementation of the plan of the summit meeting happened in Delhi (Gohar 1987)

Indo-soviet Cultural Society

Indo-Soviet Cultural Society was established in 1952, keeping a vision to build up relationship between USSR and India. The intention of the formation of a society was to strengthen people to people contact and organise programmes to enhance cross cultural understanding. Dr Baliga, Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew, Major-General Sahib Singh, Soklay, Rameshwani, Aruna Asaf Ali and others. Since its inception, the Indo-soviet cultural society is engaged in advancing the causes responsible to maintain cordial relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union and India. The objective of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society is to increase cooperation, to promote close cultural cooperation.

The activities of the Society shall include:

- (a) Holding meetings, lectures, discussions and study circles;
- (b) Facilitating exchange of delegations and all study tours between India and all friendly countries;
- (c) Staging plays and organizing symposia and poetry reading groups;
- (d) Arranging exhibitions of art, photographs, stamps, manuscripts, etc;
- (e) Organizing reading-rooms and libraries;
- (f) Assisting persons interested in learning each other's Languages:
- (g) Arranging the exchange of students, educationists, cultur
- (h) Workers, technicians and professionals from various social strata, of Indian cultural institutions and of the friendly countries.
- (i) Procuring translations into Indian languages of books and publications relating to life and culture of friendly countries and helping in translating material relating to Indian life and culture of Indian people into their languages
- (j) Publishing and distributing books, journals etc. relating to India and its culture and life;
- (k) Establishing fraternal relations and co-operation with the Societies for Friendship and cultural Relations with foreign countries and with the societies of friendship and cultural relations of the Friendly Countries;
- (l) Encouraging bilateral relation-ship between cities, universities and other institutions of India and States of Friendly countries;
- (m) Co-operating with institutions and organisations fostering cultural and friendly relations with other countries;
- (n) Other similar activities in furtherance of the aims of the society;
- (o) carrying out research into all matters covered under Aims and objects of the Society and to set up institutions wherein research work will be promoted

individually, institutionally and in co-operation with societies/organisations /prominent individual experts.

An exhibition of paintings of the Soviet Artists was held and Indian artists participated in the event and came directly in contact with the artists in the Soviet Union. Russian artists had the same experience (Upadhyaya 1977:2). Considerable work has been done in order to popularize the Russian cultural life and lot of work has been done in the quarter of the century with the advent of Indo-Soviet cultural society. There are atleast lot of people are coming to both the countries, those who are not part of any group as such. In 1963 Jawaharlal Nehru has written to the council of the Indo-Soviet cultural Society that our relations should be close and cooperative (Chopra 2003: 270). From Jawaharlal Nehru to Atal bihari Vajpayee, almost all the prime ministers have attached great importance to culture as far as Russia-India relations are concerned.

Russian Centre of Science and Culture

Establishment of the Russian Centre is strongly connected to Russian emigrants in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, after 1917 October Revolution. Idea for establishment comes from these emigrants, and it has been affirmed by His Royal Highness, the King Alexander, Serbian Patriarch Varnava, AleksandarBelić and other famous persons from Serbia. In the post-World War II period, Centre is established as the Home of Soviet Culture. Since 1994 to present it's called Russian Center of Science and Culture — The Russian House. (http://www.ruskidom.rs/pages_sr/ord.htm)

The Russian Center of Science and Culture (RCSC) has been operating in different countries since 1981. At first the RCSC was organized as a Soviet Centre of Science and Culture. The main goal is to promote the relations between Russia and other countries in the field of science, culture and education. The

legal basis for this cooperation is the agreement on cultural and scientific cooperation between Soviet Union and various countries in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asian states.

The RCSC organizes different programs for the citizens of representative states. Programs of the RCSC are dedicated to the achievements of Russian culture and science. Among them there are literary and poetic evenings, meetings with artists, painting exhibitions, book-exhibitions, photo-exhibitions, concerts, performance, presentations, conferences, seminars, discussions. RCSC introduces several modern different level programs for studying Russian language for Malaysians and foreigners. A number of different clubs and associations for children and adults work on the regular basis at the RCSC, where dance, painting, music etc. are taught and performed.

Functions

The activities of the Representative Office are directed at the forming of a fair image of modern Russia abroad, of its economic and intellectual potential, of the subject matter of domestic and foreign policy course of the country. The Representative Office works with the Russian non-profit, non-governmental and religious organizations, as well as government and non-governmental institutions in the academic, cultural, information and humanitarian field. The Representative Office actively cooperates with the civic institutions, utilizing the potential of public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is a joint activity of government and non-government organizations, the aim of which is to broaden international public relations of the state. The goal of *Rossotrudnichestvo* includes the implementation of the productive interaction between various non-governmental foundations, associations, unions and other organizations of Russia. The opportunities of “soft

power” are increasingly responsible for the current tasks that the Russian Federation faces outside: ensuring a favourable environment, the creation of modernization alliances, the strengthening of Eurasian integration.

Public diplomacy contributes not only to the strengthening of kindly feeling for our country, but also to the promotion of specific foreign policy state interests on social and interpersonal levels. Rossotrudnichestvo representatives have a challenge to implement: the productive interaction between various non-governmental foundations, associations, unions and other organizations of Russia and representative states. The representatives strongly collaborate with the civil society organization invoking a potential of a public diplomacy, working hand in glove in scientific, cultural, informational and humanitarian areas with non-profit, non-governmental and religious organizations, with government and non-governmental agencies.

Rossotrudnichestvo representatives pay special attention to work with governmental organizations and local NGOs supported by the nation’s leaders of a receiving country. The key of this activity is joint on-going events such as film festivals, thematic exhibitions and functions, concert programmes, seminars and “round tables”, competitions, demo lessons, Olympiads, and other events. Among major partners of the representatives in reference to India are: Friendship Society “India-Russia”, Indian Association of Friendship Society with Foreign Countries, Indian Alumni Association of Soviet/Russia Academic Institutions, All-India Association of Foreign Medical Universities Graduates, International Federation of Indo-Russian Youth Clubs, Film Society “Citizens’ Film Forum”, Forum of Indian Artists and photographers, Literary Society “Parichai Sahitya Parishad”, Indian Association of Teachers of Russian

Language and Literature, Roerich International Memorial Centre, Roerich Art Club, company “International Innovations” and many other.

The representatives intensively employ themed and jubilee activities to develop and strengthen relations with Indian partnership organizations and NGO’s. The representatives of the organizations mentioned above regularly participate in social and political, cultural and educational, and informative events of the RCSC that inspires audiences to follow the activities of the representatives, which are aimed at increasing prestige of the Russian Federation in representative countries.

Indian Council of Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was founded in 1950 by MaulanaAbulKalam Azad, independent India’s first Education Minister. Its objectives are to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India’s external cultural relations; to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries; to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people; and to develop relations with nations.

The Council addresses its mandate of cultural diplomacy through a broad range of activities. In addition to organising cultural festivals in India and overseas, the ICCR financially supports a number of cultural institutions across India, and sponsors individual performers in dance, music, photography, theatre, and the visual arts. It also administers the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding, established by the Government of India in 1965, whose last award was in 2009. (Union Performance Civil Autonomous Bodies 16 2013 Chapter 4 (Indian council for cultural relations)).

Indian Council of Cultural Relations

The Major Functions of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations are:

Empanelment of performing artists

To showcase the best of Indian performing and visual arts, the Council empanels performing artists who are proficient in their field. Empanelled artistes are added to a reference list, and may receive sponsorship from the Council when they perform internationally.

Sponsorships

The ICCR offers 1804 scholarships every year, on behalf of the Government of India, to international students who choose to study various artistic and cultural disciplines in India. Undergraduate and Postgraduate students from over 70 countries have benefited from this scheme.

Exhibitions

Promoting India's rich cultural heritage overseas is a central role of the Council. To this end, it sponsors exhibitions of India's contemporary, and traditional arts, in major events worldwide. Under various cultural exchange programmes, the ICCR also sponsors exhibitions of Indian art and crafts in foreign countries, and hosts return exhibitions from overseas.

Publications

The ICCR has extensive publication programme with the publication of six quarterly journals in five different languages. These include

1. Indian Horizons English
2. Africa Quarterly English
3. Gagananchal Hindi
4. Papeles de la India Spanish
5. Rencontre Avec l' Inde French

6. Thaqafat-ul-Hind Arabic

In addition the Council has published a wide range of books, covering a variety of culturally oriented subjects. Published works include the writings of eminent Indian statesmen and philosophers like Mohandas K. Gandhi, Maulana Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Abanindranath Tagore. The ICCR's Publication Programme, focusses on books relating to Indian culture, philosophy and mythology, traditional music, dance, and theatre. Translation of Sanskrit classics into foreign languages (including French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and English) and translating works of World Literature into Hindi and other Indian languages is central to the ICCR philosophy of cultural exchange and diversity.

The work of the cultural centre in the case of Europe is to strengthen the engagement between the European Union and India, seeing the potential of growth of India and bringing expertise from both regions. India Cultural Center facilitates the European research community's expertise on India, with PhDs in this area and with few modules on India being taught on either undergraduate or postgraduate programmes. The increasing importance of India as a world economic and political power means that Europe needs to train a new generation of experts who understand the political, economic and social developments in India, have experience of living and working in the country, and have the cultural awareness, languages and research skills necessary to observe and analyse how India's engagement with the world is changing.

Literature and Language

The propaganda literature for the Soviet period especially which is coming from the western shore during the cold war era focuses mainly on the Soviet ideological literature in the third world. The Soviet documents show completely a different picture as in their opinion; it lacks ideological content according to the

Soviet Union. Soviet documents show a concern about the lack of ideological literature for India (Barghoorn. 1979). In 1960 there was no much availability of ideological literature – at least in the sense that Soviets claim it or published in English on Indian History or Indian politics. For instance, according to the soviet diplomats there is not much literature on important historical events in Indian history, such as the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 (Sager 1966).

The direct book exchange between libraries was not systematic and not frequent. There was a problem with the publishing of specific and general vocabulary books, especially in spoken Indian languages. Dr. Ganghili from Delhi School of Economics showed Soviet diplomats American editions of Soviet scholarly articles on Asian countries in English (Gould 2003). As far as language is concerned, that was also not satisfactory either for instance Calcutta University had one Russophone professor Guseva, a person that had not lived in the Soviet Union for over 30 years, and who apparently had emigrated to India in the 1920s. Guseva was asking the Soviets for new materials to teach Russian because Calcutta University only had manuals published either in the US or in the UK (Saunders 1999).

The exchange of scientists did not have a systematic base before the 1960 Cultural Ties Agreement (Andreev 2003). The same can be said about invitations for Indian businesspeople, newspaper editors, rectors of universities, and ministers of Indian states. The lack of scientific ties featured prominently in a report from an orientalist scholar of the USSR Academy of Science Ulyanovsky R.A. (1904-1995) who participated in the Forty Seventh Indian Scientific Congress between December 30, 1959 and January 21, 1960 (Saunders 1999). This situation improves after the decade of 1960s or in the post Stalin's era, as censorship was no more characteristic feature of the Soviet Union's policy.

Literature started moving beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union and was flooding in India and started influencing people in India and Likewise people started liking Indian literature in the Soviet Union(Firma, 1986).. Translation started in this period. Gorkhy's characters and novels became very popular and his novel 'Mother' inspired ideologues of naxalbari movements. The novel "Hazar Chaurasi ki Ma was inspired by Gorkhy's 'Mother' Likewise Great Indian figures like Rabindranath Tagore, Ishwarchand Vidyasagar, M.N. Roy were very much influence by the Russian Literature (Firma, 1986).

Russian literature which started becomes very popular in the decade 1960 in Bengal owing to the social movement in Bengal. Russian Marxist literature became highly important in the West Bengal. The left tradition made that literature alive and popular. (Stacey 1985).

Radio

Radio was (and continues to be) considered as perhaps the most influential and significant channels for spreading ideological propoganda, due to the estimates of the Soviet Union that about 80 per cent of the Indian population was illiterate in the starting of the decade of 1960s. The primary concern was, naturally, to leave behind the Voice of America (VOA) radio station. As per the Soviet reports, VOA had as many as 105 radio stations by 1963 spread across the world—be it in US, UK, Morocco, Liberia or Greece, Ceylon, Philippines, and Japan. The route of the Indian station was quite interesting—signals for India went from Morocco and Philippines to three huge transmitters in Ceylon. Further, Moscow Radio had four shortwave frequencies in five different languages-- English, Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, and Tamil. Moscow Radio primarily gave out news about the happenings and events in the Soviet Union, including its social and political life.

Interestingly, Moscow Radio even conducted a survey poll in India pertaining questions about the quality of the radio signal, as well as the popularity of the radio station. The answers to the poll revealed that Indians then were quite interested in not only the Soviet economic and scientific achievements, but also in the culture of the Soviet Central Asian republics, along with the development of India-Soviet relations with respect to particularly economy and technology. Moscow Radio even broadcasted Russian as well as English language lessons. One of the glaring issues that the people of India had with the station, as surfaced in the poll, was the fact that it lacked programs related to the Indian scenario, issues and themes. Indian music, for instance, was missed by the Indian audience and they suggested that music from Indian movies should also be broadcasted by Moscow Radio.

The Indian findings, however, were a little different. In the year 1964, an Indian poll revealed that only about three percent of Indian urban radio listeners had ever listened to the Moscow Radio station. While the 'Cultural Ties' agreement had allowed for the exchange of radio programs between India and the Soviet, which theoretically meant that the Soviets now had access to Indian stations, but back home, the Indian radio stations did not broadcast Soviet Union's radio programs, particularly those touching political themes.

The All India Radio (the major radio station in India), claiming that it was only an entertainment station, neither accepted nor broadcasted programs on the theme of politics. Another issue which was prominent then was the fact that the Soviets primarily used frequencies which were quite difficult for cheap radio receivers to capture. This invariably meant that the Soviets had to invest much more to be able to reach the wide Indian audience, most of whom used cheap receivers.

