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THE PURSUIT OF ASIAN HEGEMONY: A COMPARISON OF CHINESE AND INDIAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND CONTAINMENT POLICIES

Abstract

India currently struggles for future Asian leadership against the asymmetrically powerful China. India desires to achieve great power status in the international community whereas China desires to be a global superpower, yet both countries must achieve Asian hegemony first. To achieve Asian hegemony, India and China employ two differing approaches. China has instituted a methodical and scrupulous "calculative strategy", which has propelled them into Asian leadership. The primary component of China's long term strategy is to systematically encircle India by embroiling them in regional affairs detrimental to India's larger Asian ambitions. China has engaged and armed South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan. India has countered China's advances by courting Southeast Asian and East Asian countries (the Look East Policy). Additionally, China and India have undergone rapprochement in the 21st century, but this rapprochement is a façade that will not moderate their antagonistic relationship. Finally, it is imperative for India to emulate China's realist strategy model to prevent China from engulfing Asia under their hegemonic influence and control.

THE PURSUIT OF ASIAN HEGEMONY: A COMPARISON OF CHINESE AND INDIAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND CONTAINMENT POLICIES

Introduction: A Realist Reading of China's Rise

In the 21st century, China has the potential to establish hegemony over Asia and acquire the power projection to challenge the United States for the role of global superpower. Views of China's future role in Asia and the world fall into two broad categories. The first category is comprised by those that view China as a future threat to global stability. This view is opposed by those that view a future China as a status quo power that will operate in a way congruous to multipolarity. Realist theorist John Mearsheimer is of the first opinion, that China's rise creates an inevitable rivalry with the United States (U.S.) and current international norms. China's economic development will provide them enough power in the future to ensure their security through achieving regional hegemony. China's motives are not inherently malicious, but they operate under the assumption that "the best way for any state to maximize its prospects for survival is to be the hegemon in its region of the world" (Mearhseimer, 402). China has historically acted congruous to realist thinking, in opposition to the liberalized world view that has become pervasive in the U.S. and throughout the international community (Christensen, 37). China uses traditional balance-of-power thinking, and is constantly suspicious of international institutions that promote shared values and culture (Christensen, 37). While the U.S. promotes democracy and liberty worldwide as a prime component of their foreign policy, China has only promoted their communist values in North Korea (Christensen, 37). China has, however, become increasingly engaged in international institutions in the 21st century, but it is clear that their motives are the advancement of their own power vis-à-vis potential rivals, not the idealistic altruism that often accompanies such institutions.

Given China's history over the last two centuries, it is easy to understand why their disposition is more realist than their western counterparts. Notably, China shares a border with 13 countries including three countries with which they warred in the second half of the 20th century: India, Russia, and Vietnam (Mearsheimer, 375). China still has outstanding border disputes with India and Vietnam, in addition to the multitude of countries that claim portions of the Spratly Islands (Mearsheimer, 375) ("China: Transnational", 2008).

Following Mearshimer's realist approach, China is deeply suspicious of neighboring Japan and the permeative presence of the U.S. throughout the Pacific Rim and mainland Asia. Currently, the U.S. has approximately 100,000 troops in Northeast Asia alone. As China grows in power projection capability, they are unlikely to tolerate the occupation of their sphere of influence by a foreign country and will institute a Chinese version of the Monroe Doctrine. This mutual distrust is exacerbated by the fact that relations between China and the U.S.-Japan alliance have deteriorated since the end of the Cold War, when all countries were united against the U.S.S.R. (Mearsheimer, 375). Since then, mutual suspicion between China and Japan has grown over increased militarization by both countries, and the U.S. and China have both realized the forthcoming conflict of interests emerging with a stronger China. The result is a China aiming to develop its economy and military as rapidly as possible, while the U.S. works to engage China in international institutions that will mitigate their desire to challenge international norms. The U.S. does this in the hope that wealth and prosperity will mute China's expansionist objectives, and that through complete integration into the international community China will be dissuaded from entering a security rivalry with the U.S. and will be content with their international power position¹. The U.S.'s policy of trade engagement with China is paradoxical to realists like Mearsheimer, who advises the U.S. to adopt policies that will slow China's economic growth potential (Mearsheimer, 402). Just as China creates foreign policy through a realist lens, so should the U.S. to ensure that China does not rise to a point where they acquire enough power to challenge the U.S. for global supremacy.

The "China Threat" mentality is reinforced by A.F.K. Organski's Power Transition Theory which postulates that the U.S.'s status as a dominant power will be challenged by China's rise. When measuring the likelihood of future conflict, The Power Transition Theory takes into account pure power, measured by population, economic prowess, and political efficacy in achieving objectives, and whether the rising state is satisfied or dissatisfied with current international norms (Lemke, 8-9). China's future portends the achievement of the three conditions for sufficient pure power: China has the world's largest population and has instituted proper controls to assure stable yet controlled population growth, China's economy is the fastest growing in the world and will overtake the U.S. in G.D.P. purchasing parity in 2015 (Tammen, 155), and China possesses a

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¹ Mearsheimer refutes the idea of economic interdependence as a source of peace. In the early 1900's, the world economy was the most interdependent it has ever been, yet World War 1 began in 1914 between European powers that had been the biggest beneficiaries of the thriving international market (Mearsheimer, 371).

