

SYNOPSIS

China and India in the post-Cold War Era: Bilateral Engagement in Select Theatres of World Politics

A Synopsis of the thesis resubmitted to for the degree of DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY (in Arts)

By

Mousumi Dasgupta

Jadavpur University

Kolkata

2022

SYNOPSIS

Introduction:

The present dissertation, premised within the bounds of the neorealist school of International Relations theory (specifically the strand of Structural Realism advocated by Kenneth Waltz), endeavors to trace the trajectory of Sino Indian engagement in various theaters of world politics and thereby attempts to analyze their underlying dynamics. However, as has been realised that such a study can only be carried out if we admit that a structural change was underway in world politics with the fall of the mighty Soviet Union, the dynamics of such a change and the implications which it had upon world politics happen to be the bedrock of this study. In other words, it can be asserted that a meticulous selection of a theoretical framework capable of explaining the dynamics underlying the change and the implications that followed is the significant element of this study.

Context and Premise:

Realists emphasized upon the ubiquity of power and the competitive nature of politics among nations which is why it falls short as a theoretical framework in explaining Sino Indian engagement during the post-cold war era. Classical realism had only explained conflict as the inevitable outcome of interaction between nation states thereby limiting its explanatory capacities beyond a certain point. The emergence of countries like India and China as rising powers during the post -cold war era have been a result of redistribution of power among units (states) of the international order. The way India and China would be conducting themselves in world politics would also be a direct result of their individual capabilities. A theoretical framework which explains the above is the structural variant of neo-realism by Kenneth Waltz.

True to the basic tenet of realism, structural realism also celebrated the notion of power. Unlike the realists, Waltz attributed the reason behind state behavior not to the innate self seeking character of human beings but to the structure of world politics which is essentially anarchic. Waltz opines that, the structure of world order is composed of units, which according to him are states. These states are sovereign in nature and are therefore in perfect liberty to act on their own accord. The absence of a superior in charge of formulating and implementing regulatory norms of behavior makes the world order an anarchic one. Waltz further argues that, the behavior of states towards each other in the absence of a regulatory authority/platform moulds and shapes the world order and the ways of the world order continuously constrains state behavior. Hence, states behave the way the system compels them to. The theorization which was forwarded by Kenneth W. Waltz was an analysis of world politics at the systemic level. It is here that Waltz draws a parallel between the international-order with states as its composing units on the one hand and a market with firms as its composing units on the other hand. He states that firms act in perfect self-interest to maximize their gains unbridled by any governing body by means of regulations or norms. The firms, by acting in their self interest in an unbridled manner give rise to forces which in turn forms the market and the market in turn constrains the behavior of the firms. To quote Waltz:

International political systems, like economic markets, are formed by the coactions of self-regarding units...International political systems, like economic markets are individualist in origin, spontaneously generated and unintended. In both systems structures are formed by the coactions of the units...Both systems are formed and maintained on a principle of self help that applies to the units¹.

¹ Kenneth W. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Mc GrawHill, United States of America, 1979. p.91.

Elaborating about the character of the units which comprise the international system, Waltz states that, unlike a hierarchical set up in which composing units have a variegated description of their functions, an anarchic situation (like that of the international system) does not provide any functional variation. The composing units, the states, thus perform similar functions. They are not formally differentiated by the functions they perform. Differences among units are noticeable when one considers their respective capability factors. To quote Waltz once again,

Each state, like every other state, is a sovereign political entity. And yet the differences across states, from Costa Rica to the Soviet Union, from Gambia to the United States, are immense. States are alike and they are also different².

The states are functionally undifferentiated; they are distinguishable only in terms of lesser or greater capabilities of performing similar tasks. Hence, it is the distribution of capabilities among the units of an international system which determines the nature of the order. It is on the basis of capability distribution that number of poles in an international system is determined. Since states are differentially placed by virtue of their respective power, even if there is a cooperative relation between two states the relative power position between the two would determine the outcome of that relationship. Waltz opines that, even if there is strong economic integration which apparently rules out possibility of a war, the question of '*who would gain more?*' does not vanish since the relative power positions of the states involved is a reality.

