

Resume/Summary of the PhD Thesis

**A CONSTRUCTIVIST ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF
POST-COLONIAL CHINA AND INDIA TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA:
CAUSAL FACTORS, STRATEGIES AND IMPLICATIONS**

By

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INTRODUCTION

Overview and Relevance of the Study

China and India are the emerging global players of modern day world (Tellis & Mirski, 2013) whose foreign policy behaviors and patterns have assumed importance for the researchers and policy makers around the world (Singh & Mir, 2014). For comprehending the foreign policies of these two countries at a global scale, deciphering their regional approaches and policies hold pivotal significance. Within the context of the neighbourhood of China and India, South Asia carries unique importance not only for these two countries but also for other global players. South Asia is host to complex regional issues having global outreach. India, itself being part of South Asia lies at its centre and claims the whole region as its natural 'sphere of influence' (Mishra, 2018). China, though not a part of South Asia, has had a long historical linkage and political association with South Asia as well and views the region as an important periphery (Swaine, 2014).

Historically, all the major global powers have aspired to control South Asia. In recent history, the region remained under British colonialism as well as served as the theatre for global power rivalry between the British, Soviet and the US. With the rise of China, South Asia has once again become the centre for global power tussle, this time around between the US and China.

The geo-strategic significance of South Asia remains undeniable. The geographic expanse and location of this region at the confluence of Middle East, China, Russia, Central Asia, Iran and Indian Ocean has always caused it to become the main battleground for major powers. In recent years, South Asia geo-strategic significance has also enhanced manifold with the launch of China-Pakistan Economic corridor (CPEC) project which is a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by China. This project is considered to be a "game changer" for both Pakistan and China (JAVAID & JAVAID, 2016) thus making South Asia play a decisive role in defining China's future role as an influential global super power. With the recent US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the concomitant security challenges in and around Afghanistan, the geo-political significance of South Asia has further enhanced.

It is for the above factors that an assessment of the foreign policies of India and China towards South Asia carries huge significance in terms of understanding the contours of their wider foreign policies towards the rest of the world.

The existing research work pertaining in the context of China and India's foreign policy towards South Asia remains scanty and disjointed to say the least. In most of the cases, the existing research on Chinese and Indian foreign policy towards South Asia has been done in silos and as part of the wider study of peripheral policies of these two countries. Furthermore, a comparative study of the foreign policies of China and India towards South Asia remains largely non-existent. As for the existing research on foreign policy analysis of China and India towards the region, either the assessment has been done on the basis of actual events as they occur in the region or bilateral relations has been studied with focus on historical approach. What remains missing from such studies has been an attempt to undertake an assessment of the causal factors that frame the foreign policies of China and India towards South Asia. The existing research on Chinese and Indian foreign policy towards the region also fails to undertake an introspection of the role of leadership perspectives and ideas, values etc. in terms of contouring these policy behaviors. This lack of above focus leads to a number of complications in properly comprehending the regional policies of China and India towards South Asia. All these aspects lead us to infer that it is indeed the social context of issues that is needed to decipher the causal factors of the peculiar foreign policy approaches of China and India towards South Asia. It therefore, all draws down to the "we" vs. "others" debate in the foreign policy analysis of these two countries towards South Asia.

Research Methodology

For the purposes of this thesis, the theoretical approach being employed is that of constructivism. Foreign Policy Analysis is basically, a socio-psychological process (Walker, Malici, & Schafer, 2011). Accordingly, the manner in which, a certain situation is perceived leading to certain foreign policy behaviors is what constitutes the core focus of foreign policy analysis (Walker, Malici, & Schafer, 2011). For constructivists, understanding the material factors through the social values, meanings and notions attached to them is important. Furthermore, constructivist approach is focused on the construction of identities (Alden & Aran, 2017). Thus this approach provides a better theoretical framework for Foreign Policy Analysis.

For this study, qualitative research methodology has been employed. This implies focus on ethnographical and historical research supplemented at different stages by narrative and phenomenological research types.

Structure of Research

As concerns the structure of my research, I have undertaken a historical analysis of China and India's modern history especially the colonial and post-colonial periods in order to understand as to how the strategic thinking processes of these countries have been impacted by these historical events coupled with their conceptualizations of territoriality, domestic identities as well as perceptions concerning role of external players. While doing so, I have endeavored to understand as to how these events are perceived by the peoples of these two countries thus constituting an introspection of their narrative and perception building of their 'self' and 'others'.

Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study include understanding the significance of constructivist approach to Foreign Policy Analysis and assessing the reasons as to why this framework is better equipped for explaining the foreign policy approaches of countries around the world. In addition, comprehending the historico-geographical context of South Asia; China and India's leadership; their pre/post-colonial history; norms; values; concepts; economic rise; domestic factors and national identity characteristics as factors explaining their peripheral diplomacy/foreign policy approach towards South Asia; as well as analyzing as to why China and India chart different policy trajectories towards South Asia constitute core research objectives for this study.

Research Questions

For the aforementioned research objectives, this study addresses the following research questions:

- i. What constitutes South Asia and what is its significance in the global political milieu?
- ii. What is the concept of 'peripheries' in China and India and where does South Asia set into this conceptualization?

- iii. What is the nature of modern State of China and India and how did these countries take their current form and under what circumstances? How have the perceptions of China and India about ‘themselves’ and ‘others’ evolved over the years?
- iv. How have the perceptions about the role of external players in South Asia impacted the strategic thinking process and foreign policy of China and India towards the region?
- v. How has the ideological orientation and political mindset of the peoples of China and India evolved over the years? How have the leaders and peoples of China and India constructed perceptions about “themselves” and “others”, based on their historical experiences? What factors have contributed to the identification of ‘self’ and ‘others’ by the peoples of China and India?
- vi. What is the strategic culture and thinking process in China and India?
- vii. How far have the domestic factors including the pluralistic identities of China and India including perceptions on this account, shaped the foreign policies of these countries towards South Asia?
- viii. What strategies do China and India pursue towards the region based on the meaning and role they assign to the region and themselves?
- ix. What are the implications of Chinese and Indian foreign policies pursuits for the region of South Asia?

