Growth Ambitions and Rising Powers: Sino-Indian Asymmetric Balancing in Bilateral, Regional, and Multilateral Settings

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Abstract

This paper applies the legal framework of forum shopping to three levels of Sino-Indian relations: bilateral border disputes, regional balancing, and multilateral competition. Brantly Womack’s asymmetric power theory is often used to explain the behavior of India and China, two emerging states of unequal capabilities. However, shown by the application of forum shopping, his theory fails to consider the increasing costs to non-cooperation as relations move into the regional and multilateral realms. Multilateral competition is, therefore, the forum with the highest likelihood of Sino-Indian cooperation, which can spill over and reduce tensions in bilateral and regional relations as well.
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Introduction

In a meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the 2013 BRICS summit, Xi described the two states as “the world’s two largest developing nations with a similar historic mission to boost their social and economic development.” While BRICS summits are just one forum in which China and India interact, an analysis of their bilateral, regional, and multilateral relations paint pictures quite different than Xi’s idealistic statement. As competition increasingly divides these two emerging powers, the policy decisions made by both New Delhi and Beijing do not always reflect this sense of a shared historic mission.

Applying the legal framework of “forum shopping,” the paper will analyze three forums of Sino-Indian relations—bilateral border disputes, regional balancing in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia (SEA), and multilateral power competition—to expose how each emerging power views the other. Traditionally, scholars have relied on Brantly Womack’s asymmetric power theory to examine Chinese relations with its neighbors, including India. Using a model of a larger state (A) and a smaller state (B), Womack predicts how neighboring states with asymmetric capabilities will interact. As he explains, B has proportionally more to gain or lose in its relationship with A than A does in its relationship with B. The consequent asymmetry in vulnerabilities creates different expectations for the relationship: B primarily wants A to acknowledge its autonomy, while A primarily expects deference from B—meaning B acknowledges the real difference in power between the two states. If an action of the opposing state breaches these expectations, both states feel threatened, and a vicious, conflictual cycle between B’s search for recognized autonomy and A’s search for deference will emerge. Overall, Womack’s asymmetry theory concludes that actions taken by A will have a greater impact on B than that of B on A, which has characterized the relationship between China (A) and India (B) since the takeoff of Chinese economic growth.

However, while the ongoing border disputes between China and India follow asymmetry theory’s policy predictions, the cases of regional balancing and global power competition uncover a changing Sino-Indian dynamic. In the case of each country’s economic presence and political influence in the Southeast Asian region, India’s security involvement in the Indian
Ocean and “Look East Policy” interfere with Beijing’s goal of regional hegemony, thus challenging its own asymmetric relations with China. Moreover, relative soft power and shared interests in multipolarity at the multilateral level are essential to India’s ability to defy its traditionally asymmetric relations with China. Although Womack predicts that any disturbance in an asymmetric power relationship will cause conflict between state A and state B, the pressure for cooperation at the global level will improve Sino-Indian relations overall, as the costs of non-cooperation multiply. Thus, multilateralism is the ideal forum for India to equalize its current asymmetric balance with China.

Forum 1: Border Disputes in Sino-Indian Bilateral Relations

Borders have played a vital role in Sino-Chinese bilateral relations since the 1950 Chinese annexation of Tibet, immediately following the victory of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in China’s 1949 civil war. Since that 1950 annexation, border disputes between China and India have been a principal source of distrust between the two powers, which has reinforced their asymmetric power relationship. India—the smaller state—has worried for the past half-century about Chinese security presence along its borders, and China has done very little to assuage such fears among Indian leaders and scholars. Two border disputes exemplify this asymmetric nature of bilateral Sino-Indian relations: the cases of Tibet and the Jammu and Kashmir region.

Tibet and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence

The Chinese annexation of Tibet in 1950 eliminated the historic buffer space between colonial India and China, which left some Indian leaders uneasy. China viewed Tibet as a part of its empire stolen by European imperial powers, and this annexation is just one example of China’s attempts to win back lost lands through negotiations with neighbors. Despite their concern over this aggressive CCP border policy, Indian leaders agreed to sign the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954, which not only recognized Chinese control of Tibet but also established the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence between China and India. The Five Principles include the following—largely superficial—rules for Sino-Indian bilateral relations: respect for each
other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other’s domestic affairs, equality and cooperation for mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Although Indian leaders pushed to include these principles in the main text of the Panchsheel Agreement, China succeeded in downplaying their significance by limiting the principles to the preamble.