strong central communist party government that has proven to be proficient in managing the economy and delegating economic roles to maximize utility and efficiency (Tammen, 156). Additionally, China is a dissatisfied state in the current international order. From 1950 to 1985, China endured eleven critical foreign policy situations and responded with force eight times. China acted violently proportionally more than any other major power, despite the fact that they possessed much weaker power capabilities compared to now (Cohen, 1997). As China increases their military and economic puissance, they will become even more assertive and less yielding to international norms. Additionally, China is often placed outside of the international community with other pariah regimes such as Myanmar, Sudan, and Iran (Gupta, Am., 76). Countries are placed outside of the international community for refusing to adhere to standards created by the West regarding human rights, trade, sovereignty, and a myriad of other issues. Therefore, China will not rise in the world and become a status quo power that accepts the conditions of the international order, they will rise in a way that threatens the order that the U.S. has established. Accordingly, the "China Threat" view should dictate the foreign policy of the dominant state, the U.S., as well as regional powers that will undergo preliminary conflict with China, such as India.

India has similar growth potential to China, although they are less advanced after commencing their economic reforms in 1991, nearly 15 years after China. However, in terms of pure power measurements, India is aligned to challenge the dominant state in the second portion of the 21st century. India already possesses an immense population, and will exceed China's in 2030 for world superiority ("India Will", 2001). India has also shown dramatic economic growth driven by a burgeoning middle class and a large population of young, educated, English-speakers (Tammen, 176). What India currently lacks is the political efficacy to effectively manage foreign threats such as China, and internal divisions resonating from terrorism² and urban-rural divisions (Tammen, 176-177). However, despite India's history of non-alignment and penchant for thirdworld associations, their parallel standards of democracy, free market economics, and English language bode well for their peaceful rise to a status quo power that is satisfied with the international order.

Hence, U.S.-Indian relations have flourished in the 21st century, and look to continue along the lines of trade, energy³, and security. From the U.S.'s vantage point, India will play an

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² According to the U.S. State Department, India was one of the foremost victims of substantial terrorist attacks in 2003 (Guihong, 2005, 283).

³ The Indo-U.S. Civilian Nuclear Agreement, completed in 2007, outlines a deal for the U.S. to sell civilian nuclear energy to India. Since India is not a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (N.P.T), the U.S. was forced to

increasingly important role in Asia as China pursues more political power, energy, and trade at the expense of the U.S.'s current dominion. Although India lags behind China in key areas of development, India has the potential to act as a counter to China's rise through their geographic position, expanding military power, and close linkages with the rest of Asia.

Long Term Strategic Objectives

As China ascends to major power status while India remains marred in regional conflict, a misperception is created that India is more aware of China than China is of India. China projects an attitude of ambivalence to India, instead focusing on aggregate economic growth and internal stability. However, to assume that China's projection is accurate of their ambitions is fallacious. China has been and is still pursuing a calculated strategy to prohibit India from attaining great power status. China knows that India is their greatest threat in Asia, and that only India can muster the military, diplomatic, and economic strength to constrain China's objectives of Asian hegemony. According to Tellis (139), China's strategy consists of five major components, the first being the employment of public ambivalence towards India and their future economic and military capabilities. The second strategy is to diminish the appearance of a military rivalry with India, particularly in the nuclear realm where China is the only world power not to acknowledge India's nuclear weapons program as legal and legitimate⁴ (Pant, 60). The third strategy is to maintain China's alliance with Pakistan while publicly appearing to have no role in Pakistan's aggressive encroachment into Kashmir and Pakistan's illicit support for Islamic terrorism. The fourth strategy is to continue the maturation of Chinese engagement and influence in the rest of South Asia and furthering economic and diplomatic ties with Southeast Asia. Finally, the fifth strategy is to maximize economic growth rates that will produce further international economic engagement, increase China's clout to the international community, and provide China the resources to achieve powerful military projection, all with the byproduct of overriding India's parallel rise.

Conversely, India has not instituted the same long term strategic objectives that China has. As a democracy, India's foreign policy is often subject to the current administration's objectives, not invariable long term plans. India is inhibited from creating a long term vision of their foreign

pass the Hyde Act to allow changes to civilian nuclear sales protocol. However, the Agreement is opposed by a minority of India's politicians and must still pass through bureaucratic processes in the U.S., making the conclusion of the deal tenuous (Natarajan, 2008).

⁴ India not being a signatory to the N.P.T., China is vehemently opposed to the U.S.-India nuclear deal since it creates a clear exception for Western-allied India (Malik, "China's Strategy", 2008).

policy due to the primacy of bureaucracy and institutional change. India's inability to counter China's long term objectives have led to an asymmetry in bilateral relations where China has assumed the role of future Asian hegemon and India is merely delaying their inevitable descent into a subservient role in Asia.