With the end of cold war in 1990, the distribution of capability across the world altered drastically, hence bringing about a new configuration of poles referred to by scholars and policy makers as a 'multipolar' world order. It is in this context that, the emergences of countries like India and China become relevant. These two countries along with a few others like Brazil, South

² n 2, p.97.

Africa etc. received frequent appraisals in the international community as the superpowers in making to whom the next century belonged. The present dissertation seeks to analyze the contours of Sino Indian engagement in various theaters of world politics under the light of Waltzian structural realism. The dissertation hypothesizes that, it is the relative power position of India and China that determines the contours of India's and China's engagement with areas like South East Asia, Africa and Central Asia.

Research Questions:

Having discussed some of the significant works of recent times on the rise of India and China, it becomes evident that these works perceive the rising Asian powers through the prism of shifting nature of foreign and domestic policies, changing international milieu and their possible consequences on the power position of these countries. The trajectory of an aspiring superpower can never be studied in isolation. The very ascend of a country in the international order has to be juxtaposed against the international scenario in order to highlight the change that is underway. The works which have been discussed in the previous section have largely chosen to analyze the rise of India and China by juxtaposing them against the international milieu. Their rise of potential superpowers can also be measured / analyzed by taking into account the level and nature of influence they have been able to muster on the other world countries of Asia and Africa. Although there is a lot of scholarship on Sino Indian comparative studies in the field of foreign policy, domestic policies, society, culture etc., there is some gap when it comes to studying their emergence by analyzing their engagement policies in specific areas. This dissertation thus makes an endeavor to map the trajectory of China and India's rise in the post-cold war era by carefully analyzing the underlying dynamics of their engagement in specific theatres of global politics. Its aim is to study and contrast their rise by capturing the interface of

their policies in Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia. The exercise of juxtaposition consequently happens at two levels: against each other and against the particular theater in question. It will not only bring to the fore the basic contours of their engagement policies but also throw some light on how the rising powers want them to be perceived by the others. This dissertation deliberately chooses to conduct the study with the structural understanding of multipolarity and views China's rise in the post-cold war era as a threat because the aim of the dissertation is in highlighting the competitive engagement of India and China in various theatres of world politics. Power, as a concept have also been regarded from the conventional standpoint and the indicators which have been employed for the sake of comparison have been chosen accordingly. It is not my submission that it could not have been done otherwise, but I have taken this liberty as a researcher to conduct it with the said premises.

This project thus would try and answer the following research questions in the forthcoming chapters:

1. In terms of dimensions, what is the scope of Sino Indian engagement in the select theaters? Is it uni-dimensional or multidimensional?
2. In terms of nature, is there a perceivable variation in each of the three theatres? If so, how does one explain it in each case?
3. What is the future of Sino-Indian engagement in these theaters? Will it be competitive or cooperative?

The dissertation will answer these questions in the successive theaters after having established the relative power position of India and China in the next chapter. Chapters three, four and five

will individually take up each of the theaters of Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia followed by the final concluding chapter comprising of the general observations and findings.

Methodology:

A qualitative research method has been adopted to carry out the present research. Since the aim of this work has been to study the rise of India and China during the post cold war era by looking at their engagement policies in three different theaters of global politics, I have followed the process of text analysis. In order to explain the basic contours and the underlying dynamics of Sino Indian engagement in each of the theaters, it has been studied separately under the categories of politics, economics and defense. While separately dealing with the engagement policies of India and China under each category, primary data like speeches, declarations, memorandums, treaties, agreements, interviews, trade data etc. were collected and analyzed carefully. The primary data was thereafter suitably supplemented with available secondary readings.