It is no doubt that Soviet Union and India enjoyed and shared positive power relations. The 1960 cultural ties agreement, which allowed the two nations to have a variety of exchanges, is a glaring example of 'soft power' dynamics between India and Soviet Union. This agreement came at a time when the Americans had an expansive presence in India, with much more developed student exchange programs taking place between India and the US. With both the superpowers using various forms (majorly radio and literature) to influence India in their ideological cold war, one of the chief themes deployed by Soviet Union was creation of a shared, common cultural ground and past. It is pertinent to mention here that though the Indian war with China in 1962 did some cultural damage between India-Soviet relations, the threat of an India-Pakistan war meant that India continues to seek help from the Soviets.

Cinema

Cinema has played not only an effectual, but a poignant role in cultural relations between India and Russia. From the raging fans of Raj Kapoor and Nargis in the USSR to Mithun Chakrabarty in recent times, Bollywood has long been appreciated in Russia from the 1950s onwards. Bollywood has a long and raging history in Russia where Bollywood stars and film classics are revered and replayed to this day. Film critic Alexander Lipkov believes that the first Indian film to be screened in the Soviet Union was Nimai Ghosh's *Chhinnamul*. Popular success for Indian films began with the screening of *Awara* at the end of 1954. At the first Indian film week, it was well received by both professionals and others (Lipkov and Mathew 1994).

Bollywood overcame two major shortcomings of the Soviet film industry- the first was the tight watch kept on the content of films. Filmmakers and producers had a narrow range of what they could depict in films. Raj Kapoor's '*Awara*'

marks a threshold as it contained within itself, the aspirations longed by a post-Stalinist era, of a break from dry cinema upon which Stalin kept strict watch. The concern was not with what the audience wanted, but state propaganda of what ought to be, fed into film and commercialized. Bollywood provided a zesty flavour to icy depictions- it portrayed dreams of a Soviet society on the silver screen, beyond patriotism and images of an 'ideal society'. Storylines that predictably swirled around the themes of sympathy for the oppressed, socialist egalitarianism and the triumph of good over evil resonated with Russians at the time (Bhasthi, Deepa. 2015).

The second concern was that Soviet film industry never really catered to its audience, it didn't create for the viewer. It stifled under the stress of pandering to the ideology of the state, and the industry suffered due to the lack of freedom of expression. It perhaps helped that in the 1950s both India and Russia were in similar situations – the former, newly free, the latter, reeling under losses from WWII. It helped to be able to sit in a dark hall for up to four hours and laugh and cry and escape from the drudgery of life outside. With the collapse of the USSR, the mighty distribution machinery of American films began to churn louder and louder. (Bhasthi, Deepa. 2015). With liberalisation came in Hollywood and a new age of global commercial cinema impacted both India and Russia- killing Indian cultural- film diplomacy softly.

The reason, may critics state, for the success of India films in Russia was also one of cultural proximity shared especially with the former Republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasia, and such specific ethnic groups as, for instance, the gypsies (Lipkov, A., & Mathew, T.,1994). This cultural affinity was shared in views, ideas and aspirations, not in terms of nation-states. Alexander Lipkov who wrote extensively on cinema in the Soviet Union from the 1970s onwards

credits much of his work to Bollywood. He states that "writing in newspapers and journals on responses to films is a particularly Soviet phenomenon. Sociologically analysed, the abundance of such writing reflects the inadequacy of other forms of participation in life, a compensation for the lack of the civil liberties and of the scope for self-expression"(Lipko and Mathew 1994).

What made Indian cinema more palatable to Russian audiences as well as the state was that it came from a friendly country, but this was indeed a two-way process. The success of such cinema also fuelled a softer image of India in Soviet minds, as these films saw no censorship even during dictatorial times when Russia's own productions were under heavy scrutiny. Several bollywood films with themes on social revolution and political freedom were hugely popular in Russia in the pre-perestroika years. The Russian cultural influence also travelled back to India and several left- leaning filmmakers put these themes on the screen. The most prominent of these was Utpal Dutt, who translated Gorky's "Mother" onto the film screen, a film that is well forgotten today; along with Mrinal Sen and Satyajit Ray.

However, popular Hindi cinema fared best in Russian theatres. Audiences often walked out when films about poverty and harsh realities of life were screened, and Bollywood's classic flare and romance were most celebrated. Lipkov crowd sourced opinions and impact of Bollywood film on Russian audiences and found out that Bollywood gave people a new visual, a way to dream which was unavailable till then. Hindi cinema's explosion of colours, characters that are strong and sensitive, a simple contrast of good and evil, all gave the audience hope and colour into the greyness they experienced in life. Bollywood was portraying the dream as it were, with an exuberance of beauty brought to life on screen. Through the 1970s this trend continued, till a lull in Bollywood itself and a new age of globalisation in cinema abroad.

Chapter 4

Cultural Diplomacy in Russia and India Strategic Partnership in the Post-Cold War Era, 1991-2010

The Soviet disintegration was a great shock to India and left her with uncertainty and chaos in the initial years. Russia was preoccupied with economic recovery from the ruins and miseries generated by Soviet disintegration. Boris Yeltsin who was President followed Atlanticist pro-western policies. Atlanticists were not interested in developing relations with India. Therefore, there was a neglect of India in the initial years, i.e., during 1991-1993 by Russia. But since 1993 change towards a more Eurasianist approach reflected in Russian policy during Yeltsin period itself. Russian leadership understood that the US and west were not treating Russia as an equal partner, but they expect Russia to be a junior partner. They realised the need of establishing strong bilateral relations with India.

On the occasion of the Presidential visit to India in the early 1993, Yeltsin declared, “the time for Russia’s concentration on partnership with the West has come and gone. The recent series of visits to South Korea, China and now India is indicative of the fact that we are moving away from western emphasis in Russian diplomacy.” Further, multipolarity as a concept in Russian foreign policy was consolidated by former Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov. Primakov believed that Russia, like any other great power, should develop a diverse foreign policy cultivating strong ties with both the West and with China, India, Japan and countries of the Far East and Middle East (Belopolsky 2009: 20; Usha 2016). Against this backdrop Russia-India relation exemplifies cultural diplomacy playing an important role.

Cultural cooperation between Russia and India is not just a long time phenomenon but pervades all the possible areas of cooperation. In some areas the history of cultural cooperation exists even before 1991 and in some areas the systematic and organized cooperation initiated after 1991. After the demise of the Soviet Union, the cultural practise and image of Russia has changed. The period after the disintegration was a period of increased activities in the international cooperation from the Russian side. Culture also works as the framework for right policies in other areas as well; right cultural policy gives direction to the policies “cultural policy, by allocating values on a non-discriminatory or discriminatory basis to certain cultural categories, can be distributive or redistributive” (Rudolph, Lloyd I. 1993). The new economic system opened up new avenues and since with some ups and downs, cultural cooperation between Russia and other countries is continuously spiralling.

Theoretically, cultural diplomacy in the form of cultural identity, soft power and creative economy respectively has been taken into consideration in International Relations in the post-cold war period. It has been viewed that International Relations cannot be limited to power as conceived by realism or hard diplomacy, but it has moved beyond to social, political and economic dimensions which are being taken into consideration. Contemporary scholars use cultural diplomacy synonymously with concepts like ‘soft power diplomacy’, ‘public diplomacy’, etc. But cultural diplomacy cannot be equated with “soft power” diplomacy’, as coined by Joseph Nye (Nye, Joseph. 1990). Because the primary focus of soft ‘diplomacy’ is to influence through means other than military. In the case of cultural diplomacy, it is about ‘dialogue’ and through dialogue to promote understanding. Cultural diplomacy cannot be equated with public diplomacy also as it is about influencing other’s view point to one’s own favour. Cultural diplomacy softly plays on the heart.

In the post cold war era, the identity of the nation states no more associated with the ideological position or block they associate. Identity since the cold war is collective representation of the culture and therefore it is in the helm of the foreign policies. During the cold war, both the superpowers have used culture to contain the other power and the culture identity overshadowed the political identity of the superpowers. Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried in their book argued that the culture as opined by different scholars that the culture has been used by the states for different purposes including manipulation “between 1945 and 1989-1991, culture productions became the most powerful tools for the promotion of ideological goals and strategies” (Gienow-Hecht, Jessica C.E. and Mark C. Donfried. 2010). The political simulation to the cultural policies which characterised the cold war era came to an end, opening new avenues or possibilities of the usage of culture especially in the formation of the national identities.

Conceptualisation and usage of soft power became prominent in that period, as a soft way of approaching nation state with the intention to facilitate it in hard power or trade diplomatic relations. There is an earnest endeavour of the scholars, while analysing the foreign policies of the nation-states, especially powerful states that the hard power diplomacy, employed so was inadequate, therefore it is pertinent to add a new dimension, which together would be called smart power. Earnest J Wilson in analyses of the content of the foreign policies found the inadequacies of the traditional foreign policies and argued in favour of Smart power. He stated further that the G-8 countries are transforming from simply industrial to post-industrial, and the basic characteristic features of the policies employed so far needs revision “where power increasingly rests on a nation’s capacity to create and manipulate knowledge and information” (Wilson, Ernest J. 2008).

The disintegration of the USSR resulted in the emergence of US as the only superpower. “In 1991, one of the Superpowers collapsed. The other remained alone, unchallenged” (Rao, P.V. Narsimha. 2004). The world changed its basic structural form from being dominated by superpower to an alternative of regionalism. Liberalisation, open market economy and new identities characterised the post-war period. The whole world reshaped its policies in order to come to terms with the changes political and geo-political situation. Russia and India were also greatly affected. Russia was searching new policies, friends and identity. So far formidable enemies the USSR and the US came closer, which shows the stark difference in the foreign policies of the USSR after disintegration, “the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 inaugurated a new era of foreign policy toward a group of republics once regarded by the United States as a formidable arch-enemy” (Jones, Sara Su. 1995).

Both Russia and India underwent structural changes during the post-cold war period. Ironically cultural exchanges between India and Russia have been on decline, since when the concepts such as globalization and global village became important in discourses of the international relations. Indian state has opened up its political and geographical boundaries for greater economic, military, knowledge and technological exchanges with other parts of world since the disintegration of USSR. India went through the process of Liberalisation which was envisioned, to open up not only economy but also politics. Liberalisation produced various responses, against as well as in favour of the culture element present in the new world and its policies. Arun Ghosh in 1995 has argued that there are some people including the minister of Broadcasting was sceptical about the affects of liberalisation as it was perceived as the time of cultural invasion through media and television (Ghosh, Arun.

1995). At the same time, Russia disintegrated and as a result, resorted to market economy. The Soviet Union was no more responsible in deciding the course of international relation as Russia has lost its position as a superpower.

The advancement in communication and information technology since the industrial revolution led us from the age of globalisation to the age of global village. The concept of a global village has been brought about by the rapid development of information technology, the global media along with faster and cheaper means of travel and communication. We now know what is happening on the other side of the world at every second of change (Dalglish, Carol. 2006). Therefore, in the era of global village, peaceful relations among different nations are not only for the development of nations but equally important for individuals who are part of that national identity. Moving ahead from managing conflicts to forging peaceful relations, culture is being employed which was hitherto a neglected tool in international relations so far. The cultural approach is illuminating a significant but neglected dimension of actors and forces in international relations. (Davies, Nigel Gould. 2003). Another ways of looking at decline in India Russia relation is the fact that India's relation with Russia declined only in relation to other countries such as USA and not in absolute terms during post-economic reform era in India. Even today Russia is the prime arms suppliers to India. (V D Chopra, 2003).

The *Concept of the Long-term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation* (2008-2020) or "Strategy 2020" is an important document that guides Russian cultural policy. The "Strategy 2020" elaborately talks about the objectives of cultural policy of Russia and one them one of the most important is to use culture potential for the image building of Russia abroad or the national identity. Russia will promote and preserve the national heritage of

the people with the recognition of the variants in the forms and expressions. The document also mentions the participation and access of the masses to the products of Russian culture (Oliker, Olga, Keith Crane, Lowell H. Schwartz and Catherine Yusupov. 2009). Legal mechanism or administrative mechanism to play a major role in the cultural policy of a nation-state and therefore Russia recognise the need to develop effective mechanism to ensure the objectives of the cultural policy to be fulfilled.

Institutions are required to provide environment for the development of culture. Russia envisages the establishment and formation of institution required to invoke creativity, space for cultural diversity and people's participation. There is always a challenge before a country that with the preservation of the culture, its moderation and training is required. Modernisation, preservation of diversity, training in arts with the view of the preservation of Russian school is one of the objectives of the document. The cultural policy practised in a country has a direct bearing upon the image of the country in international affairs. The sum total of cultural practises in a country is reflects the national identity and image.

The Russian cultural policy always focused on it and developed its culture keeping in mind the same. Cultural diplomacy cannot be practised in isolation; it basically reflects the domestic attitude of a country in the international relations. In the era of globalization, the surge of international culture is gaining importance but the elements of national culture cannot be eradicated altogether "It is now widely appreciated that even the most 'global' brands, such as McDonald's or Coca-Cola, have different cultural connotations and are consumed quite differently in different places" (Jackson, Peter. 2004).

Cultural diplomacy cannot employ those elements which are not a part of the national culture of a country. In the new state programme, a new dimension of Tourism has been added. Tourism is one of the effective ways of not only increasing the revenue of a country and foreign exchange but majorly helps in the dissemination of cultural values to the people from different countries. Through tourism people to people contact gets impetus and it acts a firsthand experience to the people from far of lands. In the new state programme recognised the potential of Tourism and includes it as one of the objectives (Gorsuch, Anne E, Diane P. Koenker. 2008). The policies formulated over the period of time by the Russian government gives a view of the cultural policy and practises adopted by Russia. There are various ministries and institution which acts in accordance to the laws in order to facilitate the practise of culture. Regional cooperation and cooperation among the different institutions in Russia is essential and therefore included in the policy framework.

