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CHINA AND INDIA Friends or Foes?

The Rise and Fall of Sino-India Security Cooperation, 1988-2018

1. BACKGROUND

In **1962**, India and China fought a war, which left the border between the two countries unmarked. Thereafter, **Sino-India relations freezed**. In **1988**, following Rajiv Gandhi's visit to his Chinese counterpart, Deng Xiaoping, **security cooperation** between India and China was restored. The two leaders signed several agreements enabling subsequent joint consultations and confidence-building measures, with the aim of settling the border dispute. Yet, in **1998**, the dream of reaching an agreement over the border demarcation faded away, as Indian nuclear test, **Pokhran II**, was specifically targeted against China. Since then, **security competition** between China and India has loomed large. Incursions and incidents all along the Sino-India border have increased dramatically and the two countries have been engaged in a massive naval modernization and competition for energy sources in the Indian Ocean.

2. THE OBJECTIVE

of this research is to investigate the causal mechanisms that have determined the **rise and fall of Sino-India security cooperation** from 1988 to 2018, to assess how far can Sino-India security cooperation be re-established in the twenty-first century.

3. THE REAL-WORLD CONTRIBUTION

of this research is to generate **policy relevant proposals** to foster security cooperation between China and India in the future, essential to developing peaceful relations between two states whose future relationship will be a key **determinant of international security in the 21st century.**

4. HYPOTHESIS

1988-1998: an interpersonal relationship of **mutual trust** between Chinese and Indian leaders established through face-to-face meetings made possible security cooperation between the two countries (1).

1998-2018: the development of reciprocal **enemy images** between Chinese and Indian leaders fostered security competition between the two countries(2).

2018-? Security cooperation between China and India will be possible in the future only if leaders of the two countries **restore** an interpersonal relationship of **mutual trust** through face-to-face meetings.

5. DATA COLLECTION

- **Archival and documentary research** of a data sample of historical documents and unpublished materials reporting Chinese and Indian leaders' public speeches, official documents and memoirs, as well as minutes of face-to-face meetings, from 1988 to 2018.
- **Unstructured elite and professional interviews** with former Indian and Chinese officials and policymakers. Such interviews will also be retrospective, enabling a comparison of leaders' current and past mutual perceptions as peaceful or hostile actors.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

- **Quantitative content analysis of qualitative data (The Verbs in Context System)** (3), measuring state leaders' propensity towards security competition and cooperation in their use of words, by assigning different numbers to different categories of words. Categories of words will be originally divided into cooperative/trust related ones and conflictual/enemy images related ones. Such a method will be employed to investigate archival and documentary sources and codify the interviews.
- **Qualitative explaining-outcome process-tracing** (4), unveiling causal mechanisms linking trust to Sino-India security cooperation, and enemy images to Sino-India security competition.

7. REFERENCES

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- [3] Schafer, M. and Walker, S. (eds) (2006) *Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics: Methods and Applications of Operational Code Analysis.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [4] Beach, D. and Pedersen, R. B. (2013) *Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines.* Ann Harbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

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