Sources:

The present study has used primary data sourced from government documents (speeches, interviews, white papers) available at the government and official websites, from personal interviews, primary databases like the Asian Recorder and African Recorder. Other than these, a whole lot of secondary material have been utilized to complete the study.

Chapters:

The dissertation comprises of five substantial chapters along with the introductory chapter which sets the ground of enquiry and the concluding chapter which attempts to answer the research questions raised initially. The second chapter begins with the exercise of ascertaining the relative power position of India and China by measuring their capabilities using certain hard and soft indicators of power. Since the basic premise of this dissertation rests within the bounds of structural realism, it is absolutely essential to determine the relative power positions of India and China before studying their rise during the post-cold war era. Having determined the relative power position of the countries, the dissertation takes up the exercise of mapping the rise of the Asian powers by studying their engagement in South East Asia, Africa and Central Asia respectively. Each of these chapters begins by establishing the rationale behind its selection thereby setting the ground for study. Their engagement policy in the political, economic and defense sectors is thereafter studied in each of the theaters followed by a conclusion which answers the research questions that have been raised earlier.

After having introduced the context and the resultant questions in the introductory chapter, this dissertation has moved on to establish the relative power position of China and India in the second chapter. The third, fourth and fifth chapters have separately dealt with the three theatres namely, Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia.

The first chapter began with introducing the overall context of this dissertation by underlining the structural change that occurred with the fall of the Soviet Union. The new world order which came into place began to be studied by scholars and policy makers to acquaint themselves with its nature and implications. Thereafter the chapter introduces the basic tenets of structural realism, also known as neo-realism by arguing that the task of mapping the rise of China and India during the post-cold war era by studying their bilateral engagements in select theatres of

world politics can only be carried out if we attempt to explain it from the Waltzian point of view. Having elaborated upon the central concept of 'relative power position', the chapter moves ahead to an exhaustive literature survey. Significant works on the rise of India have been categorised into two broad segments. The first segment comprising the works of Ashok Kapur, C. Raja Mohan, Stephen Cohen and a few other scholars account for India's emergence as a consequential player to momentous events like the 1998 nuclear tests, India's leap towards liberalising its economy and so on and so forth. The second segment, on the other hand, which comprises of Baldev Raj Nayyar, T.V.Paul, Harsh Pant, Sandy Gordon, SumitGanguly take a critical position on India's rise by locating the obstacles which might obstruct India from realising its potential.

The literature on China's rise have been divided into two distinct categories, one attributing China's rise as a threat to the existing order of international politics and the other taking a diametrically opposite position by regarding China's rise as a 'peaceful' one. The first includes works of Richard Bernstein, Ross H. Munro, David Shambaugh, Robyn Lin, Richard Parker while the second section comprises the works of Zheng Bijian, S.J.Noumoff, Samuel S. Kim etc. This section also takes into account the seminal works of Gerald Segal and Nicholas D. Kristoff who take completely opposite positions while explaining China's rise. Having presented a basic categorisation about the existing literature on the theme, this section provides an explanation behind the discourses of China's and India's rise. the discourse behind China's rise has been fuelled because the trajectory of her domestic politics, the policy options that were being chosen by the leadership had successfully grabbed worldwide attention. The inherent contradiction in the 1978 reform process leading to diametrically opposite economic and political ideals; growing military expenditure; anti-hegemonic posturing etc. led many to project China's rise as a threat.

The discourse on India's rise was firmly stood upon the following: economic liberalisation policies which were adopted immediately after the end of cold war and India's decision to conduct nuclear tests in 1998. These developments implied that India was finally breaking away from her normative foreign policy considerations and moving towards pragmatic choices. This section is followed by establishing the research gap. While a considerable volume of work exists on the rise of these two states, there is a need to locate their rise in a comparative framework by studying the engagement policies of each. The research gap allows the posing of the research questions that have already been mentioned. The chapter ends by making an exposition about the research methodology.