International cooperation in the field of culture was the priority of Russia, as it had to develop its new image which should be democratic and cooperative in nature. Through new policies adopted Russia successfully established itself with the new image which was not overburdened by the image of the Soviet Union. Franklyn Griffiths in 1994 argued about the development of Russian foreign policy and its objective principles and stated that after 1992, Russia became more conscious about its national interest and by mid-decade coexistence and expansion defines the foreign policy objectives as Russia corroborated with international institutions and exerted considerable influence upon the former Soviet Union republics (Griffiths, Franklyn. 1994). The political and administrative structure has been developed in two decades to ensure the implementation of cultural policy not only in the domestic affairs but also in the international affairs.

Along with inter-governmental cooperation, direct contact also has been established through festivals, artists, exhibitions, music and language. India became the new partner despite the history was supporting the cause of cultural diplomacy new relationship has been initiated and established. The cultural diplomacy between Russia and India has been practise at the different levels. India too undergone changes in the same decade but it was not a complete overhaul also it has no desire to cut off from the history therefore India not changed its policy towards Russia though lot of dimensions have been added since then.

Anita Inder Singh stated in the analysis of Russia-India relations after cold war that the de-ideologisation process in Russia and economic change in India compel both the countries to come close and start relationship anew “India's place in Russia's new world-view must be seen in the light of the latter's search for a new identity and international role” and therefore the cooperation increased in almost all the areas between the two countries (Singh, Anita Inder. 1995).

The foremost important tool of cultural policy is language. Russia attached special importance to the study and promotion of Russian Language domestically as well as internationally. Language and education are intertwined, and in the contemporary foreign policy internationalisation of education is important and with it the language. In the post industrial society the education system cannot afford to be traditional as it can be used for betterment of relationship and understanding in the international world as Russia making efforts in the direction “Since mid-2000s the country [Russia] has been actively involved in reforming its higher education system and promoting various forms of higher education cooperation initiatives” (Chepurina, Maria. 2014).

Russian is world's fourth largest language in terms of its speakers. "Russky Mir" foundation, which has been established by the President, is functional in many countries and promotes the study of Russian language. It also provides financial support for the promotion of Russian language and culture. "The main aim of which [Russian Language Foundation] will be to develop the Russian language at home, support Russian language study programmes abroad and generally promote Russian language and literature around the world." (Putin, Vladimir. 2007).

In order to preserve and strengthen the Russian culture abroad, special emphasis has always been given to the Russian Diaspora. Governmental Commission on Affairs of Compatriots Abroad helps in preservation and spreading of Russian culture and Language. In 2006 in a meeting of (GCACA) special emphasis was laid upon the spread of Russian language "systemic promotion and enhancement of the role of the Russian language as the major vehicle for preserving the Russian-speaking space abroad" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2006). Russia also holds an annual World Congress to interlink the cultural relations and experiences. In the area of translation of Russian work in other languages, Russia has employed many organisations and aids them financially.

Culture policy of a country should be receptive to the technological advancement so that it could employ different mediums to achieve its goal (Darnton Robert , David S. Ferriero, Marjorie M. Scardino, Paul Sagan, Neal Lane. 2012). When the culture does not respond to the new technology it becomes centred only to some communities. Russia in its new cultural policy to be in consonance with the trends in international arena has paid much attention to use the technology in the policy. The cultural policy of Russia therefore talks about the e-advance mechanism. Partnership among different interest groups

and organisations those who are working in the cultural domains is one important issue (Zonova, Tatiana. 2013).

Russian constitution, through its provision, provides ample support to the people for cultural promotion and development. Russia was very much clear about its cultural assertion as it came into existence by giving freedom and right to the people. There are many provisions in the constitution which safeguards people's rights in the matter of professing culture (Article 44. Constitution of the Russian Federation). It gives equal rights to the indigenous and tribal people according to the norms and principles of international law. It gives freedom to profess, practise, participation and creativity in the matters of culture. It guarantees to the republics the right to have a language of its own, though it recognize Russian as the national language. As far as the functional aspect is concerned there is a clear cut division between the federal government and the units. The cultural policy formation is the responsibility of the federal government and the preservation of cultural heritage and arts is the responsibility of the units (Schmid, Ulrich. 2010).

The cultural policy of Russia, at its best, endeavours to accept the cultural diversity within the country and gives ample chance to give it an expression. In the matters of intergovernmental cultural practises Russia showed from the very beginning its interest and taken many efforts in the direction. The cultural diplomacy practises of Russia are a reflection the cultural policy. Indian also brought few changes in the cultural practises and policies after the economic restructuring (Mukarji, Nirmal. 1992).

Russia-India relations are largely depended upon the changes that were brought in the countries' policies during the decade of 90s. India's transition from idealism to pragmatism shook its very foundation- both cultural and political.

India also tried to incorporate those changes which were in consonance with the international framework. The challenge before India in the field of culture was that to modernise the cultural practises and save the traditional elements in order to save the identity and perception on the world stage. India brought changes in the orientation of its cultural policies with the change in the economic structure but continued with the traditional cultural relations in its foreign policy priorities. In accepting the international norms about culture the national culture to some extent overshadowed. “Advanced industrial cultures (the first world) constitute the centre. Post-colonial, underdeveloped or economically dependent cultures (the third world) form the periphery” (Kapur, Gita. 1991). Historical understanding of the development of culture and cultural policies is highly significant.

Since the very beginning, India is a multicultural country which also includes significant amount of tribal population. As a result when Indian became republic, it gave enough provisions in the form of fundamental rights to ensure the rights of the citizens in different areas including culture and religion. The constitution of India ensures the right of the citizens to practise and propagate their culture. India has recognised the principle of Unity in Diversity, which reflects the will and structure of the society. India is a country with diverse cultures and its national identity depends upon not only giving them freedom but to underlying the essential common elements. Since the days of Indus valley civilisation, India has marvelled in the different forms of arts and continued its legacy in the establishment of different culture practises and art forms. There are many arts forms, music and dance in India which has been practise since the very beginning of civilisation. After the independence, the government has put

extra effort to provide institutional basis to the cultural practises, arts and other expression of culture.

Through the establishment of institutions and safeguarding of the cultural rights, India has ensured the cultural preservation and progress. National movement impacted the culture to a great extent. It was the beginning of democratic norms in almost every walk of life. Those communities and groups who were marginalised found expression in the new political set up. There was an ideological contestation in politics and cultural realms generated by the democratic principles. Interdependence is a source of conflict and cooperation as well, “the rise of systematic interdependencies generally creates new opportunities for conflict as well as increased scope for co-operation in world politics” (Young, Oran R. 1969). Cultural hegemony of the few elite is common phenomenon across the world. This phenomenon is in contravention with the democratic society. Cultural supremacy is often used as a political tool to maintain the ruling elite.

The Draft policy of 1992, prepared by the Ministry of Human Resource, clearly underlined its scepticism, especially in the light of new development under which urbanisation was taking place (MHRD, 1992). The report shows its suspicion over the loss of cultural practises as there was gap between the rural and urban life. Urban population cannot hold their traditional cultural practises for very long as their life is moving around the modern city life in which isolation happens all the time. Economic changes in the country brought many changes along with it especially in the field of culture. Westernisation, liberal values etc were reason which caused scepticism and has been defined in the draft policy of 1992.

There were two areas which were found to be extremely significant in the Draft Policy. Firstly, it has been stated in the draft that the cultural policy practised so far could not address the broad social needs and secondly that the culture is crucial for sustainable development. The draft policy recognised the importance of the participation of people at large. Since the participation of different groups with their expression could not find any space the draft policy stated that the government will facilitate and provide support for the larger participation. It also talks about cultural diversity and the rights and participation of weaker sections and minority groups. It also recognises the importance of creating positive dialogue with the world at large. It has stated that the isolation should be avoided at the international level and the culture should be conducive to the technological development.

The Draft Policy talks elaborately on the role of culture on education. It recognises the importance of integrated cultural education of the rational values. The education should reflect the long held traditional cultural and aesthetic value. Development which is often measured in quantitative terms should include spiritual and cultural development. The cultural policies should be developed in a way which includes each and every section and they should feel free to participate, cooperate, profess and propagate their cultural values. Since India gained independence, the culture became very important, as it has recognised culture as a part of development. In India culture is never considered as an isolated phenomenon but intertwined and essential for the development. Planned economy was one of the features of history of development in India. Culture since the beginning is an integral part in the countries sustainable development (Upreti, B. C. 2006).

Several institutions were established in order to attain cultural development like Indian council of cultural relation which is still an important organisation in the field of preservation and development of culture. Lalit Kala Academy, Modern Art Gallery, Sahitya Academy are working in different areas for the development of traditional cultural values. India's struggle for independence gave a new impetus of nationalism to the culture (Nanda, Subrat K 2006).

India's experiment with modernity and scientific temperament was not antithetical to the cultural heritage of the country. Jawaharlal Nehru had a vision to preserve the cultural heritage and India should be rich and varied in culture. he also recognise the underlying diversity of culture in the Indian subcontinent. Cultural resources were considered as the national resources in the culture policy and these cultural resources were considered immortal in the nationalist agenda of cultural heritage (Gellner, Ernest. 1981). Education policy was always in consonance with the culture values as education is considered in policy the most important medium to preserve and bequeathed the cultural legacy. Nationalist economic and political vision of India was supportive to the cultural resources. It is the only unifying factor which can help in the realisation of India's goal of unity in diversity.

The cultural policy in India after Independence included the vision of unity through culture, however it could not sustained its vision through political and economic setup successfully. Though lot of attention has been paid to the development of culture and many institutions have been established but India could not present a coherent policy. The Draft Policy of 1992 manifests India's vision and long experience after Independence. The five year plans in India also included culture as an important area to develop, however the degree of intensity is changing from the first five year plan to the subsequent plans. Role

of government has been changing with the change in the vision for the cultural practice and development. Village economy has also been part of cultural development as villages were believed to be the cradle of traditional culture when the urbanisation was taking place rapidly. India signed the UNESCO convention 2005 and became a part of international cultural collaboration, in which every country is free to develop its own culture and to develop international cultural relations with other countries. India not only adopted this convention but try to build its cultural relations with countries like Russia.

There are many international establishments of which India became an integral part. Organisation like ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Andean Community, BRICS, Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Commonwealth, East African Community (EAC), East Asian Summit (EAS), G-20, Indo-European Union Relations, Indo-African Union Relations etc which are responsible for maintaining cultural relations in international arena. The common cultural traits with rich heritage and history between Russia and India naturally made them attractive spots for cultural sharing and understanding. The cultural diplomatic relations between the two countries is very much evident from the sharing of rich literature, music and art. Language is one most important tool in the direction of cultural understanding and similarity between in the language between Russian language and Sanskrit as a source of language of Indian languages made people to understand the cultural of each other countries.

There are various methods and programmes taken by both the government in order to facilitate cultural cooperation and enhance cultural exchanges in various areas. On January 28, 1993 an agreement has been signed by both the countries in the direction of cultural and scientific cooperation which serves as

a guideline of cultural cooperation between the two countries and various agencies working in this direction since then. Governments of both the countries also take step from time to time to strengthen the agreement.

The objective of such programmes, for instance the one taken in the year 2007 is stated as “the strengthening of personal contacts between their representatives including youth and women, establishing direct exchanges involving both the Parties, its subjects and regions” (MEA, 2007). In the agreement exchanges and cultural enhancement activities in various areas have been recognized and cultural exchange programmes have been taken in the areas like cultural and art, mass media, science and education sports and youth exchanges etc. The government of both the countries decided through this agreement to facilitate the strengthening of cultural relations with emphasis on these areas. The government of both the countries will facilitate the exchange of ideas, cultural programmes, dance, music, and cooperation between televisions; organize lectures, educational exchanges, cooperation between libraries and sports exchanges (MEA 2007).

Russia and India has not only cherished their long history of cultural relationship, but cultural diplomacy has also been practiced since the post war period through the establishment of many institutions. These institutions are actively working in the direction of maintaining cultural cooperation. Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) and Indian Council of Cultural relations (ICCR) are two such important institutions which are amply contributing in fulfilling the objective of both the governments in maintaining cultural relations.

The very lifeline of cultural diplomacy is mass participation and involvement because cultural diplomacy does not manage but the changes the perspective of

the people and the government. In an analyses of the relationship of Russia and India Devendra Kaushik states that there is no other example in the history of the world where the relationship between two powerful countries could have been so smooth and crisis free as both the countries are powerful and at close proximity but never at war (Kaushik, Devendra. 2003).

Since the decade of the 90s, both the countries are trying to build cultural relations in a way where mass participation is possible. Popular literature and culture like dance, music, children literature are some of the areas where recently lot of efforts have been taken. Cultural diplomacy between Russia and India began in real sense in the decade of 90s. The cultural sharing, exchanges, ideals and values became institutionalised in the same decade. The cultural policies of both the countries show their effort in the direction of institutionalisation of cultural practices and cooperation. The nationalist agenda or vision of unifying could not have been possible without the establish forms of cultural diplomacy. The identity formation of both the countries was in the making, as international representation of the cultural identity is essential because it gives strength and clarity to the countries.

Both the countries have entered in a new era as far as the practice of cultural diplomacy is concerned. Both the countries became part of international or regional organisation which also pushed their efforts to practice cultural diplomacy. Through the use of various tools which have been employed in the practice of cultural diplomacy educational and arts gained much lift. Nongovernmental organisation also participated in the practice of cultural diplomacy. Civil society which became a common feature after the end of cold war in the nation-states also played its important role in the development and practice of cultural diplomacy. Network financial support also gave new

impetus in the improvement of cultural relation and the practice of cultural diplomacy.

