

**Emerging Super-Powers or Emerging Economies:
The Energy Factor in the Rise of China and India
as Major Players in the World Economy¹**

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ABSTRACT The title for this paper stems from the researcher's attendance over the last few years, at several conferences run by institutions in India and South Africa, and through increased literature surveys in the roles played by China and India in the African continent. It is almost inevitable, that in discussing the increasing investments by these two countries in Africa, that a deeper look be taken at their levels of energy consumption. This paper takes the position that it is in understanding China's and India's exploitation of their own energy resources and their imports of the same that a clearer understanding can be grasped about the hype around either one or both of these countries surging towards superpower status. Both countries are becoming increasingly known for the competition that they are providing against North American and European Union hegemonic interests in the world and both are being bandied about as emerging superpowers. But not enough is known about why such expectations are ascribed to them, and not enough is known about what should be scrutinised to justify this expectation. Analysing China's and India's energy usages is one way of acquiring a glimpse into the reasons for attributing to them statuses of emergent superpowers.