For its purpose, based on the earlier mentioned research questions as well as main highlights of the literature review, the following hypothesis has been tested during this study:

The foreign policies of China and India towards South Asia are guided by the “meaning” that South Asia carries for these two countries; and are premised on the construction of specific identities; historical meanings and experiences; social values; notions; leadership perceptions; ideas; domestic peculiarities as well as consequent strategic culture that these two countries carry for themselves; each other; and other regional countries. Accordingly, India’s foreign policy towards South Asia is guided by the ideological notion of ‘Akhand Bharat’ (undivided India) and premised on aggressive posturing and interference in the region while that of China is guided by the element of ‘community of shared destiny’, based on economic development and mutual respect.

**CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS: AN
INTRODUCTION AND ELABORATION OF THE REASONS FOR ITS SELECTION
OVER OTHER THEORETICAL APPROACHES**

The above Chapter begins by assessing the “Ground” of Foreign Policy Analysis. The Chapter suggests that study of the foreign relations or behaviors of the States is a complicated phenomenon involving communications between agents of a State, perceptions, imagery of other States as well as individual preferences towards “others” (Kubalkova, 2016). The study of foreign policy itself not only attempts to comprehend as to why the decision makers choose particular policy options but also why and in what manner the international and domestic factors affect such foreign policy options (Breuning, 2007).

Foreign Policy may be taken as the conglomerate of policies and engagements of a country beyond its frontiers (Breuning, 2007). Within the process of Foreign Policy, the whole chain of decision making process starting from problem identification; conceptualization; and prioritization leading up to the causal factors for specific decision making processes carries relevance (Hudson, 2005). “Foreign Policy Analysis”, as a sub-field of International Relations is dominated by what is termed as the ‘agency-structure’ problem (Carlsnaes, 1992), where, while on one side, the emphasis has been placed on the constraints imposed by the structure i.e. by the international system, on the other side, the focus has also been on the human factor or role of agency or individuals in terms of shaping that structure or international system (Alden & Aran, 2017). “Foreign Policy Analysis” is essentially inclined towards studying behaviors and attributes of the States (Kubalkova, 2016) and accordingly, it requires a socio-psychological approach.

In Foreign Policy, there are three levels of analysis i.e. individual; state; and international levels (ÖZER, 2018). Under the international or system level analysis, the focus of study remains the International rules and nature as well as power distribution among actors such as States and International entities (ÖZER, 2018, p. 34). Under the state-level of analysis, the capabilities of States including material dynamics as well as such factors as state system assume center stage (ÖZER, 2018, p. 34). The third ‘level of analysis’ is the individual level. Singer identifies it as part of the state-level analysis when the study of actor’s behavior comes into play. At this stage, perceptions about objective factors; conditions and circumstances matter most (ÖZER, 2018).

The above Chapter also delves into a number of theoretical approaches towards Foreign Policy Analysis and identifies their limitations in effectively analyzing Foreign Policies. For instance, under the theoretical approaches, Idealism lacks the capacity to analyze actual human behaviors that may neither be reflective of a cooperative attitude nor be peaceful in character. Behavioral approaches to Foreign Policy Analysis assess foreign policy process and motivations rather than its outcomes (ÖZER, 2018). Comparative Foreign Policy Approaches trace their origin in the notion of developing generalizable theories of foreign policy based on the behavioral patterns of States (Hudson, 2007). These approaches therefore focus on foreign policy practices rather than deciphering as to what motivated a certain foreign policy behavior (ÖZER, 2018). In case of Prospect Theory Approach, the main weakness is that it does not provide sufficient theoretical basis for analyzing the cases of revisionist States or their feeling of loss. Under the Role Theory the identities or role conceptions of any particular State are constructed socially (Breuning, 2011). However, a major problem with the Role Theory is that the causal factors for specific roles assumed by the group of individuals or the so-called elite, for the purposes of their States, are not properly assessed. This implies that the roles are in a way taken for granted. Secondly, the role of structures in terms of shaping the behaviors of agents (here implying individuals) also remains largely missing in the Role Theory. The challenge with contemporary approaches like neo-realism is that it neither takes into consideration; the role of individuals or domestic/internal factors nor undertakes an analysis of mutual constitution of agency and structure.

Having identified the main weaknesses of different theoretical approaches in providing an adequate basis for the Foreign Policy Analysis, this Chapter presents the theoretical framework of “constructivism”. In the words of Alexander Wendt, constructivism is premised on the argument that people’s actions towards other “objects” including inter alia other actors is contingent upon the “meanings” that such objects carry for them (Hurd, 2009). Constructivist approach is premised on ideas or beliefs, and those too, not only of the individuals but also at inter subjective and institutionalized levels (Hurd, 2009). The core claims of Constructivism include consideration of States as the principal unit of analysis; inter-subjective character of State structures; and social construction of State interests and identities rather than these being given exogenously (Wendt, 1994).

Under constructivism, the notions of “anarchy” and “agent” are pivotal. The notion of “Anarchy” is meant to imply a social system that does not have legitimate institutions commanding authority (Milner, 1991). In constructivist framework, however, anarchy is not a given but

socially constructed (Hurd, 2009). Wendt therefore opines that “Anarchy is what States make of it” (Wendt, 1992). There are three cultures of anarchy i.e. Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian (Wendt, 1999). The Hobbesian culture of anarchy is marked by animosity; the Lockean culture of anarchy is identified by rivalry; while the Kantian culture of anarchy is characterized by friendship towards the ‘others’ (Wendt, 1999).

“Agents” are basically the active participants of a society (Onuf, 2013). As “agency” constitutes a “social condition” (Onuf, 2013), it is not necessarily only people who may be regarded as “agents”. These could be for instance Governments as well (Onuf, 2013). Rules assist the ‘agent’ in defining a certain situation that it is faced with. These rules therefore contour the choices that the agents make. As for the agents, they recognize the rules by believing that it is through following these rules that one can achieve the desired goals (Onuf, 2013). Through interlace of rules and practices, a certain pattern evolves that is in sync with the motivations of an agent. These patterns are called institutions (Onuf, 2013).