The second chapter attempts to elaborate and ascertain the central concept of 'relative power position', which, according to this work, is the fundamental reason behind the dynamics of engagement between China and India in the select theatres. This chapter begins by characterising the post-cold war era by devoting a substantial section about the dominant academic views on the period's polarity. The wide spectrum of ideas on polarity which had emerged during the first half of the 1990s has been discussed meticulously in this section, thus inferring that a general consensus about the multipolar nature of the post-cold war era had been established. A detailed exposition of Kenneth Waltz's theory of structural realism is undertaken thereafter, focusing primarily on Waltz's concept of the anarchical world order which characterises the states with functional sameness and positional difference in terms of relative capabilities. It is further explained that states derive functional sameness from the very fact that they all are sovereign independent nation states, while positional difference can be attributed to their unequal power position. Thus, in order to locate and explain the contours of engagement policies of India and China during in the select theatres, it is essential to ascertain their relative power position.

Following a short discussion on the various definitions of national power, this chapter refers to the power index used by Devin T. Hagerty in his volume on India's rise, where he uses hard and soft indicators of power to ascertain the relative power position of the countries in question. The same index has been used in this case too. India and China have been mapped against each other based on the following categories: hard indicators of power (territory, population, Gross Domestic Product, rate of annual growth, annual electricity consumption and defence expenditure); soft indicators of power (life expectancy at birth, infant mortality rate, political stability and rule of law). On plotting China and India according to the indicators motioned above, it appears that although China outstrips India in terms of the hard indicators of power, it does not paint a similar picture in the area of soft indicators of power. This chapter arrives at the above inference by taking into account the lopsided economy centric reform process of China that was initiated in 1978. It was thus established in the second chapter that, in terms of relative power position China was better positioned in the international order compared to India.

The third chapter deals with the theatre of Southeast Asia. It begins by explaining the selection of Southeast Asia as one of the theatres for studying the engagement policies of China and India during the post-cold war era. This explanation is given on the basis of the geopolitical, historical and political realities of India, China and Southeast Asian states. Before delving into the various aspects of engagement the chapter throws some light on China's and India's relations with Southeast Asia during the cold war era. India's relations with Southeast Asia during the cold war phase lacked content and direction since it was sucked into the vortex of cold war politics, while on the other hand China's relations with the region during that period earned China the tag of an expansionist power.

Sino-Indian engagement policies have been discussed by dividing them under three broad categories: political, economic and military. Detailed discussions about the political ties Southeast Asia with the two countries respectively show that their approach has overtly remained ASEAN centric. The regional organisation has been regarded by both the countries as the best and most effective gateway to the region in order to wield influence. In the economic realm, their relationship has adopted a multifaceted approach. Trade and commercial relationship have been established by setting up institutional linkages with ASEAN, setting up bilateral ties with the extra regional bodies like BIMTEC and Mekong Ganga Cooperation Project and undertaking high level visits to the region. A number of joint working groups have been set up with the region to facilitate free trade areas and other preferential trade practices.

This section also includes a detailed account about the trade and investment data between the region and the two countries in question. Trade and investment data prove China's deeper economic engagement with the region in comparison to India. Although threat perception regarding China is still a reality in Southeast Asia, the region's engagement with China is primarily driven by the growth figures of China and her sheer economic prowess. India on the other hand has a relatively weaker engagement with Southeast Asia but it keeps the countries of the region interested because of the huge market it offers. The last section of the chapter dealt with defence ties. It is asserted that although China is a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum, happens to be one of the biggest suppliers of military equipment, and has the record of undertaking the maximum number of joint military operations, nonetheless, China's involvement in the Spratlys has kept China's threat perception alive in the region. In case of India, involvement in the area of defence cooperation with the region is limited to organising joint military exercises and trainings; yet, the region's perception about India is that of a reliable ally.