Russia-India cultural diplomatic relations have come a long way. India-Russia Working Group has already held its 20th meeting. These meeting held every year alternatively in Russia and India. The Working Group on Culture acts by establishing organisation and takes programmes which helps in the strengthening of the cultural relations among both the countries. “The sides expressed their keenness for cultural exchanges/cooperation in the fields of exhibitions, libraries, visits of crafts persons, visit of writers’ delegation, contemporary and visual arts, archives, theatre art, contemporary visual art etc” (Ministry of Culture. India). Both the countries agreed upon organising many programmes together. Cooperation in the field of organising Russia and Indian festival in each other’s country was discussed. Both the countries agreed to provide help in the joint programmes of Prasar Bharati and the All Russian State Television and Radio Company.

Chairs in the area of Indological studies were established in cities of Russia like Saint Petersburg, Vladivostok, Moscow, and Kazan. Cooperation in the field of Indological studies between Russia and India is very old. Through the help of Russian Centre for scientific culture (RCSC), Days of Russian culture were organised in different centres of RCSC in 2003. To reciprocate the same zeal similar programmes was organised in Russia with the name Days of Indian Culture in 2005. Days of Delhi was also organised in Moscow in which the chief minister of Delhi also participated. Programmes like Year of Russia in India and the Year of India in Russia are also one of the important programmes undertaken so far. In the area of language also, there is cooperation between the two countries. While a Hindi department exists in Moscow University, there is

Russian language taught in various universities in India, like in JNU. In JNU, there is a fully fledged centre on Russian studies in which research on different aspects of Russian society takes place. Many researchers from JNU visit Russian federation every year. Likewise there are many areas in which the presence of cultural relations is evidently visible. Major areas of cultural diplomatic relations are Literature, Language, Education, Media, Art, Performance art, Religion and Other key areas.

The importance of the Russian language studies increased in India and in other countries as well. The study of language was systematically commenced by Russia as Russian language became a matter of national identity. “There are 13 language study centers of the Russian embassy in India, of which two are in southern Tamil Nadu” (The Hindu, 2013). This much of institutes of learning Russian language centers are run by the embassy and there are many universities which run full time even PhD courses in the Russian languages for instance JNU in New Delhi has Russian language centers in which from under graduation to PhD courses run. There are a few improvements also required as certainly institutionally the study of language became more organized as compare to the soviet era but its importance and significance in the popular culture is not that strong. In order to make and turn the study of language in cultural diplomatic relations, the significance of the language among should be emphasized. There is large number of students getting education in Russia especially in medical courses and therefore the importance of Russian language is increasing.

It is a well known fact that Bollywood films were quite popular in Soviet Union during the cold war period, and still continues to be. In the cold war period, many Bollywood movies were dubbed in Russian and shown in prominent theatres across Russia. Owing to the age-old Russia-India friendship, a tourism-

focused Russia has already kept 'India on a special shelf'. While Russia might be keen to get more Indian filmmakers to shoot in Russia, they are still in the process of creating a suitable infrastructure to facilitate hassle-free film shoots in the country. Back in the Soviet days, Hollywood movies and films by other Western countries were banned in the Soviet Union. And because there was no means of other cheap entertainment, films from Bollywood shot into the limelight. They provided the Soviets with a cheap source of entertainment, and were also non-controversial and non-political.

Besides this, Bollywood movies then focused on partition and the struggle for freedom from colonial rule, which the struggling masses of Russia could relate to. Raj Kapoor, in particular, was very popular in Russia, with the film 'Mera Naam Joker' running into packed houses in Russia ('Mera Naam Joker' also starred Russian actress 'Kseniya Ryabinkina'). Apart from Raj Kapoor's classics, such as *Awara* and *Shree 420*, other Bollywood movies which are most popular in Russia are 'Sita aur Gita' (starring the dream-girl 'Hema Malini') and 'Disco Dancer' (starring Mithun da, with super-hit music by Bappi-da). After watching 'Sita aur Gita', children in Moscow courtyards tried to repeat the circus tricks of Hema Malini. They copied her tightrope act and her daring manner of behaviour and speech. (Russia Beyond. 2009)

However, it was Mithun Chakraborty who became a superstar for the new generation, with the classic movie 'Disco Dancer'. The dance halls at almost all the Soviet summer resorts in the decade of 1980s resounded with the sounds of '*I Am a Disco Dancer*'. At some places, fanatics even requested the song to be played ten times over. (The Quint. 2018). One of his other movies, "*Phool Aur Angaar*" (1993), was in fact dubbed in Russia and became popular in Russia. After 1990, Mithun Chakravarty became popular for the new generation

of Russian people. One of the reasons behind this is the fact that most of his movies focused on class-based oppression.

Besides this, many Bollywood films were even shot in Russia. The popular ones include; Khoon Maaf, Agent Vinod, Lucky: No Time For Love, Khiladiyon Ka Khiladi, Players. Lucky: No Time For Love (Salman Khan and Sneha Ullal, who resembles quite a lot like Aishwarya Rai and Players have a lot of footage shot in this country. In fact, 'Lucky: No Time for Love' was shot entirely in Russia. Additionally, Tamil mythological movies are screened in Russia along with some of the evergreen Tamil classics. The Indo-Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industries held talks with makers of movies like Saraswati Sabatham, Vasantha Maligai and Pudiya Paravai, its secretary P. Thangappan to screen the movie in Moscow. (The Hindu. 2009) It was believed that movies like Vasantha Maligai depict some facets of Indian culture which are quite similar to that of Russia, and that the Russian audience would immensely like such films. Mr. Thangappan went on to say that an Indian Film Festival would be organised in Moscow (ibid). The Chamber also planned to launch its website (www.matrusshka.com), which would feature a list of its services, tourism options for Indians and Russians, and Indian films to be screened in Russia. Planning was also done to offer a budget tour to Russia for Indian tourists in order to strengthen cultural ties between the countries. In line with the series of Indian releases in Russia, Kamal Hasan-starrer Vettaiyadu Vilaiyadu was also dubbed in Hindi.

A BRICS international film festival was held in New Delhi on September 2-6, 2017 in which Russia presented four feature motion pictures. The movies included "14+" directed by Andrey Zvyagintsev, "Pro ljubov" (translated as "About Love") by Anna Melikyan, "Bitva za Sevastopol" (or "The Battle of

Sevastopol") by Sergey Mokritskiy, and the 2015 Russian hit "Samyi luchshiy den" (translated as "The Best Day Ever") by Zhora Kryzhovnokov. Although not a part of the competition, a documentary film by Galina and Anna Yevtushenko, "Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi: A Double Portrait in the Interior of the Epoch", was also shown at the event. The National Academy of Cinematographic Arts of Russia and the Department of Cinematography of the Russian Ministry of Culture were among the festival's organizers. Well-known film expert Kirill Razlogov, representing Russia, was the festival's jury. (Daily Mail. 2017)

In addition, a non-competitive program was also included on the event's agenda by the Russian organizers. Among the non-competitive feature flicks, "Zabytoye" (translated as "Forgotten stuff") directed by Alexander Korolyov, "Krugovoye dvizheniye" (or "Circular Motion") by Maxim Dashkin, "Trusha" by Eduard Zholin, "Pro mamu" (or "About Mom") by Dina Velikovskaya and "Vozvrashcheniye Erkina" (known as "Erkin's Return") by Maria Guskova was screened (ibid). Further, the Joint Indo-Russia Tri-Services Exercise INDRA-2017 was conducted from 19 to 29 October, 2017 at Vladivostok in Russia. The name of the exercise INDRA was derived from India and Russia. Exercise INDRA-2017 was the first Joint Tri-Services Exercise between Russia and India. This was also the first time that Russia hosted a Tri-Services Exercise on its soil. The theme of Exercise INDRA-2017 was 'Preparation and Conduct of Operations by a Joint Force for Suppression of International Terror Activity at the request of a host country under UN mandate' (ANI. 2017)

Over 900 soldiers, sailors and air warriors from the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force participated in the exercise along with more than 1000 personnel from the Russian Defence Forces. The exercise was conducted in the Sergeevsky

Combined Arms Training Range, Cape Klerk Training Area and the waters of the Sea of Japan. Army exercise tasks involved check-point defence and humanitarian convoy escort, in the back drop of threat from armed groups. Naval tasks comprised of Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) operations besides Force Protection Measures, Joint Air Defence and Anti-mining Operations. The Air Forces of both the countries combined their air crews for Combat Air Patrols, Reconnaissance Missions, Formation Flying and Slithering operations utilising Russian fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters (ibid).

It was indeed a historic occasion for two of the world's greatest Armed Forces to join hands and successfully conduct an exercise of this magnitude with professionalism, providing an opportunity for both defence forces to imbibe the best practices from each other and jointly evolve and practice drills to defeat the scourge of terror. The first ever Indo-Russia Joint Tri Services Exercise has been a combination of training and cross training in field conditions on land, sea and air, to achieve seamless integration. The validation of the exercise tasks is a testimony of the contingents of both countries having integrated and synergised seamlessly to achieve the laid down objectives. The exercise also provided an opportunity to all personnel for cultural exchange and for friendly sports competitions (ibid). Taking Indo-Russian relationship to a new level, a painting and drawing exhibition of Russian children were held at Lulu Mall on Tuesday, November, 2017. The event was jointly organised by Indian Association of Russian Compatriots and Russian Centre of Science and Culture, Delhi (The New Indian Express. 2017).

Interestingly, competitions were also held for children under various categories, as a part of the exhibition. The theme of the competition was 'Russia - love beyond borders'.

The exhibition was held in different parts of the country and the best displayed on the official website of Indian Association of Russian Compatriots (iarcindia.org) (ibid).

In 2013, the Indian Association of Russian Compatriots was formed in 2013 to spread Russian culture among Russian citizens living in India. This association aims at bolstering the Indo-Russian relationship by bringing citizens of both the countries together. This was also organised as the diplomatic relation between both countries entered into the 70th year. To mark the establishment of Indo-Russian diplomatic relations, an Art Exhibition titled “We Have Come Far” by the Indian artist, poet, and diplomat Mr. Abhay Kumar was organized by the Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) inaugurated by Mr. Rajeev Lochan, Director, National Gallery of Modern Art, at the RCSC on April 15, 2011. (Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of India).

This was the first exhibition of Mr. Abhay Kumar in India. Earlier, he has exhibited his works in Paris and St. Petersburg. Welcoming the gathering, Mr. Fyodor A. Rozovskiyy, Director, RCSC, said that the art exhibition by an Indian author, poet, artist and diplomat appropriately timed to mark the momentous anniversary of Indo-Russian diplomatic relations, assumed new dimension (ibid).

In 2014, a book exhibition was organized at Moscow by the Moscow Kremlin State Historical and Cultural Museum and Heritage Site; Indo-Russian Jewellery Foundation. Moscow. The catalogue accompanies the exhibition which presents precious jewellery artworks by Indian and European makers of

the XVIIth—XXIth centuries. It consists of six sections that shed light upon the details of the jeweller's art in various regions of India, the history of interrelations and influences between the Russian/ European and Indian jewellery traditions, and the production of the leading Indian jewellers of today. (Moscow Kremlin Museums. 2014)

Back home, 'Indian Contemporaries' – an eclectic mix of Indian contemporary arts exhibition was organised at New Delhi's India Habitat Centre in December, 2017. The show returned from Russia after wowing the audience at Art Russia 2017 in Nizhny Novgorod. (Sputnik News. 2017) This exhibition included the works of 44 Indian artists who had come together to showcase their work to the Russian and Indian audience as part of the 70th anniversary celebrations of Indo-Russian diplomatic relations. Curated by artist Aakshat Sinha, the exhibition was supported by the Embassy of the Russian Federation in India. High-ranking officials of the Russian Embassy and the Lalit Kala Academy, India's apex body for the promotion of fine arts, jointly inaugurated the show in New Delhi.

In 2016, the State Museum of Oriental Art (SMOA) in the heart of Moscow exhibited Russia's biggest collection of Buddhist and Asian art, boasting a diverse collection from the Republic of Buryatia in the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, India, Iran, Mongolia, and Tibet. A unique range of artefacts and art that included paintings, sculptures, and antiquities from the Middle Ages, such as weapons, jewellery, household items and textiles were displayed in the exhibition. (Buddhist Door. 2016) The museum dedicated galleries displaying Buddhist art from China, India, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Among the most impressive exhibits was a mural of the Buddha and his followers dated to the 2nd century. The museum also had a model of the cave monastery of Kara-Tepa

(sometimes spelled Kara-Tepe), a complex of temples and monasteries that were built in the beginning of the 2nd century. Kara-Tepa, which means “Black Hill,” was built on three mounds in the north-western Old Termez in Uzbekistan, with the caves bearing a resemblance to the rock-cut Ajanta Caves in Maharashtra, India. The museum also has a huge collection of *thangkas*, Buddhist paintings on cotton or silk, that depict Buddhist deities from China, Mongolia, Tibet, as well as Buryatia (ibid).

In the field of education as well, both the countries have initiated various programmes. Under the Program of Cooperation (PoC), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology (MST), India along with Russian Ministry of Education and Science (RMES), Russia invited Joint Research Proposals in the field of Biotechnology, 2017-2019. (DOL Pages, 2017). The objective of this program is to broaden and deepen cooperation in Science and Technology in the field of Biotechnology and to encourage industrial R&D, related investment flows, bilaterally and/or regionally in the field of Biotechnology and to promote transparency through exchange of information and cooperation among relevant institutions (ibid).

The National Archives of India has Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Protocol with the following countries. There was a Protocol on the 20th Meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Culture (27 August 2015 and in 2016 in New Delhi) (National Archives of India). In 2014, the Indo-Russian cultural exchange fest took place. The Feast of the Russian culture in Delhi was organised in New Delhi at the Russian Information Centre. Titled “The Feast of Russian culture in Delhi”, the opening of the Russian Cultural Festival was interestingly held in conjunction

with the twentieth meeting of the inter-governmental Russian-Indian commission on trade-economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation under the leadership of the Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin (ibid).