As agents make certain choices, these carry “unintended consequences” as well. These constitute “stable patterns” as regards their impact on the agents (Onuf, 2013). The aforementioned rules, unintended consequences and institutions make up a “stable pattern” or a structure (Onuf, 2013). As per the constructivists, it is the shared beliefs, expectations, knowledge and ideas that define a particular structure where the cooperative or conflictual relationship may be situated (Weber C. , 2005). Under constructivism, States are not unitary actors. There remain other actors such as international organizations and institutions as well that influence international politics (Weber M. , 2007).

Under constructivism, the identities of the States as well as their interests are constituted by social structures rather than set exogenously. The nature of a system whether being conflictual or otherwise, is not dependent upon anarchy, but on “shared culture” instantiated through “discursive social practices” (Rynning & Guzzini, 2001). For constructivists therefore, even national interests are essentially ideas that are socially constructed (Wicaksana, 2009).

As mentioned above, the notion of identity carries singular importance for the purposes of the constructivist school of thought. (Behraves, 2011). As per Wendt, it is the role of identity that crucially signifies the “motivational behavioral dispositions” of the international actors within a system (Behraves, 2011).

As per Wendt, the “interests” are based on identities because “an actor cannot know what it wants until it knows who it is, and since identities have varying degrees of cultural content so will interests” (Wendt, 1999). There are four main types of national interests (Behraves, 2011). The first type pertains to physical survival i.e. survival of a particular ‘state-society complex’ (Behraves, 2011). The second type is ‘autonomy’ and implies control of national resources as well as the choice concerning the government. The third type is economic well-being which is defined by the continuation of a State’s mode of production (Behraves, 2011). The fourth type is perpetuation of the “collective self-esteem” (Wendt, 1999).

Having presented the conceptualization of constructivism, the above Chapter identifies a number of anomalies of the foreign policy behaviors of China and India towards South Asia which can be better explained by the constructivist theoretical approach in contrast with other theoretical approaches.

As an instance, India’s stated foreign policy guiding principles enunciated under Nehru that continue to define India’s foreign policy include “Panchsheel” ‘(five principles i.e. mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-interference; mutual non-aggression; peaceful coexistence; as well as cooperation and equality’) (Correspondent, 2015); so-called policy of “non-alignment” (Jabeen, 2013); and emphasis on India’s secular character (Although it was made part of India’s Constitution much later) (Weigold, 2018). In stark contrast with the above pronouncements, however, as one takes a closer look at the actual foreign policy behavior of India under Prime Minister Nehru, it would be noted that this period was replete with instances of India aggression and border problems in respect of its neighbors.

Having elaborated some foreign policy anomalies of Indian Foreign Policy, the study also highlights the weaknesses of other theoretical approaches in explaining these anomalies. For instance, in the above example, as we look at the rational theoretical approaches such as idealism, we will find that it fails to explain the instances of Nehru’s aggression against its neighbours. For idealists, the notion of rationality implies that humans would always avoid war and explore ways that could promote peace. Keeping these core elements in sight, the anomalies of Indian foreign policy towards South Asia under Prime Minister Nehru appear difficult to fathom. His aggression against Kashmir; Hyderabad; Junagadh; pronouncements against Pakistan; and specifically in respect of Sri Lanka [where he even referred to absorb that Island

country into Indian fold (Nehru, 1972)] stand in strong contradiction to his portrayal as an idealist.

Unlike India, China is a civilizational State and has the longest civilizational history (Jacques, 2009). In terms of China's foreign policy towards South Asia, its neighboring countries are considered to be the "peripheries". Chinese foreign policy is also premised on the notion of century of humiliation and subsequently China's desire to regain its lost stature of a great power. China's Foreign Policy is marked by strengthening economic as well as security relations with the neighbours; establishing win-win situations and pursuing a morality based foreign policy towards Chinese peripheries including South Asia. Despite these elements, we would note, however, that China has evolved a certain approach towards 'its' (emphasis added) conceptualization of territoriality and this factor has an overriding effect when it comes to define its relations with its neighbours or characterizing some neighbours as "others". All these elements require a deeper insight into the political mindset of Chinese leadership and decision making structure as well as an assessment of the manner in which China perceives the "others" i.e. neighboring countries and the structure it operates in.

If we employ theoretical approaches other than constructivism, their weaknesses in elaborating the above anomalies become quite evident. For instance, while the Comparative Foreign Policy Approach may be handy in terms of comparing the Chinese Foreign Policy over different timeframes, for example Mao and Xi Jinping; it would not assist us in understanding the causal factors as to how and why the Chinese leadership behaved in the manner in which it did while having certain ideas and beliefs as well as perceptions that pre-date modern China.

DEFINING SOUTH ASIA; UNDERSTANDING ITS GEO-STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE AS WELL AS ANALYZING CAUSAL FACTORS; STRATEGIES AND IMPLICATIONS OF INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA

The above Chapter starts by defining South Asia and identifies that this notion is a comparatively recent construction (Bose & Jalal, 1997). However, for the purposes of this study, the current members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) have been taken to define South Asia. These include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Chapter then presents the geo-strategic significance of the region for major global players around the world owing primarily to its geographic expanse and location

CAUSAL FACTORS SHAPING INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA

India's conceptualization of territoriality

“Territoriality” is meant to imply a strategy that is spatial in character and which joins the space and society together through investments that are political in nature (Penrose, 2002), thus making it essentially a social construct (Sack, 1986).

In terms of conceptualizing India's territoriality, Indian nationalists equated the so-called “Indian Territory” under British Raj with that of the mythological figure of “Bharat Mata” or “Mother India” (Abraham, 2014). Accordingly, return to this so-called archaic India or “Mother India” was used to define future Indian state (Goswami, 2004) (Abraham, 2014). This factor also led to define India's relations with neighbouring countries whose territorial jurisdiction was considered “loss” of territory for India and thus sacrilege of “Bharat”.