The asymmetry is most pronounced by the normalization of China's exploitation of divisions between India and their neighbors. China has no regard for India's security concerns, and therefore continues to copiously arm India's greatest threats and historical rivals, such as Pakistan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh (Malik, 2004, 149). Additionally, China uses their asymmetrical power to aggressively push into India's territory, which facilitates increased border tensions and instability⁵. In the two years, 2006-2008, China has illegally crossed India's border approximately 300 times; while in November 2007, China destroyed Indian bunkers along the Sikkim⁶-Tibet border (Chellaney, "Stop Being", 2008). China continues to construct roads and railways along the Line of Control, effectively solidifying the border without India's consent ("Asia", 343). Despite China's aggression, India resists calling public attention to China's cross-border forays, instead denying the severity of such incursions.

India's reluctance to publicly chastise Chinese aggression is representative of the divergence in foreign policy between the two countries. Brahma Chellaney observes that while China desires "respect and awe", India is only receptive to policies that "enjoy external affirmation" (Chellaney, "India", 2005). China has no aversion to admonishing India and the U.S. for anti-missile systems purchases, yet India did not attempt to dissuade the European Union (E.U.) from lifting their arms embargo on China (Chellaney, "India", 2005). India's silence is indicative of their compliant foreign policy, particularly considering China's comparative preponderance of weaponry. India must recognize China's recalcitrance on the border dispute and other bilateral issues and respond with affirming vigor. India will never be respected as a major world power if they continue to suppress their own diplomatic leverage by allowing Chinese aggression to continue unimpeded. To compete with China in the long term, India must institute long term strategic objectives that will remain in place across political volatility to effectively contain China's ability to engulf Asia with their growing power and influence.

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⁵ China is not eager to solve the border disputes presently since their power projection is predicted to grow in the future. Consequently, China's focus in border negotiations has shifted from delineating the line of control to establishing overarching conceptions (Chellaney, "Dragon", 2005).

⁶ China has long protested India's annexation of Sikkim, but relented in 2005 by showing maps of India with Sikkim clearly within their territorial boundaries (Baruah, 2005). However, China subsequently rescinded their approval of Sikkim as an Indian state by now claiming a northern section of the state (Pranab, 2008).

China also possesses asymmetrical power over India in terms of military prowess and nuclear weaponry. As China has grown economically, they have invested a vast portion of their resources into their military. Since 1992, China's military has seen double digit growth rates per year, increasing by 15% in 2006⁷ (Tkasik, 2006). Figures for China's total military budget are difficult to establish since China's military is largely concealed. The 2006 military budget for China was \$35 billion, but this figure neglected spending on new weaponry and research, leaving China's military capabilities indefinite (Pant, 60). China also possesses a large nuclear weapons arsenal that consists of approximately 200 nuclear warheads (Norris, 65). Primarily located on the Tibetan plateau just north of India, these warheads can reach every major Indian city (Guihong, 2006, 99). As China invests additional money into their military their nuclear weapons program will grow accordingly.

India, on the other hand, does not possess the same military capabilities as China, particularly in the nuclear realm. Currently, India has assembled approximately 50-60 nuclear warheads (Norris, 65). India has yet to fully weaponize their nuclear arsenal, so the weapons are not continuously ready to be deployed (Frazier, 298). Under optimal circumstances, India would be able to deliver a nuclear attack in 24 hours (Perkovich, 191). India's unweaponized force is less daunting than China's targeted arsenal, but still acts as a credible minimal deterrent. By 2020, India could stockpile as many as 250 nuclear warheads (Chambers, 480), yet it is unlikely that they will achieve nuclear parity with China. In sum, China has translated their advanced planning and economic progression into leverage against India in the military, diplomatic, and economic realm.

China's South Asian Influence

China has continually pursued a policy of encircling India, in order to limit India's power projection over Asia and to contain India from effecting China's realm of influence. The chief component of this strategy is the use of neighboring and regional states as proxies for Chinese objectives. This occurs through China engaging smaller Asian states in trade, diplomatic interaction, and most importantly, arms trading, and proliferation. In fact, 90% of China's arms sales go to countries that border India (Malik, 2004, 128). China validates this interaction as standard relations between states, and notes nothing unusual about the focused direction of the near entirety of their arms exports. China's arm sales also do not violate the Five Principles of Peaceful

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⁷ China's military expansion during peacetime has irked senior U.S. officials, causing former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to speculate "Since no nation threatens China, one must wonder: Why this growing investment?" (Tkasik, 2006).

Coexistence⁸, as per these principles India must respect the sovereignty of the South Asian nations to buy arms from whoever they choose. China views these relations as completely separate and distinct; Sino-Pakistan relations have no relation to Sino-Indian relations. From China's standpoint, when India contends that China's relationship with Pakistan is a threat, India is merely digressing into a worldview based in power politics, where all countries are either allies or enemies. In China's view, this turns India into the aggressor, wishing to dictate the foreign relations of neighboring states and create a hegemonic situation for India in South Asia.

China is essentially absolving itself from any responsibility from the effects of its multidirectional foreign policy. Beijing publicly espouses its wish to engage indiscriminately with every nation in ways that put economic advancement at the forefront of priorities. Therefore, there is no apparent conflict of interests in actively arming Pakistan and expecting diplomatic relations with India to remain unhindered.

This is a particularly important policy in the context of South Asia, where India is exceedingly larger and more powerful than any of their neighbors individually. India has historically been the most important state in South Asia and overshadows the smaller regional states. Without foreign governments such as China to prop up states like Pakistan or Myanmar, they would never be able to match the sheer size and power projection of India.