In 2013, Russian President Putin visited India for the 13th India-Russia Annual Summit in New Delhi. It witnessed considerable advancement on the entire range of India-Russia issues. The summit was very productive and both sides were pleased by the progress made on issues discussed (Ministry of External Affairs). It is observed that India-Russia relationship is based on substance, and not rhetoric. There is a unique political consensus, cutting across party lines and amongst peoples in both countries, along with the high significance of close and friendly ties. Both the nation states consider the further deepening of this cooperation as being among their top foreign policy priorities. Russia is also India's foremost partner in sectors like atomic energy, defence, space, and science & technology. In fact, India's largest Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation is also with Russia.

Chapter 5

Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Developing Russia-India Relations as Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership Since 2010

The official foreign policy statement of Indian foreign ministry emphasizes that relation with Russia remains as a “key pillar of India’s foreign policy”. India-Russia relations has been elevated to “Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership” at the eleventh annual India-Russia summit in December 2010 (MEA 2011). In 2017 Russia and India celebrated seventieth anniversary of diplomatic relations. On this occasion leaders of both sides declared that “the Indian-Russian special and privileged strategic partnership is a unique relationship of mutual trust between two great powers”. Naturally, this qualification raises questions such as what makes Russia-India relations “special and privileged”. What role cultural diplomacy play in making this bilateral relations special? This chapter tries to answer these questions.

Return of Cultural Diplomacy in International Relations

When Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, the West led felt that it is the ultimate victory of liberalism and decline of communist ideology and therefore, end of history. America self-declared as the sole superpower and took responsibility of world policeman. However, after a decade of unipolarity and hegemonic neoliberal economic order, in the international system is infested with multiple crises and conflicts like Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, etc demonstrating that a return of history is happening. Peace doesn’t prevails after the disintegration of Soviet Union, which the west alleged as “Evil Empire” during cold war period.

The world at present is now witnessing the emergence of multi-polar world order. Russia and India are two important powers committed to build a multi-polar world order which is peaceful, just, democratic and ruled based. In the current international system culture has been noted as harbinger of building conditions for dialogue and close relations between countries. Governments practice various methods of cultural diplomacy for purpose of cultivating mutual understanding, advancing foreign policy objectives and economic interests, branding nation, projecting identity in the international system.

Consideration of taking culture as an important component in 21st century international relations is insisted by Samuel P. Huntington in his “Clash of Civilizations” thesis. He observed the increasing rivalry and antagonism between Islamic and non-Islamic world during post-cold war period consistently forcing us to shift our understanding of diplomatic relation between different countries away from economic or military centric approach and give more importance to cultural engagement between different counties as a powerful mechanism of establishing peaceful diplomatic relation between different countries. The twenty-first century is, at-least the beginning of it, presumably claimed to be the century of culture, and cultural relation with the differences, interactions, and conflicts among different cultures taking centre stage of discourse of international relation (Huntington 1999).

Countries began taking culture seriously, especially in an interconnected world due to globalization communication revolution and digital culture. Cultural policies have been enacted. Culture industry emerged and countries began promoting cultural products through their diplomatic activities and otherwise. The cultural diplomacy in the form of cultural identity, soft power and creative economy respectively has been taken into consideration in International Relations

in the post-cold war period. It has been viewed that International Relations cannot be limited to power as conceived by realism or hard diplomacy, but it has moved beyond the discourse of power to social, political and economic dimensions which are being taken into consideration. Contemporary scholars use cultural diplomacy synonymously with concepts like ‘soft power diplomacy’, ‘public diplomacy’, etc. But cultural diplomacy cannot be equated with “soft power” diplomacy’, as coined by Joseph Nye (Nye, Joseph. 1990). Because the primary focus of soft ‘diplomacy’ is to influence through means other than military. In the case of cultural diplomacy, it is about ‘dialogue’ and through dialogue to promote understanding. Cultural diplomacy cannot be equated with public diplomacy also as it is about influencing other’s view point to one’s own favour. Cultural diplomacy softly plays on the heart.

Cultural diplomacy as a theoretical proposition is often used interchangeably with public diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy, they do have some common boundaries but equating both the concepts would not be prudent. The content and objective of cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy differs. Cultural diplomacy is to create dialogue between the two different cultures and through the intermingling of cultures, looking for the possibilities of better understanding of the societies and peoples. Cultural diplomacy could pursue by state and non-states actors and even individuals. It endeavours to represent all the cultures of a country including local cultures as well. There are different tools ranging from educational exchange, music, tourism, literature, language, dance etc.

In the post-cold era, the identity of the nation-states no more associated with the ideological position or block they associate. Identity since the cold war is collective representation of the culture and therefore it is in the helm of the foreign policies. During the cold war both the superpowers have used culture to contain

the other power and the culture identity overshadowed the political identity of the superpowers. Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried in their book argued that the culture as opined by different scholars that the culture has been used by the states for different purposes including manipulation “between 1945 and 1989-1991, culture productions became the most powerful tools for the promotion of ideological goals and strategies” (Gienow-Hecht, Jessica C.E. and Mark C. Donfried. 2010). The political simulation to the cultural policies which characterised the cold war era came to an end, opening new avenues or possibilities of the usage of culture especially in the formation of the national identities.

The advancement in communication and information technology since the industrial revolution led us from age of globalisation into the age of global village. The concept of a global village has been brought about by the rapid development of information technology, the global media along with faster and cheaper means of travel and communication. We now know what is happening on the other side of the world at every second of change (Dalglish, Carol. 2006). Therefore, in the era of global village peaceful relations among different nations are not only for the development of nations but equally important for individuals who are part of that national identity. Moving ahead from managing conflicts to forging peaceful relations, culture is being employed which was hitherto a neglected tool in international relations so far. The cultural approach is illuminating a significant but neglected dimension of actors and forces in international relations. (Davies, Nigel Gould. 2003).

The post-cold war era produced neo-colonialism, neo-imperialism and theory of ‘Clash of Civilization’ in order to divide the world into two civilizations and in order to create and explain the binary relation between the two kinds of countries that they have imagined. Cultural diplomacy becomes evidently important in the

post-cold war era because the neo-colonialism came in the form of ideas. Neo-colonialism does use traditional methods but it captures through “but through a new universalist ethics of human rights, labor standards, environmental standards, and intellectual property rights” (Koshy, Susan. 1999). The author further states that economic domination is the new key to realise neo-colonialism. The commonality between the two periods of study is that they have witnessed surge of interest in cultural studies at personal level and educational institutions which were funded both by private and public institutions together. Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw emergence of Anthropology and Ethnography as one of the dominant discipline in social sciences while post-cold war era saw beginning of knowledge or education system which go beyond the question of discipline or era of post-discipline studies.

It is important to note here is that one should not misunderstand inter-cultural studies with inter-cultural dialogue, communication, relation and interaction etc. It is possible that inter-cultural studies and research in this field might have increased in recent years, since the collapse of USSR and surfacing of the theory of ‘Clash of Civilization’ but there is hardly any serious attempt to encourage and promote inter-cultural dialogue, communication, Whatever has been done in the name of strengthening inter-cultural dialogue, communication, relation and interaction under the name of ‘cultural diplomacy’ was more or less a controlled policy intended to keep in check the cultural life of the people which is one of the strongest determinant of non-cultural life. “Hoping for a collaboratively constructed understanding, we instead encounter an unarticulated chasm” (Flower, Linda. 2003). The post-cold war era certainly developed methods for the inter-cultural dialogues and intercommunication but it turns up just another government exercise.

Modernity seems in common parlance has defined, characterised and evaluated things solely in terms of pure, absolutist, homogeneity and logic has reduced in terms of scientific and so called rationality. Though it is not the case tools of the transportation of culture has become more important and the relation between culture and technology turning out to be stronger than ever. “Literature, and poetry in particular, has been the subject of such transformations in what one has made language say that its relation of the visual to the oral has been transformed, modifying each of the terms themselves” (Messchonic, Henri, Gabriella Beditte and Alice Otis. 1992).

Therefore, in social and political relationships, culture was always implied whether it was recognised or not, even though international scenario was ever laden with antagonism and therefore hard power diplomacy seemed significant. The cultural exchanges between different cultures and civilization became a subject of formality and marginal activity for both state as well as non-state actors. However this does not mean that interaction between two different cultures did not happen during modern era. Colonialism constructed colonial subjects who were Asian and African in colour but western in taste and their cultural outlook. This process is also known as westernization of oriental world. This process was not possible without cultural exchange between western and eastern civilization but these cultural exchanges were hegemonic, coercive and controlled by colonial powers as part of their cultural diplomacy project where their cultural diplomacy was ruled and controlled by their larger material objective to dominate the world system politically as well as economically which is also known as hard power. In the process of cultural diplomacy between different countries during colonial period, the aspect of mutuality, harmony, coexistence etc increasingly became marginal.

In the changed political circumstances and technological advancement, it is evident that the flow of information is comparatively unhindered. It poses a challenge to the existing diplomatic formulations which revolves around the power and hardly takes into consideration the will and wish of the citizens. In the present scenario holding up the diplomatic practises to the government is neither rational nor possible. Culture is travelling and pervading the other cultures and it is not dependent upon the traditional government institutions. In such political, technological milieu cultural diplomacy becomes highly significant and supremely important.

Against this backdrop Russia-India relation exemplifies cultural diplomacy playing an important role in maintaining close relations. The geopolitical context is a precursor of their special and privileged strategic partnership.

Russia-India Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership: Geopolitical Context

After twenty five years of defeat and humiliation, The Russian National Security Strategy of December 2015 identifies NATO expansion and colour revolutions as threats to national security. As in the Soviet days Russia now confronts containment 2 by west and a new cold war. However, Russia survived the new cold war, sanctions and isolation by shifting attention towards east, Asia-Pacific region strengthening cooperation with China. In the formation of polycentric international architecture, Russia finds India and China as strong partners who can challenge US hegemony in Eurasia. The Russian National Security Strategy of December 2015 states, “The Russian Federation is increasing collaboration with its partners within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), RIC (Russia, India, China), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the G-20, and other international institutions. ... The Russian Federation assigns the privileged strategic partnership with the Republic of India an important role” (Russian National Security Strategy 2015).

The strategic self-identity India and Russia are trying to project and challenges they are facing also condition their foreign policy. India has been projected as a growing economy and an emerging global power in the international system by the country's political leadership. India view itself as an emerging global power. The strength of such a claim has been articulated by diplomats and strategists in their speeches and statements. For example, Nirupama Rao, former Foreign Secretary, and the first Indian woman Ambassador to China and Sri Lanka, in her speech at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI–Institut français des relations internationales) in Paris on 5 May 2011 stated:

In an Asia-centred century we would naturally wish to ensure a role for India that is commensurate with its size, its growing economic strength, its democratic stability and proven capacity to manage our enormous diversity, contribution to global peace and security and what we see as our justified quest for a greater voice in a multilateral system that is balanced, equitable and representative of new global realities (Rao 2011).

Apparently, India views its civilizational strength, economic growth, soft power credentials, bilateral defence relations and military strength, bilateral and multilateral engagements, market potential and cultural attractiveness as indices of great power status and influence. Indian foreign policy of nonalignment takes a new meaning in the changing situations. Multilateral alliances and strategic autonomy are the two principles apart from national interest included in India's foreign policy. India pursues for a multipolar world order through global institutions and aligning with other powers showing consensus in this direction. BRICS is an example. India views unipolar world order as dangerous. India challenged unipolarity indirectly as an emerging power aligning with rising China and Russia. The global dimension of India-Russia relationship is based on the belief that their enhanced role in the international system will bring global strategic

stability, modernization, prosperity and a democratic multipolar world order. The unity of perception on security issues and geopolitical priorities make this relation important (Usha 2016).

In the post-cold war period the world changed its basic structural form from being dominated by superpower to an alternative of regionalism. Liberalisation, open market economy and new identities characterised the post-war period. The whole world reshaped its policies in order to come to terms with the changes political and geo-political situation. Russia and India were also greatly affected. Russia was searching new policies, friends and identity. So far formidable enemies the USSR and the US came closer, which shows the stark difference in the foreign policies of the USSR after disintegration, “the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 inaugurated a new era of foreign policy toward a group of republics once regarded by the United States as a formidable arch-enemy” (Jones, Sara Su. 1995).

India underwent drastic changes in the economic and political sphere. Both the countries underwent structural changes. Ironically cultural exchanges between India and Russia have been on decline, since when the concepts such as globalization and global village became important in discourses of the international relations. Indian state has opened up its political and geographical boundaries for greater economic, military, knowledge and technological exchanges with other parts of world since the disintegration of USSR. India went through the process of Liberalisation which was envisioned, to open up not only economy but also politics. Liberalisation produced various responses, against as well as in favour of the culture element present in the new world and its policies. Arun Ghosh, in 1995, argued that there are some people including the minister of Broadcasting was sceptical about the effects of liberalisation as it was perceived

as the time of cultural invasion through media and television (Ghosh 1995). At the same time Russia emerged as a new country and as a result resorted to market economy. As the Soviet Union disintegrated there was no opposing power in deciding the course of international relation as Russia has lost its position as a superpower.

India is showing growth despite global economic slowdown. In spite of several achievements India has a lot of challenges like poverty, unemployment, environmental issues, malnutrition, inequality, crimes, etc. also to address. In the regional context also India has many security challenges from neighbouring countries. Dealing with Post-NATO Afghanistan, Pakistan, and improving already complex relation with China are challenges for India in Asia. South Asia is the least integrated region in the world. Countries in the region view India's policies with scepticism, whether India follows a "big brother" attitude to them is another challenge for her. Pakistan sponsored cross border terrorism is a serious security issue facing India. The new China-Pakistan Economic Corridor through the disputed territories of Gilgit-Baltistan in Kashmir under China's One Road One Belt project is a growing concern for India. India views this project with caution. Ensuring stable and multipolar balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region is the main purpose India's "Act East" policy (Usha 2018).