Influence of British Raj

The British had taken over subcontinent from the Mughal Empire following the 1857 “Sepoy Mutiny”. British considered the Muslims to be more responsible for this upheaval and accordingly looked at Muslim community in the subcontinent with a certain sense of suspicion (Bodine, 2015). This inspired the British to play a more appeasing role towards Hindu community and therefore placed them at the helm of administration (Bodine, 2015). These developments led to the penetration of the idea of identification of Muslim community as the enemy “others” within the context of South Asia in the minds of predominant Hindu majority population. Resultantly, Muslims of subcontinent were seen as the invaders rather than belonging to the soil of subcontinent. The political thought process of Indian National Congress (INC) was also defined on this sense of “exclusiveness”. Another manifestation of the British Raj on subcontinent and their close association with Indian National Congress (INC) was that the Indian state that emerged after 1947 adamantly insisted on being projected as the inheritor and legal heir to the British Indian Empire in South Asia. India also negotiated its border treaties and pursued subsequent foreign policies with the small Himalayan countries of South Asia on the same argument. In case of border disputes with China over Tibet as well, India pursued the British “forward policy”.

India's creation and expansion process

During the entire British Raj, the boundaries of subcontinent remained in a state of flux and continued to change over time (Abraham, 2014). In 1947, as the British left the subcontinent, they created the modern state of India in such a manner that it had a marked influence on its foreign policy towards South Asia.

The creation of the modern Indian state occurred in a two ways. Firstly, there was “partition” of provinces of the British Indian Empire as well as accession of the princely states of India (constituting almost 2/5th of British India). Parallel to creation process, there was expansion process of India, whereby a number of states standing independently after 1947 as well as territories belonging to other countries were occupied by force. These two processes still have a huge influence on India’s foreign policy towards the neighboring countries as they represent unfinished agenda of settlement of boundaries between India and these countries.

India’s conceptualization of “foreign”

The manner in which the Indian State has historically conceptualized the notion of “foreign” has an important bearing on its foreign policy towards South Asia. Beginning from the early twentieth century, a Hindu-nationalist interpretation of Indian history was put in place (Thapar, 2002) whereby people who did not believe in their ancestry having roots in the subcontinent or having their religious origins beyond the frontiers of subcontinent were to be considered “alien” (Thapar, 2002). The above conceptualization of “indigenous” vs. “alien” marked its influence on the foreign policy of India towards the region of South Asia after 1947 and the immediate neighboring countries of India having Muslim majority or an identity claim separate from “Hindu” were taken to be alien to the region of “South Asia” and therefore considered an “adversary”.

India’s threat perceptions in respect of China

India’s perceptions regarding China have marked an important influence on its foreign towards South Asia. In general, India considers China to be hostile towards its global power ambitions desire for regional hegemony in South Asia. The reasons for the above adversarial “othering” in respect of China can also be traced back to the British colonial legacy that India has assumed for itself.

Cliental Role for major powers

Another important causal factor guiding India's foreign policy behavior towards South Asia has been its cliental role in the region for major global powers. India initially served as the client state of the British in the region. In the mid-1950s, the US replaced Britain as the strategic mentor of India. The US encouraged the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) essentially as part of its long term plans aimed at dealing with the "non-communist neutrals" (Bhardwaj A. , 2018). After 1953, as part of its strategy to cause a split between China and the Soviet Union, the US encouraged India to seek weapons from the Soviet Union in Indo-China war of 1962 (Bhardwaj A. , 2018).

Perceptions; views; beliefs and ideas of Indian political leadership in shaping Indian foreign policy

India holds a belief about itself that it is destined to assume a "great power status". This latter perception takes inspiration from the "overarching idea" of India's so-called "geo-strategic and civilizational primacy" (Pande, 2017). India's general approach towards its neighbourhood is influenced by the perception that the states around it are all part of the so-called "Indian civilization" (Balachandran, 1996) (Deshpande, 2003).

INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ITS CONSTRUCTIVIST UNDERTONES

India strategic culture is based on Hindu or Vedic values and philosophical undertones (Kamal, 2018). India's strategic culture is influenced by the perception, ideas, interpretations and values of history made by the elite of modern India regarding India itself and towards South Asia. Furthermore, India's conception and perception of what constitutes its geographical limits as well as misperceptions regarding South Asia being part of so-called 'Akhand Bharat' (Beitelmaier-Berini, 2018) heavily influence India's strategic culture.

STRATEGIES PURSUED BY INDIA IN TERMS OF ITS RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIA

Neighbourhood-first approach

India's neighbourhood-first approach is essentially guided by the motivation to first establish its regional hegemony before gaining its "destined" role as a global player. An important feature of India's neighborhood first policy has remained creating dependencies for the neighboring countries in respect of India i.e. a "Delhi-centric" security, economic and political structure.

External balancing strategy

India perceives China and Pakistan to be formidable threats to its regional domination in South Asia as well as to its global power ambitions. Accordingly, for countering these perceived threats, India has always opted for the strategy of foreign interference in the region. For instance, in late 1950s, as rebellion surfaced in Tibet region of China, India was found to be complicit in cooperating with the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for assisting the Tibetan rebels as well as undertaking over-flights in that region (Shankar, 2018).

Hegemony-Imperialism Redux

India's regional hegemonic ambitions do not constitute a static ideal. According to Destradi, the foreign policies of regional powers could be placed on a continuum where "hegemony" could turn into "Imperialism" (Destradi, 2010). Accordingly, as the Hegemon expands (Layne, 2002), it goes on to assume the role of an Empire to ensure its regional preponderance while deterring any extra-regional contender. India's role and foreign policy in the region can be well understood through the above grid as well. Since its inception, India has been pursuing the goals of establishing itself as a regional hegemon. The main inspiration behind this ideal has been that India had a role conceptualization for itself as a Hegemon destined to become a global player. Joint Defence Doctrine of Indian Armed Forces (JDIAF) is a blueprint for this wider global ambition where India envisions a role of "security provider" much beyond South Asia.