It is, therefore, not surprising that distrust grew into an armed conflict along the border area of Tibet in 1962, which created a “Nehru-induced delusion”—referring to the post-independence Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru—that India was a victim of unprovoked Chinese aggression. To apply Womack’s theory to this victimization, China, the larger power, invaded the autonomy of India, the smaller power. Not only did Nehru create this sense of victimhood among Indian leaders but his views supporting Tibet’s independence also infringed on what China viewed as its historical right to the area. Distrust and suspicion continued to grow, for the actions of both the larger state and the smaller state invaded their respective desires for deference and autonomy. Shen Dingli argues that China and India’s “problematic handling” of this border dispute prevented the long-term cultivation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, thus foregoing the opportunity to build a bilateral partnership at an early stage in their relations. This conflictual beginning to Sino-Indian politics hurt their historic capability to cooperate bilaterally, regionally, and multilaterally, as distrust continued to plague their asymmetric relationship.

Rajiv Sikri argues that Tibet remains “the single most important factor driving Sino-Indian relations,” a view that originated from Mao Zedong and still influences contemporary Chinese thinking. In fact, the Beijing Review, News from China, and People's Daily Online—all publications controlled by the CCP—still reiterate that Tibet is a part of modern China. Although China’s hold on Tibet has become more economically motivated, the Tibet question continues to cloud Sino-Indian relations. It enforces the asymmetric power relation between the two states, for Indian leaders—just as they did when signing the Panchsheel Agreement—have been unable or unwilling to counter growing Chinese security and economic presence. This border dispute will remain a major challenge to Sino-Indian bilateral relations as long as both powers abide by the predictions from Womack’s asymmetry theory.
The Princely States of Jammu and Kashmir

In addition to Tibet, the princely states of Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan are a notable source of Sino-Indian border conflict. The complicated history of these two princely states dates back to March 26, 1846, when the Treaty of Amritsar drew out their borders following the Anglo-Sikh War. In 1947, the princely states were divided into three main sub-units: India-controlled Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan-controlled Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan, a part of which Pakistan ceded to China in 1963. Pakistan gave over 5,000 square miles of the Gilgit-Baltistan territory to China as a part of a border agreement, which arguably marked the beginning of today’s close Sino-Pakistan relationship. However, the cooperation between China and Pakistan since that agreement has only enforced suspicions among Indian leaders, and as long as Sino-Pakistan relations remain strong, Sino-Indian bilateral relations are unlikely to improve.

Even excluding China’s presence in the Jammu and Kashmir region, India sees Kashmir—a majority Muslim province in secular India—as “a jewel in the crown of Indian nationalism.” At the same time, Pakistan, a Muslim-majority country, views Kashmir as a part of its own nation, following the arguments of the post-independence “two-nation theory” of Pakistan and India. Pakistan’s ceding of the Gilgit-Baltistan region to China further threatened the deeply identity-based rationale for India’s partition of the princely states. Similar to the Chinese image of Tibet as belonging to the “motherland” of China, India views Jammu and Kashmir as belonging to its own motherland. This border dispute, thus, exemplifies Womack’s asymmetry theory in that China, the larger state, does not care about India’s rationale for controlling Jammu and Kashmir and, therefore, does not accept Indian autonomy. Furthermore, the role of Pakistan in the case of Jammu and Kashmir further complicates the asymmetry, as China cooperates with a historical adversary of India.

In the past few years, the political significance of the Gilgit-Baltistan region has expanded with Chinese economic growth. In November 2014, the Chinese government committed 45.6 billion US dollars to the building of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which will run directly through Gilgit-Baltistan and give China direct access to Pakistan’s Gwadar Port. Because of the region’s rich hydro resources, mineral wealth, and
forest reserves, Priyanka Singh argues that it is “almost impossible” to imagine CPEC without Gilgit-Baltistan. Not only will CPEC increase China’s economic stakes in Pakistan but it will also inevitably increase Chinese security presence along India’s northwest border in the Jammu and Kashmir region. An increased Chinese economic and security presence along this contested border area will further invade Indian autonomy, but China has shown no concern for such an intrusion. CPEC, therefore, very clearly exposes both China’s indifference towards India and its expectation for deference from its less-powerful southern neighbor.

To conclude, the border disputes along Tibet and the Jammu and Kashmir region still greatly define—and impede—Sino-Indian bilateral cooperation. Border disputes are the origin of a significant amount of distrust between the two powers, which will continue as long as China intrudes into Indian domestic autonomy. This analysis of border disputes shows that Womack’s asymmetry theory does apply to the Sino-Indian relationship today, and as a result, bilateral relations are the least likely forum for a softening of their asymmetric power balance. Neither India nor China will likely overcome their conflicting historical or economic interests in these border regions, therefore preventing future cooperation.