Russia is a great power since the time of Peter the Great. After disintegration of Soviet Union, Russia lost its great power status temporarily. Today, Russia re-emerged as a great power of global significance and capable of challenging the wrong policies of west. Russia is strongly committed to a multipolar world order. She is the largest energy exporter and has the fifth largest economy. Being a veto power in the UN she has already become a strong voice on the international issues. However, Russia is confronting containment II strategy of West and NATO

encirclement. The alleged role of Russia in the Ukraine crisis upset her relations with Europe and the US. The west imposed sanctions on Russia for weakening her economically and isolate politically. Oil price decline affected the economy negatively. The post-sanction economic crisis and inflation led to suffering of people. Russia is now struggling hard for economic recovery. This is the time to rejuvenate Russia-India ties expanding towards new horizons. Therefore, it is important to see how India-Russia relations developed over the past seventy years to the level of special and privileged strategic partnership. .

Cultural Diplomacy in Russia-India Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership

Special Privileged strategic partnership between Russia, India is the natural outcome of not their political symbiotic relations but of the cultural understanding for a very long period. These two countries has set an example contrary to the view of the proponents of hard power diplomacy or the advocates soft power that cultural diplomacy can lead the world to a better state where peaceful relationship can be established beneficial for every partner involved. “Indo-Russian relations are embedded in a history of trust, mutual compatibility and interest that makes it difficult to find parallels in bilateral relations” (Chenoy 2010). The multi-polar vision emphasises non-military solutions to international problems; it argues for the inclusion of states (Chenoy 2010).

Cultural and civilizational connections between Russia and India have always been highlighted basis of close partnership in the various Russia-India annual summits, economic forums and celebrations of special occasions. As explained in the first chapter Russia and India has a rich history of civilizations and cultural connections and commonality of values since antiquity. This closeness continues till date without any serious issues or conflicts interests despite some misunderstandings occurred at times between them. Since the assumption of Putin in power in Russia, the Russia-

India relations were declared as strategic partnership in the first bilateral annual summit in 2000.

When Vladimir Putin became President in 2000 he asserted Eurasianist foreign policy based on maximising Russian interests through aligning with both East and West. He visited India on 2-5 October 2000. President Putin and Prime Minister Vajpayee jointly signed Declaration for Strategic Partnership between India and Russia and launched the annual Summit process in New Delhi in October 2000. Delhi Declaration became the foundation for new relation between India and Russia and Putin became the architect of India-Russia relations in the 21st century. This declaration was a continuation of earlier treaties from 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, to Moscow Declaration of June 1994. The Delhi Declaration evinced the basic ethos guiding the strategic partnership ahead (Usha 2018).

Seventeen bilateral agreements and documents were signed in the field of strengthening defence and military technological cooperation, science and technology, culture, postal communications, cooperation between regions, legal assistance in civil and commercial matters, cooperation in trade and economy, agriculture defence and processing and trade of diamonds, cooperation in the banking sector, atomic energy exploration and development of oil and gas fields and cultural cooperation. Putin visited Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in Mumbai on 5 October 2000 (BARC 2000). He was the first Russian leader to visit BARC. He also visited Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi where one of the world's biggest centre of Russian Studies is located. He was honoured with the title of honorary doctor of law. In his speech Putin stated, "India is a reliable ally of Russia" (kremlin.ru 2000a). Speaking at the lunch hosted by the then President of India Kocheril Raman Narayanan Putin called signing of Delhi

Declaration as “an important milestone in the two country’s bilateral relations” (kremlin.ru 2000b). Putin being the architect of India-Russia relations the succeeding years saw intensified cooperation between two countries.

The significance of this declaration is that it was signed in the global and regional context of unipolarity, US domination, regional political instability (Afghanistan) and security threats (cross border terrorism) which are common for both India and Russia. The framework of annual summits, guiding principles and commitments are shaped in the Delhi Declaration as the basis for future trajectory of the bilateral partnership in the 21st century. New institutional mechanisms were suggested to establish and old ones were renewed to implement the agreements and for interaction. Both countries set up a Joint Working Group on Afghanistan, an Inter-Governmental Commission for Military Technical Cooperation, and a process for active cooperation between the National Security Council of India and the Security Council of the Russian Federation, election commission of the two countries, Comptroller and Auditors General of India and Russia, and the judicial authorities of the two countries. The Integrated Long Term Programme Cooperation in Space and Technology was extended for ten years until 2010 (MEA 2000).

After ten years the eleventh summit held in 2010 in New Delhi reviewed the partnership of a decade and elevated to high level (MEA 2011). Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated that “The tradition of annual summits with Russia symbolises the richness of our relationship with Russia. Russia is a time-tested friend of India that has stood by us in our times of need in the past ... Ours is a very special and privileged strategic partnership. It is a partnership that has and will continue to develop independently of our relations with other countries” (Singh 2010). Now what is special and privileged over the other relations is a natural query.

A joint statement titled “Celebrating a Decade of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership and Looking Beyond” signed by Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh and President Medvedev was adopted in the 11th summit. Eleven agreements of mutual cooperation were signed in the areas concerning the field of Elections, Simplification of Travel Documents for Certain Categories of Nationals, Cooperation in the Field of Emergency Management, Enhancement of Cooperation in Oil and Gas Sector, Science, Technology & Innovation, Atomic Energy Corporation, Combating Irregular Migration, Mass Communications, Information Technology, Hydrocarbon Sector, cooperation between institutions and Joint programmes in scientific and technical cooperation. Besides these, about 20 other contracts were concluded in the government and private sectors on the margins of the Summit, in a range of sectors including defence, banking, trade, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and petrochemicals and communications and Information Technology (MEA 2011: 32-33).

Before discussing the cultural cooperation and cultural diplomacy practices of both Russia and India it is relevant to understand the Russian and India cultural policies.

Cultural Policy/Diplomacy/Cooperation

Russia and India promotes cultural relations and cooperation as foreign policy objectives to boost strategic partnership. Given the past ambivalence on culture or a minimalist approach to culture as a field of foreign policy, by the end of 2014 Russia has formulated and approved the policy document on “Foundations of State Cultural Policy.” This document is fundamental element of Russia’s “pivot to culture” policy in which culture is given priority for the first time in the post-Soviet history.

Foreign Policy Concept of The Russian Federation, approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on 30 November 2016 also states about the significance of culture in foreign policy. Regarding culture it states:

With a view to upholding the national interests of the Russian Federation and achieving its strategic national priorities, the State's foreign policy activities shall be aimed at accomplishing the following main objectives:

-to strengthen Russia's role in international culture; promote and consolidate the position of the Russian language in the world; raise global awareness of Russia's cultural achievements and national historical legacy, cultural identity of the peoples of Russia, and Russian education and research; consolidate the Russian-speaking diaspora;

-to facilitate the development of constructive dialogue and partnership with a view to promoting harmony and mutual enrichment among various cultures and civilizations; ...

- to promote the learning and wider use of the Russian language as an integral part of the global culture and as an instrument of international and inter-ethnic communication, to sustain and develop the network of Russian educational institutions abroad, and to support foreign branches and representative offices of Russian educational institutions (Foreign Policy Concept of Russian Federation, 30 November 2016)

The latest Russian National Security Strategy, December 2015 gives priority to culture even as an issue of national security and sovereignty of Russia. It states:

Threats to national security in the sphere of culture are the erosion of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values and the weakening of the unity of the Russian Federation's multinational people by means of external cultural and information expansion (including the spread of poor-quality mass cultural products), propaganda of permissiveness and violence, and racial, ethnic, and religious intolerance, as well as the decline in the role of the Russian language in the world and in the quality of its teaching in Russia and abroad, attempts to falsify Russian and world history, and unlawful encroachments upon cultural objects.

To achieve the strategic aims of ensuring national security in the sphere of culture, the state cultural policy and the state nationalities policy are being implemented and are aimed at strengthening and augmenting traditional Russian spiritual and

moral values, ensuring ethnic, religious, and racial tolerance, fostering mutual respect among the Russian Federation's peoples, and also developing interethnic and interregional cultural ties. Coordination of the activity of interested federal organs of executive power and the Russian Academy of Sciences in implementing the state cultural policy is being stepped up. ...

Special significance for strengthening national security in the sphere of culture attaches to the implementation of state policy on realizing the function of the Russian language as the state language of the Russian Federation, a means of ensuring the country's state integrity and interethnic communication among the Russian Federation's peoples, the basis of the development of integration processes in the post-Soviet area, and a means of meeting the language and cultural requirements of compatriots abroad. Russia is implementing programs to support the study of the Russian language and culture in the CIS member states so as to accelerate the processes of Eurasian integration.

The utilization of Russia's cultural potential in the interests of multilateral international cooperation (Russian National Security Strategy, December 2015).

Vladimir Putin expressed his impression on "cultural policy" for the first time on 2 October 2013 at a meeting of the Council for Culture and Art under the President. Then he signed a decree on celebrating the 2014 as the Year of Culture in Russia. According to Vitality Kurennoy and Rouslan Khestanov, Putin's position on culture include several factors. They write:

First, culture and Russian Language are seen as interesting elements of the "multinational nation" of Russia; second, cultural diversity, of the world is understood to be one of the factors favouring the national sovereignty and self-sufficiency of Russia; third, traditional cultural values include, above all, support for the multichild traditional heterosexual families ... and a commitment to "Christian values which are the basis of Western civilization" (even if this Western orientation does not prevent clashes between Russia and Western countries); and fourth, the emphasis in "traditional values" is seen as an element of Russia's foreign policy (Kurennoy and Khestanov 2018: 308).

The cultural policy document states that "state cultural policy is called on to provide priority cultural and humanitarian development as a basis of economic enlightenment, state sovereignty and civilizational identity of the country" (ibid).

As indicated by the speeches, many a times articulated by President Putin in several speeches, which includes Valdai Club Speech in 2013 and his 2013 address to the federal Assembly, is not only in contradistinction for a multinational and diverse society but really it runs contrary to article 13.1 of the Constitution, which recognises the “ideological diversity” of the country. The posture which is value driven should be reversed. Purely technocratic neutral cultural policy could be very disorienting to the people who are working in the cultural sector, creating a value vacuum. Values those are common to all citizens should be should be appropriated-for instance values rooted in the Russian constitution. And if the direction of the present course towards the “sovereignisation” of Russia must endure over the long term, the recasting of the values orientation of cultural policy could be called as constitutional patriotism (Kurennoy and Khestanov 2018: 316).

The cultural policy has undergone criticism from many quarters. Kurennoy and Khestanov point out certain challenges need to be solved. The interest of state in culture as one its strategic priorities should be affirmed through genuine legal and institutional changes including legislation to open the sphere of Russian culture. Also through increase in significant amount of funding aimed at the modernisation of the cultural policy of state and cultural life of the country in general. There is a need for institutional reorganisation of the cultural sector in order to develop the infrastructure of the institutional of culture commensurate inform and content with the demand implicit in the massive cultural life of the country. If as, mentioned, the libraries, museums and other cultural institutions inherited from USSR are predisposed to the reproduction of erstwhile function then what is required is a fundamental reorganisation of the internal structure and administrative methods of these institutions and affiliated networks, including a review of the statistical representation of the Russian culture and a general renewal of personal and talent

in the sphere. A qualitative renewal of expertise and research in respect of Russian culture and cultural policy more generally is required. This should include strong knowledge and appreciation of the considerable “grey area” process and practices in the national cultural sphere. The Constitutional obligation to preserve the country’s historical and cultural heritage should be met through institutional and legal measures that help to stimulate public private partnerships and volunteerism in Russian civil society (Ibid).

India like Russia considers culture as an important medium of communication to international audiences about certain image of India it wants to project abroad.

The year 2012 marks 65 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations. In 2013 the major focus was on trade, energy and defence, and deepening the strategic partnership for global peace and stability. 15th Summit was held in New Delhi in December 2014 in an environment of change in government in India western sanctions on Russia and global geo-strategic dynamics. The new BJP government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi continued “special and privileged” relation with Russia which is a key pillar of India’s foreign policy matrix. The foreign principles continues after the government change in India and Narendra Modi, representative of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) became Prime Minister.

Modi’s Era: Towards Continuity and Progress

Review of progress of cooperation between the two countries under Modi government reflect that partnership remains robust in major areas under Modi’s visions of “Make in India”, “Digital India”, “Smart Cities”, etc. Commentators opined that the 15th India-Russia annual summit in December 2014 and Modi’s approach to Russia remain as a test of India’s strategic autonomy, pragmatism and continuity in foreign policy. Some analysts say that the vision “India First” is both

ideology and pragmatism in Modi's foreign policy. India's civilizational grace is also important for him. He is showing a very committed focus on India's development in principle through his "Make in India" drive. In the initial few months he established international prestige in terms of his pragmatic diplomacy, independence and continuity in foreign policy matters. He was trying to enlarge his space of diplomacy in India's relationship with the rest of the world through his own way of making and articulating foreign policy.

Modi asserted the importance of Russia that India attached to her relations with Russia despite the pressure the US tried to put on India during President Putin's visit to New Delhi. During Putin's visit to India, the US State department spokesperson Jen Psaki said, "Our view remains that it's not time for business as usual with Russia. But beyond that, we'd have to take a closer look at what these agreements entail" (Psaki quoted in Haider 2014). India's Ministry of External Affairs refused to comment on US pressure, but Indian Ambassador to Russia, P.S. Raghavan made it very clear that "There is no question of India being pressurized by any country to change its behaviour to Russia or to change its attitude toward anything that concerns India-Russia relations" (quoted in Upadhyay 2014). On the side-lines of BRICS summit in Fortaleza, Prime Minister Modi said: "Every child in India knows that Russia is our best friend" (quoted in Mohanty 2014). The Prime Minister reaffirmed that "relations with Russia will continue to enjoy the priority that they always had in India's foreign policy and that he looks forward to working with President Putin to further deepen and broad-base the strategic partnership including in the areas of defence, nuclear energy, space, energy, trade and investment, people-to-people contacts and addressing regional and global challenges" (Press Information Bureau 2014).