Addressing ontological security through Security Dilemmatic situations

Another strategy being employed by India in respect of its neighbours is the "Security Dilemmatic" situations created in the region based on India's "ontological security" i.e. "Security of the self" concerns. In case of India, the "ontological security" issues constitute an important motivation for that country to create "security dilemmas" in the region. Owing to its peculiar construct, India has remained a victim of identity crisis. This causes "ontological security" concerns for India where it finds it difficult to define itself or create an identity for itself. For overcoming this identity crisis, India has been historically following the policy of either "assimilation" to dilute the existence of its neighbouring countries where the trans-border communities exist; or questioning the rationale of existence of its neighbouring countries altogether. For this, India has often been seen to be creating security dilemmatic situations in its neighbourhood that have triggered regional instability. India's instigation and support of Tamils

and LTTE in Sri Lanka to resolve its ontological security issues in Tamil Nadu (A state which did not identify itself with Indian identity) is one such example.

Isolating perceived adversaries

India has also been pursuing the policy of isolating perceived adversaries as part of its foreign policy strategies in the region. This strategy implies that India would first isolate its adversary through propaganda aimed at demonizing it or assimilating it in order to insulate it from any foreign assistance. Later, India would employ its expansionist tactics to overwhelm or outright occupy that neighbouring country. As an example, in case of Sikkim, India first politically isolated the ruler of Sikkim, i.e. the Chogyal, through political interference followed by outright intervention in that country to occupy it.

“Strategic autonomy” at regional level through “strategic maneuverability” at global level

Another prominent strategy employed by India towards South Asia is its pursuit of “Strategic autonomy” in respect of regional countries. However for doing so, India has been following “Strategic maneuverability” at the global level. As an example, under Indian Prime Minister Nehru, India asserted its influence over its Himalayan neighbours to conclude unequal security related treaties with them and insisted on exercising strategic autonomy in terms of laying down the security architecture for these countries without any foreign intervention. However, while doing so, India employed strategic maneuverability in the garb of non-alignment to reap benefits from both the Soviet Union and the US to counter China which was acting as a counter-hegemon against India in the region especially for the Himalayan States.

Weak Periphery-Strong Centre dyad and concentric circles or “Mandalas”

India’s foreign policy makers have evolved the perception that for a stronger centre, a weaker periphery is important. This implies that Indian foreign and security policy is based on weakening its neighbouring countries and making them dependent on India in order to avert any possible threats of intervention from their end. India’s instigation of instability in Sri Lanka through support of LTTE was, for instance, motivated by its desire to keep its restive Tamil Nadu province under control.

Another element that defines India’s foreign policy in respect of its neighbours in South Asia is the concentric circles of “Mandalas” policy. In essence, under this approach, the countries having contiguous territory are considered enemies or vassal states (if they are weak) while the ones

whose territory lies immediately beyond the enemy's territory are considered to be enemy of the enemy and therefore allies for India. Further ahead, the countries with territory after the enemy's enemy are considered allies of India's neighbouring enemies. The cases of Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as Turkey are indicative here.

Diversionsary conflicts

Another foreign policy strategy employed by Indian political leadership in towards South Asia has been the use of diversionsary conflictual situation in sync with "diversionsary theory of war" aimed at diverting domestic attention from the internal issues being faced by India. For instance, India used the LTTE issue to dilute the secessionist movement ongoing in Tamil Nadu in 1980s and 1990s.

Strategic use of "conceptual confusions"

India, as a matter of strategy in its foreign policy approach has been using conceptual confusions to give a completely different understanding of different conflict situations and has been attempting to justify its actions accordingly. As an instance, India had employed the façade of "Peacekeeping troops" to send its forces in Sri Lanka that was in fact involved in supporting the LTTE, a terrorist organization.

Ethno-religious foreign policy

India's foreign policy strategy towards the neighbouring countries in South Asia is essentially guided by ethnic and religious considerations. For instance, in case of Nepal, India's support for Madhesi community and movement in Nepal even through support of inter alia economic blockade (Ethirajan, 2020) is seen in the ethnic context.

Continuation of British colonial policies

India claims itself to be a successor State of the British Indian Empire. Accordingly, being a British legacy and a creation of the British Raj, most of India's foreign policy strategies towards the region are in fact a continuation of the British Empire in the subcontinent. For instance, the unequal security and defence treaties that India concluded with Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan after its creation in 1947 were on the same lines as the arrangements made by British with these countries.

IMPLICATIONS OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE REGION

Zero-Sum foreign Policy behaviors

India's foreign policy strategies pursued in respect of South Asia appear to be zero-sum in character, owing to India's perceptions, views and ideals regarding India's "self" and "others" being highly deterministic in character.

Security Dilemmatic Situation in the region

India has developed a narrative concerning South Asian whereby it is taken as India's civilizational space. This hegemonic ambition of India is also guided by its sense of history and internal insecurities. India considers the neighboring countries of the region, as a constant threat to its modern day construct as well as security. It, therefore, considers itself mandated to interfere in the internal affairs of these smaller states with a view to keeping them unstable and thus securing its own ontological security concerns. This therefore constitutes hegemonic instability.

Hegemonic instability in its own turn causes "Security Dilemma" in the system. A Hegemonic State is essentially looking for its ontological security besides military, economic and physical superiority. This leads the hegemon to aspire for its own security at the cost of the "others" in order to ensure and retain its hegemony. Once that is achieved, the hegemon moves to the next step of domination, i.e. aspiration to turn into an "Empire". This requires further interference into the internal affairs of the neighbouring smaller states, which calls for perpetual revisionism.