For this reason, South Asia offers a unique opportunity for China to spread its influence. South Asian states are hesitant of an India that becomes a domineering force in South Asia, and can exert overwhelming influence into smaller South Asian states' internal affairs. Consequently, they turn to China to act as an anti-hegemonic force in the South Asian region (Garver, 2001, 379). Just as China wants to restrict India from amassing enough power to challenge China's pre-eminence in Asia, smaller South Asian states want to restrict India from having the ability to overwhelmingly shape the region to match India's policy objectives.

When China and India went to war over the disputed northern border in 1962, the Pakistan-China relationship became increasingly appealing for Pakistan. While the two countries remained allied throughout the 1970's, China was noticeably absent from the conflicts between Pakistan and India, including the creation of Bangladesh.

However, China was without fail available to aid Pakistan in the recovery process after conflict with India (Garver, 2002, 385). This was consistent with China's policy of building up

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⁸ Signed in 1954, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was one of the first diplomatic agreements consummated by India and China. In 1982, it was formally written into China's constitution ("Five", 2003).

Pakistan in a way that ensures they can be a threat to India, but ultimately absolves China of any responsibility for the aggression towards India in itself. The "All-Weather Friendship" has remained intact, remarkably enduring significant fluctuations in leadership, foreign policy and internal strife throughout both nations (Garver, 2002, 386). While some of the weapons transfers from China to Pakistan have become more clandestine, the relationship itself is currently as strong as it has ever been.

China has aided Pakistan in a multitude of ways over the span of half a century, and this aid falls into three general categories which will be expounded on in the following section. The first is pure military strength, which includes conventional arms and transfers, critical military and nuclear technology transfers, the expansion of Pakistan's military-industrial commerce, and direct military coordination and exchanges (Garver, 2002, 386-387). The second is diplomatic support, including high level political visits and exchanges, support for Pakistan in contentious matters that oppose India, such as Kashmir, and indirect support for Pakistan in all confrontations with India (Garver, 2002, 386-387). The third form of aid is economic, with China supporting the development of Pakistan's economy through increased regional links and trade (Garver, 2002, 386-387). While economic aid and assistance has not historically been a strong tenet of the China-Pakistan relationship, it has emerged as a prime link in the last decade.

China has been instrumental in developing Pakistan's military, which is currently the fifth largest in the word (Chellaney, "Military", 2008). Military aid to Pakistan expanded to notable levels in the 1970's, after India once again defeated Pakistan in the 1971 war. This war displayed to China that if Pakistan was ever to emerge as a viable counter to India's regional power, China would have to become more deeply involved in the expansion of Pakistan's military capabilities.

Consequently, the end of the war ushered in a new era of China military assistance to Pakistan. From 1970 to 1976, Pakistan accounted for 46 percent of China's military exports, and also set up and operated tank and air force repair facilities to ensure that Pakistan's forces remained formidable (Deepak, 367). This policy continued unabated into the next decade, as China initiated transfers of advanced MiG-19 fighters, as well as Saab MF-17 trainer aircrafts valued at 1.6 million each (Deepak, 367). The alliance was only strengthened in the 1990's when the U.S. refused to sell Pakistan 72 F-16 fighter jets. Consequently, Pakistan turned to China for these fighter jets, as well as 3 fire control radar systems, 24 anti-ship missiles, 550 portable surface to air missiles, and 8,600 anti-tank missiles (Deepak, 368). With the massive amount of military assistance that Pakistan has received from China they still may not be in a position to defeat India,

but at the very least they have a credible amount of force to necessitate India's time and resources in ensuring the security of their western border.

While India is troubled by the expansion of Pakistan's conventional military capabilities, they are ultimately more concerned with the nuclear portion of Pakistan's weapon arsenal. In the aftermath of India's original nuclear test in 1974, Pakistan embarked on a mission to match India in terms of nuclear knowledge and capability. China aided Pakistan in their quest to develop a nuclear deterrent to India, illustrated by the presence of Chinese scientists and technicians at Pakistan's facilities, assisting in the development of gas centrifuges. In addition, China also supplied weapons-grade uranium and tritium, used to "boost the yield of atomic weapons" (Paul, 25), as well as weapon designs.

Despite international condemnation surrounding Pakistan's nuclear development, China sent 5,000 ring magnets to Pakistan in 1994 and 1995, valued at \$70,000. These ring magnets are used "for special suspension bearings at the top of the centrifuge rotating cylinders", giving Pakistan the ability to enrich uranium at double the previous rate (Pike, 2000). They were supplied by the China National Nuclear Corporation, which is owned and operated by China. China later augmented their support by providing Pakistan with heavy water to produce plutonium and advanced heating instruments used in shaping nuclear material into a bomb core (Paul, 25). China nuclear assistance culminated in Pakistan's 1998 nuclear weapons test, a direct response to India's previous weapons test.