On refusal to condemn Russia's annexation of Crimea Modi said hinting US policy: "In the world right now, a lot of people want to give us advice. But look within them, they too have sinned" (Zakaria 2014). Modi said:

President Putin is a leader of a great nation with which we have a friendship of unmatched mutual confidence, trust and good will. We have a strategic partnership that is incomparable in content. The character of global politics and international relations is changing. However, the importance of this relationship and its unique position in India's foreign policy will not change. In many ways its significance to both countries will grow further in future. President Putin and I agreed that this is a challenging moment in the world. Our partnership and strong sensitivity that we have always had for each other's interests will be source of strength to both countries (News Nation Bureau 2014).

Modi tweeted on 11 December 2014, "Wonderful day with President Putin. Our meeting was comprehensive. India's partnership with Russia is incomparable" (Modi 2014). Moreover the joint summit declaration signed by Putin and Modi clearly stated that "India and Russia oppose economic sanctions that do not have the approval of the United Nations Security Council" (Press Information Bureau 2014a). Modi's above statements are evident enough to show his determination to keep relationship with Russia in high priority. Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj also asserted in a comment on India's relations with Russia following the deadly crash of the Malaysian airliner in eastern Ukraine: "There is no change in our policy. We think that foreign policy is in continuity. Foreign policy does not change with the change in the government." Former National Security Advisor, Shiv Shankar Menon also observed that "It's a very successful foreign policy ... There's a large element of continuity in foreign policy that successive governments had expanded on" (quoted in Hindustan Times 2015). Therefore, as expressed by the Indian political elite, one can assume that the new government is following continuity in foreign policy and India maintains its independence and strategic autonomy in her engagement with the rest of the world.

Immediately after assuming office, the Modi government began efforts to establish contacts with Russia. Several meetings between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Mr Vladimir Putin took place between 2014 and 2016. They met on the side-lines of the Summit in Brazil (July 2014), on the side-lines of the G-20 Summit in Australia (November 2014). Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi also met Russian Prime Minister Mr Dmitry Medvedev in Myanmar on the side-lines of the East Asia Summit held in November 2014. Fifteenth annual India-Russia Summit was another milestone fortaking the time-tested, all weather, special and privileged strategic partnership to new heights.

Prime Minister Modi visited Moscow on 23-24 December 2015 to participate in the 16th Annual summit. He visited Ufa (Russia) to participate in the 7th BRICS Summit in Ufa (Russia) on 8-9 July 2015. On 15 February 2016, India assumed the next Presidency of BRICS from Russia. PM met the Russian President on the side lines of the SCO Summit in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) on 24 June 2016. Besides these, visits by Pranab Mukherjee, President of India, visited Moscow to participate in the celebrations to mark the 70th Anniversary of Russia's Victory in the Great Patriotic War held on 9 May 2015. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Olegovich Rogozin, visited India to prepare for the forthcoming annual summit in Goa on 15 October 2016. PM Modi presided over the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) leaders meeting to finalise their stand on G20 summit in Hangzhou on 4 September 2016 (NDTV 2016).

In the 15th summit, India and Russia signed twenty agreements in priority areas of cooperation defence, energy and space, nuclear energy, technology and innovation, fertilizers, diamonds, expansion in economic engagement, business, culture, and people to people contact and identified pharmaceuticals, diamond industry, IT

sector, clean energy, etc.as potential areas of cooperation. Two vision documents are signed in the 15th annual summit in December 2014: (i) Druszb-Dosti: A Vision for strengthening the Indian-Russian Partnership over the next decade, and (ii) Strategic Vision for Strengthening Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation (MEA 2014). A range of regional and global issues which affect Russia and India directly and indirectly such as international terrorism, militancy, Afghanistan and foreign support to militants are specified to be addressed jointly (MEA 2014).

In the 16th summit in 2015 signed a joint statement of “shared trust, new horizons’ and reviewed the progress of bilateral relations at various fields. Seventeen agreements/MoUs signed between India and Russia on visa simplification, Cooperation in the field of Helicopter Engineering, combating Customs violations in 2015-2017, manufacturing in India for Russian-Designed Nuclear Reactor Units, technical cooperation in railway sector, construction of solar energy plants, cooperation in the field of Broadcasting, investment cooperation in the Russian Far East, cooperation for geologic survey, exploration and production of hydrocarbons onshore the Russian Federation and Cooperation in the field of Ayurveda (MEA 2015).

Regarding this, on the occasion of celebration of seventy years of diplomatic relations between both countries in 2017, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, “We are celebrating a significant date—the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and India. Over the years, a lot has happened and many things have changed, but the main thing in our bilateral relations remains: these are special, trusting, friendly relations between our countries and peoples” on 1 June 2017. Tracing the century-long cultural affinity linking Russia and India, Mr. Anatoly Kargapolov, Charge d’

Affairs of the Russian Federation in India, mentioned the pride of place India has in the minds and hearts of the Russian people. He said, “You ask any person in any street of Moscow, he/she would readily respond saying that they love India, and the people of India are their best friends” (Russian Centre for Science and Culture in New Delhi, 2018).

On the occasion of 70th anniversary Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote in his article published in Russian newspaper *Rosyskaya Gazeta* on 31 May 2017 that “India-Russia relations have been the one constant in a world that has changed dramatically since 1947. They have withstood the test of time and grown from strength to strength. ... Our relations of course go well beyond the last seventy years. They are steeped in history.” (*Times of India* 31 May 2017). Similarly he said in December 2014, during Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to India: “Even a child in India, if asked to say who India’s best friend is, will reply it is Russia because Russia has been with India in times of crisis” (Simha 2014).

The two sides mutually agreed to promote further strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of bilateral inter-regional cooperation. They noted with satisfaction that many cities and regions in the two countries have established linkages for cooperation in various fields such as trade and investment, tourism, cultural and people-to-people contacts (MEA 2014). Cultural Cooperation aims at enhancing people to people ties through cultural exchanges, annual festivals of culture, exchanges between cultural institutions, think tanks, tourism promotion events, and other initiatives.

The sides will take steps to strengthen education ties through facilitating and extending support to each other’s students. They supported the establishment of institutional linkages between universities and academic institutions of the two countries. The sides will promote in this context the development of network

partnerships between universities. The sides will encourage cooperation to promote health and fitness through traditional Indian forms of Yoga and Ayurveda, including through Yoga centres, camps and Ayurveda centres (MEA 2014). Both sides welcomed progress towards the establishment of an Ayurveda Chair in the Peoples' Friendship University in Moscow.

Humans are basically cultural being and therefore their mental and psychological development is possible only in the multiplication of different cultures, which is possible through the use of cultural diplomacy. The proponents of cultural diplomacy like Russia and India should also bear in mind that the culture as a form of expression, can exist only when it represents the aspirations of the masses and if it includes variety of cultures existing in their boundaries. It is pertinent to enhance the scope, to enhance the impact of culture and they should come out of presenting one type of culture as their national identity. It should include each and every culture, and then the aim of cultural diplomacy will be fulfilled. The most important difference between use of culture as soft power and cultural diplomacy is that the soft power's culture represents the elite culture with a specific intention while cultural diplomacy transcends the narrow concept of national interest.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In almost all definitions of cultural diplomacy, there are a few elements which are common. These elements are the core of cultural diplomacy which nation states practice in relation to others. These elements include portraying cultural image to the world, increasing mutual understanding, and gaining political and economic benefits, accelerating people-to-people connect and institutionalisation. These elements are essentially important in understanding the meaning and functions of cultural diplomacy.

In the modern world, which is now shrinking day after day with the use of new technology and modes of communication, trade and business, these elements of cultural diplomacy seem extremely relevant. In this fast-paced world, where people-to-people connect and communication is no longer dependent on a particular given framework provided by the government, mutual understanding among nation states is highly crucial and useful. This understanding is not merely helpful in communication, but also facilitates trade and development.

Ideology, in today's times, is not as predominant as it was before the Cold War, and thus, the identity of the nation states is the sum total of their cultural image. A cultural image in the new image of countries and branding one's cultural image to the outside world is the most essential thing in the life of a country. The building of an image and portraying it opens up the gates for new relationships vis-a-vis other nations, their policies and their people. In the process of forging or maintaining a relationship, cultural understanding is indispensable. In other forms of diplomacy, for instance in soft power, the focus is on portraying one's own culture while there is no space for creating dialogue. In cultural diplomacy,

however, mutual understanding of culture is basic and needed, which is an essential for the further development of relations.

An important feature of cultural diplomacy is people-to-people contact-- something which also holds special significance as it demarcates cultural diplomacy from public diplomacy. The focus of cultural diplomacy is to connect people of one nation with that of other nations, with the government working as a facilitator, not an active agent.

In this context, Russia- India relations hold special significance because of its unique history of cultural relations through people-to-people contact, and engagement of governments. In Russia-India relations, for instance, there are various institutions working in the direction of cultural diplomacy. The other essential feature or rather objective of cultural diplomacy is to gain benefits and privileges in the field of both economy and politics; the economic and political gains can be achieved effectively by its use. The situation of political and economic cooperation in Russia and India is a clear example.

Cultural diplomacy, which is primarily based upon the sharing of ideas, values and cultural traditions through different tools like art forms, music, literature, language, media etc, plays a significant role in international relations. This form of diplomacy has survived through different time periods and has emerged as one of the most crucial kinds of diplomacy remarkably contributing to the development of relations among nation states. It creates the brand image of a country and helps in further engagement and cooperation with others-- it helps considerably in identity formation and establishment of a country on the world stage. And with the changed circumstances, laden with new technology and communication methods, cultural diplomacy is essentially gaining more importance.

An interesting fact about cultural diplomacy is that while it has been used at different times and circumstances by almost all the countries, particularly the powerful ones, its usage changes with the objective the country is trying to pursue at that point. The stark difference between the objectives of the nation states while using cultural diplomacy was clearly evident during the Cold War period. The varied narratives of governments and ruling elites were created and spread only with the help of cultural diplomacy.

Pertinently, the social and political contradictions have changed the very content of cultural diplomacy since the time it came into existence. In the Cold War period and after, the political contestation based upon ideological presumptions was defining international relations. Political or ideological rivalry was managed by not so much by hard power diplomacy, but cultural diplomacy. The government of the countries involved in the war were using cultural diplomacy against each other for gaining war benefits. There are many instances of cultural confrontations during that time whereby culture was not simply used, but very effectively used as a weapon. The Cold War era is not marked by direct confrontation among nation states; instead, it was a silent war with a clear objective to overpower the other. On the one hand, the capitalist states led by the US used cultural diplomacy to malign the USSR, and propagated its own culture and values as progressive and democratic, on the other, the Soviet Union was spreading its ideology and socialist culture to the other states under the scheme of their version of internationalism. The intention of both the blocs was to destroy the identity of the other, something that became successful with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. As a result of the clever, wide and triumphant use of cultural diplomacy by the US, the American form of democracy and liberal values became the order of the day in the aftermath of the war.

Cultural diplomacy affects relationship by using culture as a tool-- something that was evident during the Cold War-- with the intention to create an altogether different narrative. In the post-Cold War period, and since then with the advent of a new world order, it has gained special importance. The reason for the acceptance and significance of cultural diplomacy in the post war period was primarily the cultural identities of the nation states, and new relations based upon that. In case of India, for instance, the evolution of nationalism is very much cultural. While politics has undoubtedly played a crucial role in the development of nationalism, the content of nationalism in India is still cultural. Renaissance in India had established the content of nationalism, and leaders like Vivekananda has greatly focussed on the cultural role of nationalism. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru explained India's basic characteristic feature when he said that India is the epitome of 'unity in diversity'. The assimilation of different cultures, and presenting them as the political identity of the nation was the objective of renaissance.

Russia is no different. After the de-idealisation process, the national leaders endeavoured to forge culture as the basis of their nationalism. In fact, before de-idealisation also, the Soviet Union was projecting its culture only as their identity, though that culture was very much political. In the present scenario, cultural diplomacy is turning into an essential form of diplomacy, being thus used by countries across the world. New technology, modern forms of communication and less control of government on market gave further impetus to its use in international relations. People-to-people contact is a predominant feature of cultural diplomacy, and thus, its significance increases with the enhancement of methods that can promote people connect. Interestingly, both the state and non-state actors play an important role in this regard, as in the modern world, it is not only the government which communicates. The philosophy of the

modern government is to facilitate relations-- be it cultural or economic-- and therefore, the role of state and non-state actors is equally important. There are various organisations, NGOs and other educational institutions working in this direction.

Moreover, cultural diplomacy also enjoys dialectical relations in matters of economy, as it helps strengthening economic relations. This is so because it can provide positive environment which welcomes business, trade and investment and through trade, culture too moves to other lands. Culture and its utility in international relations is not an unknown phenomenon; the concept of soft power is quite popular and prevalent in the modern scenario. Almost all nation states, in some form or the other, practice soft power, and have their own way of influencing other countries using the tools of soft power. Soft power primarily relies on cultural means to influence others in order to gain economic and military benefits. In fact, in a way, it is imposing one's own cultural values on others indirectly, and influencing them to support their actions in favour of their national interest. It is implied in the very concept of soft power, leaving aside its usage, that it is not a two-way path-- it does not endeavour to establish a dialogue between the concerned countries.

Soft power upholds a political agenda of the government, or of the elites, of the country, who try to create a narrative which favours them. Soft power does not necessarily reflect the traditional and ethical values; instead, it is a certain kind of projection which a country wants others to accept. American movies, for instance, fall into this category; many of the Hollywood movies are overwhelmingly about saving the world from some external enemy, who is a terrorist most of the times. The American idea associated with the 'war on terror' explains the objective of its soft power. The US wants to project and save the

unilateral world order, where they are the sole power and propagator of democracy.