As a Hegemon weakens other States with a view to addressing its ontological security concerns as well as becoming an imperial power, it causes precautionary responses from the smaller or weaker states which include bringing extra-regional powers to act as counter-hegemons in the region. In this situation, the Hegemon would have two possible scenarios before it i.e. either to incentivize the smaller states or pursue coercive measures. Incentivizing a smaller state may not deter the smaller states from approaching extra-regional powers as they may be aiming at gaining advantage from the hegemon as well as extra-regional power or counter-hegemon. However, such a situation may become a disincentive for the allies of the regional Hegemon as they may feel left out in this game of maximizing advantages despite bandwagoning the hegemon. Accordingly, the likely policy of hegemon would be to sanction the smaller states. For instance, whenever, the smaller countries of the region have resorted to China for countering India's hegemonic ambitions, India has countered such moves by sanctioning and taking punitive actions against these smaller countries of South Asia. These include political interference (Nepal and Maldives), military action (Nepal and Sri Lanka), outright occupation (Sikkim), as well as support of insurgencies (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal). In its turn, the counter hegemon, for

gaining influence in the smaller states, may also resort to military measures that could lead to further instability in the region. These actions and counter-actions generate security dilemmatic situation in the system (Rafique, 2019).

China's increasing influence in the region

A natural consequence of the Indian hegemonic foreign policy in South Asia is that an increasing number of countries would resort to Chinese assistance in order to counter-balance India. This situation, however, could lead to its own peculiar consequences.

Extra-regional powers enter the fray

As China enters the South Asian system for countering the hegemonic designs of India vis-à-vis smaller states of South Asia, this evokes interest among the extra-regional powers. For retaining its own regional hegemony, India therefore also considers it vital to involve other extra-regional powers in the region. For instance, after China reclaimed Tibet in 1950 which led to India's perception of increasing Chinese influence over the Himalayan States, it started involving extra-regional powers like the US, Britain and the Soviet Union in the region.

In the last portion, the Chapter provides an overview of India's relations with its South Asian neighbours through the lens of constructivism. In a gist, these relations are defined by India's peculiar conceptualization of its territoriality where the entire South Asian region is considered to be part of India's "zone of influence" taking inspiration from the notion of "Akhand Bharat". India's foreign policy towards South Asia is also defined along ethnic and religious lines.

UNDERSTANDING CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA: CAUSAL FACTORS; STRATEGIES AND IMPLICATIONS

CAUSAL FACTORS SHAPING CHINESE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA

Role of History in shaping Chinese identity and foreign policy perceptions

This study argues that the peculiar perception of the historical developments in China have shaped the manner in which Chinese leadership has been attempting to define their country's stature and role in the emerging global world order (Kuhn, 2011). China is basically "a civilization pretending to be a State" (Pye, 1992) which has maintained its cultural continuity over the past five millennia (Ng-Quinn, 1993). This longevity of the Sinitic civilization has also

given a certain sense of stability to the Chinese notion of the “self” (Forsby, 2015). With this stable frame of reference, the concept of “Middle Kingdom” continued to evolve in Chinese historical perceptions of their self (Pye, 1992) (Forsby, 2015). Another key historical influence on Chinese perception and mindset as well as subsequently its Foreign Policy has been “the century of humiliation” which is related to the elements of trauma, inequality and fundamental internal weakness to Chinese polity caused by imperialist powers (Forsby, 2015). Resultantly, while proclaiming the People’s Republic of China (PRC), Mao Zedong promised a “New China” free of civil war or foreign occupation (Kuhn, 2011). This promise laid the blueprint of China’s core foreign policy ideal for future and defined its approach towards the Chinese neighbourhood including South Asia.

China’s conceptualization of the “self” and “others”: Middle Kingdom; Influence of Confucianism

As mentioned earlier, the notion of “Middle Kingdom” whereby China was placed at the center of the world while the countries and regions constituting the “tributary states” recognizing Chinese supremacy (Callahan W. , 2010) forms the core of Chinese neighbourhood policy including towards South Asia. An important moderating influence on Chinese conceptualization of “self” and “others” has remained that of Confucianism (J.A.Berling, 1982). Its four essential components include collectivism (situating individual in the context of social relations), moral virtue, social order based on harmony (harmonizing differences) and universalism (opportunity for people with all backgrounds to take part in civil administration) (Forsby, 2015). The resultant worldview is based on the Chinese concept of “Tianxia” that implies “all-under-heaven” (Esherick, 2010) (Forsby, 2015) “harmony-with-differences” (Qin, 2010) as well as “peacefulness” (Kelly, 2012) (Forsby, 2015) while giving little value to the use of force (Forsby, 2015). Owing to the above influence, China’s adversaries are not considered rivals in the normal sense of the word and only when the adversary actually threatens China’s integrity is when such foreign invader is considered “barbarian” and dealt with accordingly.

In Chinese conceptualization, the notion of “self” does not stand on its own but is relational in character (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). This implies that Chinese “self” is required to live up to the expectations of “others” (Chinese notion of “Bu Fu Hou Wang”) (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998).

Perceptions regarding Peripheries

The concept of peripheries is as old as the Chinese civilization since the Han Chinese population started dealing with the nomadic tribes of non-Han origins. During the rule of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), China introduced a “frontier model” which was premised on the notion of “defense through development” and included strategies i.e. security and political control; defence and development of the frontier regions; as well as economic development of areas with thin populations. As the Chinese peripheries were mostly inhabited by minorities of non-Han origin while also being rich in natural resources, China had a clear inkling of these peripheries being prone to foreign invasion and interference from foreign powers. This suspicion later turned out to be true when Russian imperialists and other western powers eyed on these regions to exploit China. As a result of these vulnerabilities and threats, a deep impact was made on Chinese psyche and they devised the strategy of defending these peripheries through development. This led the Chinese dynasties to develop tributary system which was linked up with the idea of trade and tribute to assert influence on these peripheries. In essence, therefore, Chinese way of exerting influence on the peripheries was economic in nature rather than coveting for geographical expansion or occupation per se. Another important influence in this context was the western intervention and control of these peripheral areas during the 19th century due to which, Chinese became convinced that these peripheries that formed part of mainland China were to be regained. It was this consideration that led Mao Zedong to regain Tibet as soon as People’s Republic of China was established in 1949. The peculiar perceptions and sense of vulnerabilities within the peripheral regions also contoured China’s foreign policy towards its neighbourhood including South Asia post-1949. China’s foreign policy towards India within the context of Tibet as well as approach of economic cooperation with neighbouring countries of South Asia can be seen through the lens of above defined perceptions regarding peripheries.