China has also played a key role in the infrastructure of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. First, all four nuclear plants that Pakistan operates, in Kahuta, Khushab, Rawalpindi, and Chasma, were constructed with aid from China. This is significant since the Khushab plant is not safeguarded, yet Pakistan uses Plutonium from the plant in nuclear weaponry (Paul, 25). Second, China has supplied M-9 and M-11 missile delivery systems with a range of 300 Kilometers, effectively giving Pakistan the capability to strike India at any time (Malik, 2004, 136) (Paul, 25). Third, China has been integral in the development of Pakistan's ballistic missiles used to deliver nuclear material, providing missile components and constructing factories for the Shaheen short and medium range ballistic missiles (Paul, 25). Pakistan's current nuclear weapon stockpile is

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⁹ Pakistan's test was solely for political purposes as a reaction to India's previous test. Pakistan tested five separate warheads in one shaft, defeating the scientific purpose of gathering information about each individual warhead. Testing multiple warheads in one shaft is also incredibly hazardous if proper detonation does not occur, leaving an unexploded weapon in a radioactive shaft. Pakistan is the only country to have ever tested nuclear weapons in this manner (Chellaney, "Nuclear", 148-149).

currently estimated to be between 40 and 100, although the opaque nature of the program makes estimates inexact (Hasan, 2008). Regardless of the exact number of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, China's continuous support for Pakistan's nuclear weapon program has created long term security dangers between Pakistan and India, which China hopes will occupy India's attention while China pursues Asian hegemony.

The most visible illustration of the Sino-Pakistani energy transport partnership is the construction of the Gwadar port in Baluchistan. Formerly a remote fishing town on the Arabian Sea, the area was transformed for the March 2007 opening of a multi-billion dollar port (Barnes 2007). The pronounced purpose of the port is energy transport, benefiting primarily from the close proximity to the Strait of Hormuz, which is used for 40% of the world's oil supplies (Barnes, 2007). Gwadar will be Pakistan's third naval base, already having operational bases in Ormara and Karachi (Haider, 98). Pakistan was formerly dependent on the base in Karachi, which despite its close proximity to India's border was used for 90% of Pakistan's sea-based trade in 2001 (Haider, 98).

China benefits from the construction of Gwadar not only because of the increase in Pakistan's military capabilities in opposition to India, but also because it extends China's reach into the Indian Ocean. China has played such an integral role in the financing and development of Gwadar, so naturally the port will be at China's disposal. This is another example of China's encirclement strategy to contain India, as now they will have a multi-million dollar port in the Arabian Sea which they can use limitlessly. The Indian Ocean is conventionally viewed as India's sphere of influence, but the development of what is essentially a Chinese naval base is a clear incursion into India's sphere.

Due to the massive amounts of aid China has bestowed to Pakistan, Pakistan's military capability capability is now as strong as it has ever been. India monitors Pakistan's military capability through the use of a combat ratio to measure their military superiority over Pakistan. In the 1970's, the ratio was roughly 1.75:1, but has dropped precipitously to currently stand at 1.2:1. India has advantages over Pakistan in both economic power and population, yet China has so ardently aided Pakistan's military that India now exhibits only a small comparative military advantage over Pakistan. In some areas of military prowess, Pakistan is predicted to actually be more advanced than India. The U.S. National Intelligence Council found that Pakistan's weapon delivery systems for both conventional and nuclear missiles are superior to India's, which is a direct result of China's unrelenting direct assistance to Pakistan's military (Pant, 60). In essence, China has been

successful in its strategy to contain India through building up Pakistan. The degree to which Pakistan's military has grown, compared to India's, illustrates China's commitment to keeping India outside of the realm of major world powers. In the future, China will continue to support the growth of Pakistan's military capabilities, particularly in light of India's economic growth as well as India's public ambitions to achieve great power status.

China's Influence in Myanmar

The Myanmar-China relationship was consolidated further by the 1988 military junta, which put Myanmar at the forefront of international condemnation from the West and resulted in the revocation of \$12 million in aid from the U.S. (Garver, 2001, 259). With China facing similar international difficulties due to human rights violations and the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, the two countries naturally drifted towards each other. Simultaneously, China withdrew their support for the communist insurgency, recognizing that Myanmar's current government was suitable for China's Asian objectives. The absence of organized rebels in Myanmar strengthened the current government's control over their citizens, and allowed Myanmar to institute cooperation agreements with China for military and economic purposes, a notable adjustment in light of Myanmar's historic aversion to international trade (Garver, 2001, 263). In sum, China has provided \$3 billion worth of military and economic assistance to Myanmar, ensuring access for the Chinese to not only Myanmar's markets, but military facilities as well.

From India's standpoint, the most ominous aspect of the Myanmar-China relationship is China's aid to Myanmar's military. After the military junta, Myanmar undertook a strategy to expand and strengthen their armed forces, beginning with doubling the size of their army to 400,000 soldiers (Garver, 2001, 265). China provided these soldiers with advanced military equipment, including 180 tanks, 250 armored vehicles, antiaircraft artillery, 140 combat planes, and 30 naval ships in the decade following 1988 (Garver, 2001, 265). China was also integral in upgrading Myanmar's capabilities in surveillance and communication, as well as modernizing Myanmar's military structure and training facilities (Garver, 2001, 265). China's intent when arming Myanmar was to specifically prepare them for state to state conflict, not counterinsurgency efforts (Garver, 2001, 266). While the influx of military equipment aided Myanmar in overpowering internal descent, both Myanmar and China identified their greatest enemy to be external.