The chapter finds that perception about external players like India and China play a decisive role in their engagement with the region. It further notes that both China and India regard Southeast Asia as their immediate sphere of influence, which is why both the countries relentlessly seek to integrate with the region through the principal regional body, ASEAN. It is evident that China's level and scale of political, economic and military engagement with Southeast Asia is greater than that of India because of their relative power position and India's early reticence to integrate with the ASEAN states due to cold war complications and the imperatives of non-alignment. The degree of difference in their influence has declined perceptibly because Southeast Asia as a region wants to engage China for economic benefits and also wants to engage India in order to balance China. Although both China and India have developed a multifaceted engagement policy vis-à-vis Southeast Asia, it remains as an area of competition between China and India.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation discussed the pattern of Sino-Indian engagement in the African theatre. The chapter begins by establishing the rationale behind choosing the African theatre. Historically, both India and China had cordial ties with the African continent since the days of Afro-Asian resurgence which had played a significant role in the development of a sense of identity among the three players. Further, with the end of cold war, Africa began viewing both India and China as reliable partners of development quickly replacing them for the western countries. On the other hand, Africa was identified as a very important resource hub, making it an important destination for the growing Chinese and Indian economies. The wave of democratisation that swept African countries during the 1990s and the positive growth figures which were recorded by these countries during that time instilled the Indian and Chinese foreign policy makers with a sense of optimism.

The next section of the chapter discussed the political ties between Africa and the two countries respectively. Political ties between India and Africa have been discussed under the broad categories of bilateral high level visits by heads of states and ministers, promotion of cultural exchanges between the countries, conferring awards to African heads of states, development cooperation, involvement in the regional organizations like the African Union (AU), and adoption of identical positions on specific issues at global platforms. These together have created an environment of mutual trust and benefit between India and the African countries which has helped their economic relations to flourish. Political relations between China and Africa have also been discussed under the categories of bilateral high level visits resulting into political and cultural exchanges, development cooperation leading to collaborative projects in the infrastructure sector, involvement in the regional bodies and establishment of the Forum for China and Africa (FOCAC). These measures together have also helped the economic relations between China and Africa to mature during the post-cold war period.

The chapter has subsequently taken to the economics of this engagement. The broader aim of their economic engagement has been gaining access to the vast resource pool of Africa and also gaining access to the vast African markets for the manufactured Indian and Chinese goods. Their energy procurement policy also forms an important segment of their overall engagement strategy. In terms of trade and investment data since the 1990s, China outstrips India as net exporter and importer. Chinese investments figures also narrate a similar story.

Coming to the defence ties, China is better engaged with the African countries than India. China happens to be one of the biggest arms suppliers to the African countries. The chapter concluded with the following observations on Sino-Indian engagement in Africa. First, Chinese and Indian policies vis-à-vis the African countries are multifaceted, showcasing an all-rounded approach

based on the principles of mutual benefit and cooperation. Second, the African theatre presents itself before China and India as an economic opportunity (vast market for manufactured goods, storehouse of energy resources and other natural resources) which is why the primary thrust of their policies remains economic in nature. Lastly, since Chinese and Indian interests in this area are identical in nature, they are bound to compete in the near future over the resources of Africa. So far as comparison between China and India are concerned, this study finds that China's engagement with Africa is much stronger owing to the governmental support that Chinese ventures receive.

The final chapter deals with the Central Asian theatre. The Central Asian theatre has been understood in the conventional usage of the term, implying that Afghanistan has not been included as a constituting country. Selection of this area as a theatre has been explained by pointing out the historical connection between the region with India and China through the fabled silk route. It implies that not only were India and China connected to the present day Central Asian countries by way of trade; they also shared a close civilisational bonding. Along with continuous movement of traders and their commodities, this region also witnessed movement of ideas from one place to the other. This region also gains pertinence from the fact that, the Central Asian countries which were economically and politically isolated during the days of cold war unshackled themselves with the demise of Soviet Union. A power vacuum developed immediately. With the discovery of energy resources in this region, most of the major players of international politics began taking an active interest since the mid 1990s. Discussion about the political relations between India and the Central Asian states begins with usual high level state visits underlining the historicity of their relations. India has been a late starter in its efforts to engage with the countries of Central Asia. India started taking an active interest in the