There are, however, clear cut demarcations between cultural diplomacy and soft power. Cultural diplomacy in fact contradicts some of the basic principles and tenants of soft power. As mentioned before, in cultural diplomatic relations, the governments of the concerned states only act as facilitator, with the state and non state actors as participants. Furthermore, the objective of cultural diplomacy is not as single pointedly focused as in case of soft power. Its intention is to give regard and try to connect with different cultures, and establish a dialogue. The major objective of cultural diplomacy is to forge an identity of the country in consonance with its cultural and political values, and present an image which would be helpful in the development of its relations with other countries. Pertinently, cultural diplomacy, through various tools, works equally in the realm of public as well as the government. It is like creating a positive attitude and image so that it could help the other nation states in not only understanding their culture, but also in strengthening relations in other areas, like that of economy and politics.

Moreover, cultural diplomacy is also quite different from public diplomacy, which is a kind of diplomacy in which government's role is much greater (in comparison with cultural diplomacy). It is evident from name itself that in public diplomacy, the government uses tools which engages with the public, in order to present an image in a controlled manner under the agencies of the government. Cultural diplomacy, on the other hand, is not about any controlled image or branding; instead, is related to gauging the trend of its own cultural traditions and following that path to present the culture outside, so as to create a positive

attitude by not projecting one particular image but rather, having the will to understand each other's culture.

Cultural diplomacy seeks a holistic and comprehensive understanding of different cultures, and helps in the evolution of trusted relationship; it tries to pervade into all the communities and sections of the country. However, in practice, it is not that cultural diplomacy completely encompasses all the cultures of a country; the elites of the nation state, through cultural diplomacy, create a narrative in their favour and do not recognise the prevalent cultural contradictions.

This is quite evident in the cultural diplomacy practiced by Russia and India. While both the nation states certainly attempted to assimilate different cultures, but deliberately or not, could not do so successfully. The governments and the ruling elites get benefited by projecting one sort of culture, and they thus create that narrative selectively and not holistically. A classic case in point would be the present Indian scenario under the new government which is projecting that image outside India which is not completely in consonance with the traditions of the country.

The relevance of cultural diplomacy can be particularly understood during and after the Cold War era by tracking the identity formation of the nation states during that period. It was a time when the traditional identities of the countries were constantly under scanner. It was quite evident during the Cold War in case of the communist and capitalist blocs, led by the Soviet Union and the US respectively. By the end of the war, the blow was big to the Soviet Union with its structure and identity crumbling down. While the repercussions were particularly damaging for the Soviet Union, almost all the countries underwent some kind of

change as far as their identities were concerned. India's experiment with the new market system is an example of not merely a change in its economic system, but rather in its traditional identity which it has always cherished.

The Soviet Union's identity, which was based upon the ideology that became prominent after the socialist revolution, also underwent a drastic change followed by the complete overhaul of its economic and political structure. Its identity was lost, and it then started forging a new one based on the new political values and cherished culture of the country. Russia too, as a successor state, had to forge a new system with a new identity. The definition of friend and foe for Russia, which was earlier based upon the ideological background it had bequeathed, now had to change. Even India, which was once very much inspired by the socialist model of the Soviet Union, had to undergo change, and openly adopted liberalism in the wake of the new developments in the world.

The post Cold War period was also a time when every nation state, who was a part of the fray in some form or the other, sought to initiate new relationships. The reason being that their relationships so far were based on the ideological position of the bloc they were a part of, which was not the case anymore. The world divided into two blocs, led by the Soviet Union and the US, was not defining international relations anymore. A unilateral world order was now the reality, and the onus of developing relationship with others was the responsibility solely of the countries involved. This situation, along with the forging of new identities, helped in emerging regional cooperation, which became significant and relevant with time. Suddenly, the countries started focusing on regions and developing regional cooperation, as a result of which numerous regional cooperative bodies came into existence.

This creation of new identities was not immune to challenges. Russia now had to work to forge its new identity, probably leaving behind that of the leader of the socialist bloc, but the challenge was to establish a harmonious attitude between its legacy and the new image they wanted to create. While the political and economic system they adopted was certainly not a part of the legacy, but the cultural identity they tried to adopt was in line with its history. Here, it is also pertinent to mention that despite their will, they could not assimilate all the cultures in their cultural diplomatic process, and could not resolve the prevalent cultural contradictions.

The tools of cultural diplomacy sometimes cannot assimilate the mass culture of the country. A few times, it is the necessity of the regime to create a cultural discourse in their favour, and they cannot afford to assimilate the elements of mass culture in the dominant discourse. The dominant discourse cannot then have elements of mass culture because that can alter the projected image of the country, and then, the privileges of the government and the elites can be in jeopardy. The language of regional people, for instance, could not find enough space in Russia when the government recognised Russian as the binding language of the country, which in fact it was not. This naturally led to tension among the masses. In case of India, which was also struggling with the same problem, this was all the more challenging because of its differences and diversity. It required great efforts on the part of the Indian government to assimilate the huge differences in the dominant culture of the country.

In the present era, when political parties are interested only in their interpretation of culture, the problem of defective cultural representation is a result. Indian politics in today's time, for instance, is revolving around culture which is being redefined in the past few years. The narrative which is being created so far does

not necessarily take into account the various traditions of the country; instead, small fragments of culture are being used to create their own version of distorted cultural identity.

This political understanding of culture restricts not only cultural identity of a country but also affects the use of cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy, though practiced for a long time in the arena of international relations, could not (and cannot) give enough regard to mass culture, and therefore has affected (and continues to do so) policy making restricting it to the upper echelons of the society. In the democratic form of government, the policies of the government should reflect the will and wish of the people belonging to every community and class, something which is certainly not the case in the present set up.

Both Russia and India could not accommodate diversity and mass culture successfully, and thus, while cultural diplomacy of both the countries have served them well, it could have been much better. The reason behind the successful practice of cultural diplomacy between the two countries is not that they have given enough space to the mass culture, but that they share a long history of people-to-people contact. This people-to-people contact and cultural sharing between the two countries since antiquity helped them in the practice of cultural diplomacy. The political and social ideas transported from Russia to India after independence, and Indian values, helped both the countries to search for a new avenue—something which categorically happened in the year 2001 and 2010 in the form of special strategic partnership.

Cultural diplomacy affects not only the cultural understanding, but it pervades and garners support in other areas as well. In the wake of new threats and problems, which are a result of rampant development, and the issues requiring collective effort, cultural diplomacy provides a fine solution. Terrorism,

economic depression, social problems can be challenged best by the use of cultural diplomacy, as it increases the understanding of and between countries, which would be helpful in working together effectively.

Both Russia and India have supported each other in various international platforms on matters of terrorism and other domestic problems—be it Chechnya in case of Russia, or Kashmir in case of India. With the development of cultural diplomacy, both the countries have come closer institutionally, and have supported each other several times in economic and political matters. This goes on to reflect the level of mutual trust that exists between them.

Russia and India, since antiquity, have had close collaboration in matters of culture. After the October revolution in Russia, India was quite influenced by the struggle and spirit of the Soviet Union. The influence of the socialist revolution could easily be seen in the freedom struggle of India. There were many freedom fighters who were greatly swayed by Marxism and socialism, and they tried to incorporate its elements in the fight for freedom. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was influenced to such an extent that he adopted the Soviet Union's economic planning; the Indian planning commission and mixed economy were the consequence of the Soviet Union's influence over India. Russia too was equally appreciative of India's culture and its policies. The Non-Alignment Movement, for instance, was fairly admired in Russia. The presence of Indian religions, like Buddhism, remarkably tells the story of cultural diplomacy practised between the two countries.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, Russia was forging not only a new identity, but also new relationships, more so with India. Russia and India both reiterated the framework of regional cooperation, for instance, as the key to development. In

the aftermath of the war, while Russia was going through a transformative phase, India too felt the tremors of a changing world. The cultural relations or cultural diplomacy helped them survive and maintain their mutual trust.

In the post Cold War era, regional cooperation enhanced with the development of new identities of the nation states. Cultural diplomacy became all the more important as culture was now the very basis of a new identity. Russia and India both increased their regional cooperation, and became members of a few regional organisations. From the very beginning, both the countries, through practices of cultural diplomacy, have shared relationships which were beneficial to them. Russia and India shared a great deal of cultural amalgamation, which is quite evident in the tools of cultural diplomacy-- an example being the considerable influence on each other of cinema, literature, language, music and art forms. Indian cinema was very popular in the Soviet Union and later on in Russia.

The cinema and its influence is not only limited to the public but institutionalisation process also become extremely important. There are many joint ventures in the field of cinema which are working in this direction; numerous films since Raj Kapoor's production are a result of collaborative efforts in the field of cinema. Likewise, in other arenas, popularity and collaborative efforts were (and are) going hand-in-hand. Literature, for instance, is one highly popular area which narrates the story of cultural relations between the two countries. Russian classical literature was and is still exceptionally saleable and tremendously appreciated. Vice versa, the literary works of Indian writers are often included in the literary festivals of Russia.

These media, though very popular and playing an exceedingly crucial role in the field of cultural diplomacy, has very limited reach and content. For example, in

the present context, literature or in cinema-- the most popular tools of cultural diplomacy—do not include much of mass culture and their traditions. In the classical literature and travelogues, the glimpse of the mass culture and the common culture could be found because at that point, literary works sought association beyond the national boundaries. Whether in India or the Soviet Union, the literature which came into existence and which had influence, was written against the ruling elites; this meant it had to incorporate elements of mass culture to a great extent.

In the modern times, however, neither is the literature of that kind popular nor is the government keen on having those sorts of works. Undoubtedly, the governments and institutions are working for promoting literature, cinema and other forms of art in each other country, but it is quite limited in its scope. These forms of arts or expressions become popular when people of other country feel themselves to be connected and associated with it, when the people of the foreign land seem to be sharing similar kinds of issues. Hindi cinema, for example, was extremely popular in Russia at one point of time, because of the distress that people of Russia were facing during the decade of the 90s owing to which they could easily associate with the problems and anxieties of the people in India as shown in the movies.

Russia and India have remained to be trusted allies of each other for a very long time. Their relations, particularly cultural, have existed from their very inception, with the Russian merchants and travellers having played an important role in the development of these cultural relations. Their accounts remain valuable till date because of the first-hand experiences. They have presented the picture not according to the set rules of one regime, but have rather jotted down their own real experiences. This is one example of the people-to-people connect, something

that has contributed to a great extent in the development of further relations between Russia and India.

In the post Cold War era, the historicity of both the countries helped them to continue their relations; it is at this stage when cultural diplomacy helped them a lot as they could easily trust each other. Russia and India share incredible support of each other in political matters, and they have supported each other on numerous platforms. When Russia, as a successor state of the Soviet Union, was forging relations after the disintegration, it had to change its foreign policy, not to mention its political and economic system. Even at that stage, when Russia started afresh, the relationship between Russia and India survived. The trust between the two not only made them continue with their existing relations, but both developed and improved their mutual understanding, taking it to such a level whereby they could proclaim 'special privileged strategic partnership'.

It is quite evident from the speeches of the leaders of both the countries that they believe in the long-trusted friendship and relationship, and are always keen on taking them a notch higher. As a result, they established a new sort of relationship in 2001, which deepened further in 2011-- 'special privileged strategic partnership'. Russia and India have had military ties, economic cooperation, and cooperation in the field of science and even space technology, hydrocarbons et al, and these ties are only getting stronger. It is, indeed, very difficult to find one area where these two countries have nothing to share.

Cultural diplomacy makes it possible to establish a platform whereby dialogue is possible in the long term. It is considered that the role of cultural diplomacy is limited, because it is a time-taking process, and it seeks to forge long-terms relations but this is certainly not the case. Cultural diplomacy is effective in

matters of conflict resolution as it can provide enough space and a peaceful platform wherein peaceful dialogue is possible. While international organisations or security organisations, which have the responsibility of conflict resolution, are working in this direction, they are not much effective. The international organisations are not free from prejudices, and are often accused of working in favour of the powerful nation states. The practice of cultural diplomacy seems to provide a solution here as it tackles the imposition of these international and security organisations.

Cultural diplomacy, as we have seen, was crucial in developing, maintaining and improving relations among nation states, as it helps in learning about the other cultures, in turn, understanding the other country's identity. This kind of diplomacy, which may seem similar, but is quite different from soft power and public diplomacy, was very much prevalent during the Cold War but was being used for ideological war and spreading propaganda against the other bloc. However, with the end of the Cold War, it started being used for building new identities and shaping new kinds of relations among nation states. Now, with changing times, new technology and modes of communication, it is only natural and logical to believe that cultural diplomacy has become all the more useful.

As far as Russia and India is concerned, their shared history and culture has helped them build a strong trust and understanding—something which has proved to be beneficial for both. Since the Cold War, and after, Russia's culture—be it literature, music, art forms, films, or ideas—have massively influenced Indian way of thinking, even impacting India's freedom struggle and its policies afterwards. Similarly, Indian values and ideas, religion and cultural practices, art and movies is also greatly appreciated in Russia. This mutual admiration, appreciation and the trust which comes from it, has been exponential in strong and improved relations between the two countries.

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APPENDIX



September, 1961: Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev (left) and Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru at the Indo-Soviet Friendship Rally in Moscow (Source: Frontline)



September, 1971: Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev welcomes Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in Moscow (Source: Frontline)



Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi with the last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev (Source: ITAR-TASS)



Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife Raisa with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his wife Sonia during his visit to India. (Source: ITAR-TASS)



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Russian President Vladimir Putin during the BRICS Summit in 2017 (Source: AFP)



Modi and Putin during their informal summit in Russian city of Sochi in May, 2018 (Source: The Indian Express)



Glimpses of The Festival of the Russian Culture in India held at New Delhi in 2014 (Source: Embassy of the Russian Federation in the republic of India)



'From Russia, With Love': A celebration of the Indian culture in Russian city of Moscow (Source: Russian Embassy)



Bollywood movies and dance are immensely popular among the Russian people (Source: Russian Embassy)



Indian iconic actor Raj Kapoor is equally, if not more, in Russia. Kapoor with friends in Moscow (Source:l.pinimg.com)



'Dream Girl' HemaMalini was honoured in Russia during the 4th Indian Film Festival of Russia in 2017
(Source: The Indian Express)