In the five years after Myanmar's junta, India was a strident supporter of democratization efforts, even financing pro-democracy supporters within Myanmar (Garver, 2001, 261). Myanmar

was weary of their western neighbor, and increasingly sought China's presence to counter India's efforts to transform Myanmar's governmental structure (Deepak, 460). However, after observing little progression in Myanmar's democracy movement, India sought a more nuanced approach. Isolation forced Myanmar to rely solely on China, and any further segregation would perpetuate this trend. In 1993, India began to engage with Myanmar to diversify Myanmar's international exposure and mute China's exclusive authority (Garver, 2001, 271). India's policy alteration was illustrated by the funding of \$135 million for the Kaladan Corridor, which connects Northeast India to the Sittwe Port in Eastern Myanmar (Chellaney, "Engage", 2008).

India has recently become anxious over the expansion of Chinese presence into the Indian Ocean. From 1976-1999, China annually produced an average of three major warships, compared to India's average of one major warship annually (Garver, 2001, 287). By 1999, China's naval personnel surpassed five times that of India (Garver, 201, 288). In 2025, Chinese submarines in the Pacific are projected to outnumber the U.S. submarine force five to one, causing consternation for both the U.S. and their allies in the region (Tkacik, 2006).

Whereas China holds the advantage over India in terms of sheer naval power, India has the distinct advantage in positioning throughout the Indian Ocean region. Positioning is crucial in naval conflict not only for attack and defense planning, but for replenishment of the ship's resources and repair. China is aware that India holds a distinct advantage over Indian Ocean positioning as India is able to use a multitude of secure ports in close proximity. For this reason, China has subsequently pursued a policy of engaging with India's neighbors to garner the use of their maritime facilities. China requires the assured use of ports in Pakistan and Myanmar to be able to compete with India's naval power in the Indian Ocean. As China and India's power expands congruous to economic growth in the 21st century, the intensity and depth of their concentration on the Indian Ocean will increase accordingly.

China's close ties to Myanmar have given China a surrogate army along India's eastern border, and have provided a new array of bases and facilities for the Chinese military to use in their encirclement of India. Throughout the South Asian and the Indian Ocean, China pursues a policy of forward basing which allows them to establish a presence in India's sphere of influence, through their use of allied military bases. China supports forward bases from their own territory, but can use the forward bases in military situations, giving them a tremendous logistical advantage over India by spreading their base operations to such a wide array of possibilities.

Given Myanmar's large area of coastline along the Bay of Bengal, they have been an integral partner in China's forward basing strategy. China uses the Great Coco islands as a communications facility. Using advanced surveillance equipment, China monitors Indian naval activity in the area (Deepak, 461). The P.L.A. Navy continuously has personnel at the base to assist Myanmar in its radar monitoring activity (Garver, 2001, 293), and has been constructing an additional base on Small Coco Island (Ramachandran, 2005). India is particularly attentive to Chinese naval activity on the Coco Islands, as they are merely 45 kilometers from India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Ramachandran, 2005).

China has become actively involved in Myanmar's maritime and port activity, working to develop Myanmar's facilities for future Chinese use. China has performed general upgrading on Myanmar's ports in Mergui, Yangon, Bassein, and Sittwe (Garver, 2001, 294). On the Kyaukpyu harbor on Ramree Island, China has not only upgraded the port, but has built a new radar station. China also provided experts to guide Myanmar in monitoring the Bay of Bengal (Garver, 2001, 294). On the Hainggyi Island, China has built a new port which functions as a naval base, in addition to possessing shipping and transport capacity (Garver, 2001, 294). China has also established a presence in South Myanmar on the Kra Isthmus at Zadetkyi Kyun Island (Garver, 2001, 293). An earth satellite system is housed here, which is used to communicate with P.L.A. Navy ships throughout the Bay of Bengal (Garver, 2001, 293). The P.L.A. Navy has a similar system in the Asia Pacific (Garver, 2001, 293), and it would become integral to China's operations in the event of naval conflict in the Indian Ocean.

The most prominent of China's projects in Myanmar, and the most worrisome to India, is the Irrawaddy Corridor. The Corridor will operate on roads, rails, and water to connect Yunnan Province, in southern China, with Kyaukpyu in the Bay of Bengal (Garver, 2005). To complete the corridor, China has played a fundamental role in the construction of new roads and railways, as well as excavating the Irrawaddy River (Garver, 2005).

While the current thrust of expanding overland links to the Indian Ocean is purely economic development for China, the Corridor will enhance China's security by allowing them to not be solely reliant on shipping lanes from their Eastern coast (Garver, 2005). In addition, the Corridor allows China to provide backup to their naval forces in the Indian Ocean more efficiently. From India's standpoint, a functioning Corridor derails much of the strategic positioning advantage they possess in the Indian Ocean. With China being able to forward base in the Indian Ocean and use the Corridor to quickly replenish supplies, India will be forced to rely on naval power that is

inferior to China's to deter a permanent Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean. For India to ensure that the Indian Ocean remains in their undisputed realm of influence, they must not allow Myanmar to be a full surrogate state of China. India must also amplify their naval power and presence through enhanced technological development and the sustainment of strong allied forces in the area, such as the U.S.