region when Afghanistan came under the hold of the sinister Taliban regime making New Delhi wary about her own security vis-à-vis Pakistan, which shares land borders with the Central Asian states. This compelled India to show a sustained interest to gain entry in the region through the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Political relations between China and Central Asia also revolve around the fulcrum of territorial security. China shares her south western borders with the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and the people living across the borders share ethnic and religious identity. This issue got compounded by the outbreak of Islamic separatist movement in Xinjiang (south western province of China) and Talibanisation of Afghanistan. Thus it became an imperative for China to maintain peace and stability in the region by actively engaging with these countries, both economically and politically. One of the most significant aspects of China's political ties with Central Asia happens to be the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The creation of this regional grouping was a clear admission that China was desperate to address the problem of separatist movements in the region in a collaborative manner in order to secure her own strategic interests.

This study has also analysed the nature of economic partnership that the two countries have established in Central Asia. Economic relations between India and Central Asia follow the conventional avenues of bilateral trade, investment, infrastructural aid and similar cooperative ventures. Procuring energy resources from the resource rich Central Asian countries form an extremely important component of India's economic relations. India's commercial ties with Central Asia do not narrate an optimistic story as full spectrum of economic relations have not flourished. China's economic engagement however is much more robust. Chinese manufactured goods have captured the Central Asian markets without a shred of doubt. China's economic policy with these countries also revolves around energy resource requirement. So far as defence

ties are concerned, China has a better presence compared to India among the Central Asian countries. Taking the above into consideration the chapter derives the following conclusions: first, so far as the various facets of the relationship are concerned, India does not have an all-rounded engagement policy with the Central Asian countries unlike China. In case of India, the absence of sufficient cultural exchanges between the two is a major drawback. Second, the predominant nature of China's and India's Central Asian policy is security oriented. Their economic, defence and political ties are respectively driven by the security imperative. Third, Sino-Indian engagement in the Central Asian theatre would be competitive in the realm of economic relations, for they share similar appetite for energy resources. Nevertheless, since there is a convergence of security interest between India and China; they might cooperate with each other in areas of political and security engagement.

The dissertation has carried out the comparative analysis at two levels: first, it compared India and China in order to arrive at the relative power position. Second, it attempted to compare their rise during the post cold war era by studying their engagement in three different theatres of world politics. The first has been dealt in details in the second chapter by comparing the power position of India and China. The exercise has been carried out by plotting both the countries on the basis of certain hard and soft indicators of power. The figures indicate that China's relative power position is stronger than that of India, with certain minor variations in the realm of the soft indicators. China's membership in the exclusive club of United Nations Security Council is also indicative of her relative power position against India.

Thus, having mapped the relative power positions of China and India, the study compared their modes of engagement in three different theatres of world politics, namely: Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia. The objective of this study has been to uncover the fundamental contours of

their engagement in these three areas thereby trying to map their rise. Three research questions were set at the outset to facilitate a better understanding. Before delving into the three questions separately, we ought to take cognizance of the fact that the larger objective of both India and China in these three theatres have been to expand their respective ambits of influence. They have tried to do so by charting an overall policy of engagement, the nuances of which have been studied in this work.

The first question is about the dimensions of their engagement policies in each of the areas. India's engagement policy in Southeast Asia and Africa are multidimensional, it is a combination of political and economic initiatives. India's Look East Policy was designed to bring about an effective integration with the region so that the economies could grow together. In order to facilitate economic integration with the region, India courted the Southeast Asian countries actively for an extra regional seat at the ASEAN. It is her inclusion in the ASEAN that added a number of other dimensions to her relationship with the region. India's Africa policy too is a multidimensional policy which rests on political, economic, cultural and military components. Africa presents itself not only as a hotspot of energy resources but also as a vast untapped market for manufactured goods and knowledge related services. In order to tap these sectors, India has formulated a well balanced engagement policy with the African countries. Support of the African countries at various global forums also happens to be another incentive for emerging countries like India. India's Central Asia policy is not as coherent like that of Southeast Asia or Africa. It is more of an attempt to keep an Indian presence amid several other external players in the region. Its political, economic and defence components are not yet fully developed to impart it the features of a comprehensive policy. China like India has put forward a multidimensional policy in Southeast Asia and Africa. Southeast Asia being China's extended neighbourhood in