Chinese leadership’s views; beliefs; perceptions towards neighbourhood with special reference to South Asia

Chinese leadership’s perceptions, views and beliefs have marked an important influence on China’s foreign policy towards South Asia. As an instance, for Mao Zedong, establishing good relations between the Han majority and non-Han minority communities of China was considered significant. Accordingly, the non-Han minority dominated regions of Xinxiang and Tibet constituted special significance in terms of defining the contours of Mao Zedong’s foreign policy approach towards South Asia. In this particular context, Tibet singularly has been standing out as the most important factor for Chinese foreign policy towards South Asia since Mao’s time.

China's incumbent President Xi Jinping's foreign policy towards the peripheries or neighbourhood is marked by the notions of "amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness" (Zongze, Yurong, Jianxue, Junying, & Jinyue, 2016). While China takes a central position in global politics, Chinese leadership under Xi Jinping has introduced a "new model of major country relationship", where in contrast to the "Tributary system" or "Heavenly Kingdom" concepts for defining China's relations with its neighbours, attempt has been made to define relations with the neighbors on the basis of "equality and harmony" (Zongze, Yurong, Jianxue, Junying, & Jinyue, 2016). China's foreign policy behaviors towards South Asia are generally defined under the same framework. India however remains an exception on this account as China has historically considered this country to be representing and safeguarding western/imperialist interests in the region.

CHINESE STRATEGIC CULTURE TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA

Chinese strategic culture is dualistic in nature (Scobell, 2002) and therefore considered to be neither bellicose nor pacifist in its characterization. Chinese strategic culture is influenced by the Confucian philosophical framework. Owing to its non-confrontationist and harmonious undertones, China generally prefers harmony over confrontation, thus resulting in defensive rather than offensive posturing. It is for the same reason that Chinese strategic decision makers tend to prefer strategies over combat. Psychological warfare takes precedence over the one-on-one confrontation in the war theatre.

As regards South Asia, the underlying principle of Chinese strategic culture remains its urge for peace and safeguarding national core interests through protection of territorial integrity and national sovereignty. The pillars of "befriending good neighbours" (Scobell, 2002) Chinese President Xi while highlighting the elements of friendship with the neighbouring countries had emphasized the significance of "sincerity" and "reciprocity" in terms of advancing these relations.

CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGIES TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA

Economic Development & Soft Diplomacy

One of the primary foreign policy strategies being pursued by China in South Asia includes strengthening its economic and cultural footprints in the region essentially through the provision of economic aid as well as promotion of Chinese culture there (Jain B. , 2017). For instance, in

case of Pakistan, in 2015, China announced US\$ 46 billion worth of China Pakistan Economic Corridor project (Jain B. , 2017).

Economic-Military-Cultural diplomacy

For China's foreign policy, economic relations remain of paramount importance. However, China views that while its neighbouring countries are relying on China in economic terms they resort to the US for security purposes. China perceives this approach as detrimental to China's relations with the countries in its neighborhood (Zongze, Yurong, Jianxue, Junying, & Jinyue, 2016). Accordingly, China has also made military cooperation with its neighborhood including South Asia an important plank of its foreign policy strategy. In addition to these, China also pursues cultural diplomacy which it calls the "spoke" connecting the two wheels of economic and military cooperation with the neighboring countries (Zongze, Yurong, Jianxue, Junying, & Jinyue, 2016).

Moral based bilateralism

For Chinese foreign policy in general, moral considerations form an important component. Accordingly, notion of "righteousness" takes precedence over interest in Chinese perception of foreign policy (Zongze, Yurong, Jianxue, Junying, & Jinyue, 2016). In respect of South Asia, China's foreign policy is guided by remaining engaged with the smaller countries of the region irrespective of their political systems i.e. policy of non-interference in internal matters.

"Home-Court Diplomacy" and Multilateralism

As part of this strategy, Chinese leadership has been following the approach of creating its own multilateral economic and security institutions including its peripheral countries and also getting actively engaged in the already existing multilateral political and economic institutions in the neighbourhood.

Active defence policy

In terms of China's vision for the achievement of its national security objectives, "active defence" ("jiji fangyu") constitutes an important plank (George, 2019). China's development of hypersonic glide vehicles and weapons; launch of aircraft carriers; Naval forces shift to a combination of "offshore water defence" and "open seas protection" are some examples that manifest China's "active defence" approach. Furthermore, China's active defence policy may

also be interlinked with its proactive and aggressive diplomatic posturing against such countries that in Chinese perception are seen to be associating themselves with alliances openly aimed at challenging China's resurgence as a global power.

IMPLICATIONS OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY IN SOUTH ASIA

Sino-centric system: Mutual Development as well as Economic Dependencies

China wants to see itself placed at the center of a Sino-centric system where relations between China and its peripheral countries are based on “win-win approach” and mutual development. In South Asia, the above foreign policy approach is likely to generate economic development but also lead to certain economic dependencies.

Smaller States in South Asia countering Indian Hegemony

A positive implication of Chinese approach towards South Asian periphery is that the countries of South Asia (other than India) can manage to counter Indian regional hegemony through collaborative relations with a much powerful China. For instance, through collaborative relations with China, Nepal has been able to ward off India increasing hegemonic ambitions in that country to a certain extent.

A flip side is however that while a smaller state attempts to get closer to a counter-hegemon in order to ward-off a regional hegemon, it carries the risk of inviting the wrath of the hegemon that could even result in compromise of its territorial integrity or sovereignty as a whole.