India's Counter-strategies

In opposition of China's containment policy of India, India has enacted a similar policy to assert their influence over the rest of Asia and prevent China from achieving Asian hegemony. India's counter-containment policy encompasses 7,000 miles from North and Southeast Asia to the Central Asian republics and Africa. The purpose of India's policy is to form economic and military relationships with a variety of new partners, thereby ensuring the security of Indian trade and the growth of their military capabilities while eliminating China's exclusive influence on Asia.

India's engagement with Myanmar is part of a broad strategy to play a formidable role in Asia which is known as the Look East Policy. The strategy is broadly defined as India claiming a significant role in the affairs of East Asian states through the proliferation of linkages in the economic, diplomatic, and military sectors. Southeast Asian countries have received the bulk of the attention from India through this strategy since many Southeast Asian countries are in the midst of market reforms which portend a prosperous future. Additionally, other than Myanmar, Southeast Asia is relatively independent in terms of international alliances. Southeast Asia is not wholly loyal aligned with China, and is suspicious of China's burgeoning influence into the area. Southeast Asia has historically been in China's sphere of influence, and India is unlikely to supersede this completely, but many Southeast Asian countries desire a counterbalance to China's overbearing stature. India is cognizant of this aperture and is eager to establish a presence in Southeast Asia before China's imperious presence excludes India from forging favorable linkages.

A principal component of India's Look East Policy is to enmesh Southeast Asian states with India in multi-lateral organizations. The most substantial of these organizations is the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (B.I.M.S.T.E.C.), which contains a mix of countries from both S.A.A.R.C. and A.S.E.A.N., and focuses on a variety of issues, such as commerce and energy (Batabyal, 187). B.I.M.S.T.E.C. is significant for India because it bridges a gap between two formerly distinct entities, South Asia and Southeast Asia. While India wishes to eventually expand the group to political and security issues, it is currently moving forward in exclusively economic development. The group has set 2017 as the target for

the installation of a free trade pact between all members. Urgent to push developments ahead with expediency, India agreed to reach trade liberalization by 2012 along with Thailand and Sri Lanka, with all other nations following suit in the proceeding five years (Ghosh, 2004). While B.I.M.S.T.E.C. is currently one of a myriad of small multi-lateral organizations, India is intent on using these institutions to further their agenda of strengthening ties throughout Southeast Asia and establishing linkages that undermine Chinese interests in the region.

India was also instrumental in creating the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (M.G.C.) Forum that includes all five countries along the Mekong River, with the notable exception of China. The forum originally focused on education, tourism, and cultural connections through 2007 (Levesque, 2007) and more substantive cooperative agreements in trade and infrastructure followed (Batabyal, 188). The most visible of these agreements is the Trilateral Highway, a 1,360 Kilometer Highway running from northeast India through Myanmar into Thailand (Bhattacharya, 4). The highway cost approximately \$700 million to construct, and includes complementary projects connecting the highway with rail services and the Dawei deep sea port in Myanmar (Bhattacharya, 4). India has also been an active proponent of connecting train routes between New Delhi and Hanoi, which need certain incongruous routes to be linked to become fully functional (Bhattacharya, 5). India's hope is that the linkages will benefit India's northeastern states closest in propinquity to Southeast Asia, while also allowing India to counterbalance China's overwhelming influence in Southeast Asia.

Simultaneous to India's move into the Mekong region, China created the Agreement on Commercial Navigation on Lancang Mekong River with Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos (Batabyal, 189). The motivations behind China's establishment of this agreement are largely the same as India's: to ensure their own influence in a burgeoning region that will increase in economic and strategic importance. The fact that both China and India have created Southeast Asian regional forums which exclude each other illustrates the growing competition for regional influence that will be central to the future of Asian leadership.

However, as with B.I.M.S.T.E.C., the M.G.C. Forum has failed to develop into a vital piece of foreign policy for the countries involved. Whereas trade between India and the other five members has rapidly increased from \$1.7 billion in 2002 to \$3.7 billion in 2006, there is little evidence that this is a direct result of India's multilateral efforts. Instead, an increasingly powerful and dynamic A.S.E.A.N. that has placed economic integration at the forefront of its priorities is the biggest external instigator to India's trade relations in Southeast Asia (Levesque, 2007). If India is

to definitively exert their influence over Southeast Asia, it is imperative that they utilize their multi-lateral endeavors in a more substantial manner that explicitly produces cooperation detrimental to China's influence in the region.

India and A.S.E.A.N.

India's most significant penetration into Southeast Asia to date has been through their inclusion into the A.S.E.A.N. Regional Forum (A.R.F.). A.R.F. was created in 1994 as a multilateral forum of 27 countries that includes all A.S.E.A.N. members as well as other major international powers such as the U.S.A., China, and the E.U. In 1992, India was granted sectoral dialogue partner status, with full dialogue partner status coming in 1995, and inclusion into the regional forum in 1996 (Batabyal, 191). India's role in A.S.E.A.N. has increased in prominence so much that the first India-A.S.E.A.N. summit was held in Cambodia in 2002 and has continued annually (Batabyal, 192). The summits have led to the implementation of a Free Trade Area between India and A.S.E.A.N. to be established by 2011, as well as the reduction of tariffs to the lesser developed countries of A.S.E.A.N. (Batabyal, 192). India has used their increased eminence in A.S.E.A.N. to establish numerous economic and diplomatic relationships which allow India to remain an active participant in Southeast Asian matters.