the south has always played a crucial part in her foreign policy designs, both during and after the cold war. One of the biggest issues that China faces in this particular region is the threat perception. In order to address this perception and engage with the region economically, China has crafted a well balanced policy which ably stands on its political, cultural, military and economic components. The Central Asian theatre also experiences a well balanced Chinese policy of engagement through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In terms of level or extent of China's and India's engagement with the regions, it can be inferred safely that China's extent of engagement with all the three regions possesses better depth than that of India. The primary reason which explains the above assertion is that, China's position in the international order is much better compared to that of India. China's economic and political presence in any theatre therefore is much stronger than India's.

Explaining variations between the natures of engagement policies of these two states across the region remains the second objective of this study. India's Southeast Asia policy showcases the traits of a classical economic policy where integration with the region by developing institution linkages are regarded primary. So far as Africa is concerned, India's policy once again portrays an economic leaning. In both the cases the nature of the policies can be explained by taking into account the following: vast markets that these areas present; their natural and energy resource reserves (proven and speculated); and the compulsions of India's newly liberalised economy. China's Central Asia policy on the other hand conveys a mix of political and economic interest owing to the simple fact that India has been a late starter in the region and is still to carve out a well thought out policy for engagement. China's Southeast policy and Africa policy also represent an economic leaning. Once again, it can be explained by the factors of vast market and resource base that these areas are. The demands of the growing Chinese economy also form a

crucial factor in its engagement policy in these areas. China's engagement in these theatres also comprise of security measures adopted to guard her strategic interests. In case of Southeast Asia China's policy regarding the Spratleys indicate her concern not only about the resourceful islands but also about the marine routes that crisscross the region. In case of Africa, in order to consolidate her economic security China has pursued a robust resource procurement policy by offering aid, waiving loans and by extending unqualified support to the undemocratic regimes of the resource rich regions. China's Central Asia policy presents itself more as a security policy. The crux of China's Central Asia policy has already been explained. In order to insulate the south western province of Xinjiang from the influences of the pan Islamic, pan Turkic elements China has formulated a strong economic engagement policy which it runs, both bilaterally and multilaterally through the SCO. The regional platform of SCO has also been used by China to unanimously produce a comprehensive policy to address the security threats that plague the region.

The third and final question revolves around the possibility of cooperation or competition in the near future in each of these areas. In all the three areas China and India are predominantly poised to be competitors. As is already evident from this study, India and China exhibit rather similar engagement policies, which is why it is natural that clash of interest would be inevitable. Hence, a competitive streak between China and India in these theatres can be regarded as a natural outcome. The other reason behind this assertion is that all these regions would try to balance one external player with other so that no one becomes dominant enough to wield absolute control. Southeast Asia is wary of China's territorial claims and Beijing's attempts of replacing indigenously produced goods with Chinese manufactured goods. Such a perception is always reiterated in the Southeast Asian minds by the history of Chinese expansionism. Africa, on the

other hand, is wary of the same economic difficulties that might be brought about by overt Chinese engagement. Central Asia's anxiety regarding China stems from her cold war memories of the Sino-Soviet conflict days. No matter how proactive China has been in this theatre, its ascension will encourage balancing behaviour from the Central Asian republics and this would open possibilities of a greater strategic role for India in this region. In each of these theatres China has played a proactive role while India's role has been reactive. Thus, this study asserts that in all these three areas India would be made to play against China, making competition an inevitable outcome between the two.