Enhanced involvement of extra-regional powers in the region

Another notable implication of China's strategies towards South Asia is the enhanced involvement of extra-regional powers in the region encouraged and promoted by India, with a view to filling up its own capability gap and seeking assistance from these countries with a view to accomplishing its desired regional hegemony. As a recent manifestation, as China increased its sphere of interest into seas and its immediate neighbourhood, India feels threatened that its vision of regional hegemony and power ambitions may not materialize. As an instance, recently, “QUAD” comprising the US, India, Australia and Japan, which has now emerged as an anti-China alliance (Ward A. , 2021), has been actively engaging in South Asia to counter the resurgence of China as a global power.

The above Chapter concludes with an assessment of China's relations with different countries in South Asia. In a gist, with the exception of India, which is considered by China to be pawn of western imperialist powers in the region, China has established good relations with all the other regional countries which remain primarily guided by economic cooperation and development and the factor of China acting as a counter-hegemon in contradistinction with India's hegemonic ambitions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while undertaking the foreign policy analysis of China and India towards South Asia through the constructivist theoretical framework, this thesis argues that the major causal factors contributing towards India's actually practiced foreign policy towards South Asia include inter alia, India peculiar conceptualization of territoriality premised on the ideal of "Akhand Bharat" or "Greater India" pivoted on Hindutva ideals of the revival of a glorious Hindu Past; India's perceptions of itself being a Imperial British legal heir in the region; peculiar conceptualization of "foreign" whereby Muslims and Christians are considered to be "alien invaders" and "irreducible alterity"; process of India's creation; threat conceptualization in respect of China as an "enemy other"; as well as cliental role for major powers in order to counter China. Furthermore, the perceptions, beliefs, views and social construction regarding the region held by India's secular and right-wing Hindu political leadership have also marked a lasting influence on the foreign policy of India towards South Asia.

As for the foreign policy strategies being pursued by India towards its neighbours, these include adoption of "neighbourhood-first approach" premised on employing neighbourhood as a jump board for achieving regional hegemony; pursuit of British Imperial policies aimed at becoming an Imperial power; external balancing in order to involve extra-regional powers in the region with a view to countering perceived adversaries and counter-hegemons; "strategic maneuverability" at global level while exerting "strategic autonomy" at the regional level; externalizing internal problems as a diversionary tactic (diversionary conflict); ethno-religious neighbourhood policy; and creation of security dilemmatic situations in order to address ontological security. An important plank of India's foreign policy strategy is conceptualized around the notion of "Mandalas" or concentric circles whereby a neighbour is always assumed to be an enemy while the neighbour's neighbour is considered a friend and used for subverting the neighbour. This strategy is also used to have a weak periphery and strong Center (i.e. India)

which traces its origins from the British Imperial policy. Last but not the least, strategy of creating conceptual confusions is also a peculiar foreign policy approach of India towards the region. In this category, use of tag of ‘terrorism’ for suppressing ongoing movements of self-determination in India is presented as an example.

Owing to its peculiar nature and uncompromising ideas for achieving self-aggrandizement through exclusionary methods, India’s foreign policy actions remain zero-sum in character with lesser to non-existent space for flexibility. Furthermore, India’s social construction of structure or the regional system is such that for retaining its hegemony, India’s ideational goals and views envision creation of instability around, and thus have weak peripheries. A natural consequence of this approach is the initiation of security dilemmatic situations in the region, coupled with China’s enhanced role in the region as a counter-hegemon.

In case of China, history again plays a defining role in shaping Chinese leadership’s perceptions and views regarding China’s “self” and “others”, as well as conceptualizing its identity in general. Essentially, the China’s “Middle Kingdom” conceptualization as well as “century of humiliation” has played an important role in making China an ‘anti-imperialist’ power in the region. In addition, the influence of “Confucianism” has also been pivotal in shaping Chinese foreign policy towards its peripheries. Resultantly, harmonizing differences and developing together became an ideal of Chinese foreign policy rather than aggression against the neighbours. The only exception in this context remains China’s “active defence” policy against those who covet Chinese perceived territory. In respect of peripheries, under the influence of Confucianism, historical influences and “Century of Humiliation”, the defining characteristic of Chinese foreign policy is “economic development” for the neighbours.

As for Chinese leadership’s perceptions, the post-colonial Communist Chinese leadership was oriented against Imperialism. Resultantly, countries coupling with Imperial powers were perceived as adversaries by China. As China perceived India to be a continuum of Imperialism in Asia, Chinese leadership was uncomfortable with Indian leadership from the very beginning. Furthermore, Chinese leadership’s perceptions were also guided by support for smaller countries of South Asia to enable them come out of India’s regional hegemony.

China’s main foreign policy strategy towards its neighbourhood in general and South Asia in particular remains economic development. China supports the smaller countries of South Asia through its economic-military-cultural diplomatic initiatives in order to ward off Indian

hegemonic designs. China also emphasizes moral-based bilateralism with its neighbours in South Asia marked by non-interference in internal matters of its South Asian neighbourhood as well as support for Multilateralism.

Chinese foreign policy strategies towards South Asia could result in enabling the smaller regional countries to counter India's hegemony. However, these approaches could also lead to region's economic dependencies on China. Furthermore, while enhancing Chinese influence in South Asia, the Chinese foreign policy may also lead to extra regional powers getting increasingly involved in the region at the behest of India.

In sum, the thesis accepts the hypothesis that the foreign policies of China and India towards South Asia are guided by the "meaning" that South Asia carries for these two countries. Accordingly, these policies are premised on the construction of specific identities; historical meanings and experiences; social values; notions; leadership perceptions; ideas; domestic peculiarities as well as consequent strategic culture that China and India carry for themselves; each other; and other regional countries. India's foreign policy towards South Asia is therefore guided by the ideological notion of 'Akhand Bharat' (undivided India) and premised on aggressive posturing and interference in the region. On the contrary, Chinese foreign policy towards South Asia is guided by the element of 'community of shared destiny', based on economic development and mutual respect.

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