In total, India's Look East Policy has allowed India to reap remarkable economic benefits. In the 1990's, trade between India and A.S.E.A.N. countries increased by three times, from \$3.5 billion to \$10 billion by 2000 (Sridharan, 125). This coincided with an aggregate increase in India's international trade, yet A.S.E.A.N. countries have increased their share of India's imports and exports, at the expense of both the U.S.A.'s and E.U.'s share (Sridharan, 126).

A.R.F. is unique from both the B.I.M.S.T.E.C. and M.G.B. forums because A.R.F. has a pronounced interest in security issues, while not being a collective security pact. India's active participation in A.R.F. marks a distinct alteration of India's foreign policy, which has historically only used multilateral forums for economic purposes. As India's presence in the international realm expands, so does the need for India to fully realize the potential of A.R.F. for security issues.

India's inclusion into security-related forums is also indicative of how other regional countries view India. Southeast Asian countries, led by Singapore, have been pro-active in including India into the forum to counterbalance China. With the end of the Cold War and the cessation of conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam, the security situation in Southeast Asia entered a period of tenuous uncertainty (Batabyal, 190). Many smaller Southeast Asian countries feared that the absence of power in the region would lead to more conflict as larger external forces,

such as China, competed to wield their authority over the newly unaligned area. To balance China's imminent dominance of the area, Southeast Asian countries have exuded fervent support for India's integration into multilateral forums. Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam's public support for India's acceptance into A.S.E.A.N. (Batabyal, 189) is an indication that India's Look East Policy is successful and that India is a legitimate balance to China. While India is too diplomatically deft to overtly challenge China in Southeast Asia, India's presence at the behest of Southeast Asia nations demonstrates their ability to challenge China's expansionist policies that constrain India from greater Asian authority.

Prospects for Sino-Indian Relations

The future of the India-China relationship depends on two major variables: economic development and foreign policy. Currently, China's G.D.P. is projected to remain in the 8-9% range through 2012 ("Economic Data: China", 2008), with longer term projections showing a tapering to 6-7% (Frazier, 306). Comparatively, India's G.D.P. is projected to hover in the 7-8% range through 2012 ("Economic Data: India", 2008), with long term projections also showing a reduction to 5-6% (Frazier, 306). For both countries to remain entrenched in a competitive rivalry, they will need to maintain high growth rates as they transform into industrialized, developed countries.

India is in a more difficult position than China, having undertaken economic reforms 15 years later than China and subsequently growing at a slower rate. India's foreign policy is determined by a variety of factors congruous to the international community, including democracy, secularism, and counter-terrorism. For India to attain international power, they are able to rely on their similarities with the international community rather than solely relying on economic progress. However, for India to maintain ambitions of rivaling China, their economy will need to continue developing at a high rate. India needs to continue to reform their economy to encourage more foreign investment ¹⁰ and industry privatization (Frazier, 307). Indian leadership has been reluctant to enact such reforms, primarily due to turnover in government that retards long term macroeconomic restructuring.

In addition, India must make a permanent commitment to military and weapon development, particularly nuclear capabilities. Economic power will not solely allow India to acquire the global power they desire; they need to establish a credible nuclear deterrent to both Pakistan and China. Whereas the initial nuclear weapons test in 1998 was a forceful avowal to

¹⁰ In 1997, China's FDI was a robust \$45 billion compared to India's miniscule \$3 billion (Tellis, 167).

Pakistan and China that India had serious intentions of developing an advanced nuclear weapons arsenal, India has faltered since then to weaponize their arsenal. The absence of viable weaponry is not the fault of India's scientists, but of India's leaders to recognize the need for nuclear capabilities. India's leaders still view disarmament as an attainable goal for the world despite the obsolescence of the U.N. Conference on Disarmament (Chellaney, "Stop Chasing", 2008). The only effective disarmament regimes are ones for outdated technology, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention that flourished when only third world countries were pursuing chemical weapons simultaneous to the major powers advancing their nuclear arsenals (Chellaney, "Stop Chasing", 2008). Disarmament has never been successfully achieved throughout history, and therefore should not be a component of India's foreign policy (Bajpai, 284). For India to realize their greater Asian ambitions, they must recognize that the value of nuclear weapons lies not only in pure destructive force, but also that they act as an intimidating force that establishes India's status as a major power. Only when both economic and military capabilities are developed in tandem will India be able to exert the authority necessary to challenge China's claim to Asian hegemony.

India is also experiencing a transformation in foreign policy decision-making as the power of the civilian government over the military is rescinded. Since India's inception, the parliament has possessed principal power over military operations, leaving senior military officers with marginal decision-making power (Frazier, 310). At the turn of the century, India undertook reforms to implement military officers into a more substantial role regarding foreign policy, resulting in the creation of the Joint Strategic Forces Command in 2001 (Frazier, 311). This will allow India to exert itself further into the Indian Ocean and the rest of Asia, as now military commanders will have greater command responsibility and will no longer be hampered by the bureaucratic inefficiency of the civilian government (Frazier, 311).

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