**Forum 2: Regional Cooperation and Competition in Asia**

As China and India grow economically, both powers will compete for increased security presence in the Indian Ocean and greater economic cooperation with Southeast Asia (SEA). Sino-Indian regional balancing actually presents an opportunity to transform their asymmetric relationship, for India’s “Look East Policy” (LEP) intrudes upon the traditionally asymmetric power relations between Southeast Asian nations and China. China’s growing presence in both the Indian Ocean and SEA poses three potential outcomes that require a consequently aggressive Indian regional policy: Beijing as a maritime power, Beijing as a maritime economy, and Beijing as a “polygonal power” in both security and economics. At the same time, India’s increased maritime involvement creates new dynamics for China’s regional policy. This second forum of Sino-Indian relations, thus, presents a transition from the two countries’ very asymmetric bilateral relations to more balanced regional competition.
Indian and Chinese maritime strategy has grown more aggressive in the Indian Ocean, reflecting a slight shift in their asymmetry. China sees ocean politics as a “new frontier,” not only to consolidate its regional power but also to ensure its access to global markets. In addition to CPEC, other policy actions recently taken by China in the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) include the construction of ports, pipelines, and commercial bases—some of which run directly through India’s South Asian neighbors. At first, New Delhi ignored China’s expansionary strategy across the Indian Ocean because its leaders falsely believed Beijing would fail to challenge Indian IOR dominance. However, while New Delhi failed to respond, China built ports in Sri Lanka, deployed nuclear submarines in Karachi, and strengthened its security ties with various countries in SEA. Once the Indian government realized the extent of China’s threat to their regional dominance, New Delhi adopted more aggressive policy in the IOR.

The past decade saw two shifts in India’s maritime policy. First, India boosted the protection of its coastline following the Mumbai attacks of 2008, in which Pakistani terrorists sailed to the coast of Mumbai. Second, and with greater implications for Chinese presence in the IOR, New Delhi updated its naval strategy in 2015 with a shift from “using” its surrounding seas to “securing” them. India hopes to transform itself from a passive beneficiary of its IOR access to an active security provider in the Indian Ocean, in order to balance Chinese security presence in the region. While China continues to construct ports and improve its access to the Indian Ocean, current Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced his commitment to “consolidating India’s maritime ties and collaborating with Indian neighbors on maritime security.” In contrast with border disputes, New Delhi’s more active rhetoric and policy in the Indian Ocean exposes the importance of regional balancing in the evening of their asymmetric relationship.

New Delhi’s overall regional security architecture does not include single-power domination over the Indian Ocean. While not explicitly stating that it aspires for such domination, Beijing has focused on a regional security environment in which mutual trust guarantees stability and bridges policy differences “through dialogue on an equal footing.” Thus, the IOR region is potentially a space of both competition and cooperation between India...
and China, as both share common interests in regional stability and securing access to global markets. However, India’s response to Chinese aggression renders the Indian Ocean the first potential forum that challenges Womack’s asymmetry theory.

**ASEAN in Sino-Indian Regional Competition**

Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand founded the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on August 8, 1967, and its role in Sino-Indian relations has grown as both powers attempt to expand their regional influence. Originally envisioned to be a “risk-avoiding organization,” these countries created ASEAN to minimize the threat of conflict either within the region or with external actors. Since the boom in Chinese economic growth, Sino-ASEAN relations represent an easy application of Womack’s asymmetry theory, even more so than that of India and China. ASEAN includes relatively small states that do not pose a challenge to China’s rise globally or regionally. However, India’s Look East Policy (LEP), which was originally proposed in 1991, interferes with the traditional asymmetric balance between ASEAN and China. By interfering in the Sino-ASEAN relationship, New Delhi has proven not only that it is a rising regional power but also that this rise corresponds with an alteration in its own asymmetry with China.

The Look East Policy has two primary policy focuses: increased economic integration with ASEAN and a strengthened security architecture between India and the region. Although LEP originally sought to enhance India’s global position after the Cold War, the first formal arrangements between India and ASEAN began in the early 2000s with the signing of various free trade agreements. In 2009, total trade between India and ASEAN was 39.1 billion US dollars, but this trade volume grew 41.8 percent in 2010, to 55.4 billion US dollars. This 2010 volume constitutes about 2.7 percent of total ASEAN trade. As comparison, Sino-ASEAN trade totaled about 362.9 billion US dollars in 2011, which constituted an increase by nearly 24 percent compared to 2010. Although these numbers show China’s trade dominance with Southeast Asia, the foundation of the ASEAN-Indian Free Trade Agreement (AIFTA) in 2010 was a “milestone” achievement of India’s Look East Policy. Furthermore, some scholars point to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) as another opportunity for Indian
integration into the Southeast-Asian trade network. India’s increased trade with its eastern neighbors, along with agreements like RCEP and the AIFTA, are essential for New Delhi’s attempt to balance China in the region. As the Indian economy continues to grow, its Look East Policy will make cooperation with India even more appealing to the ASEAN nations.

The second and more recent tenant of LEP aims to improve security cooperation within Southeast Asia. In fact, under current Prime Minister Modi, the Look East Policy has transitioned into an “Act East” policy, meaning that Indian actions in Southeast Asia have intensified in both economic and strategic scope. While the original Look East Policy focused primarily on the economic benefits of trade with ASEAN, this Act East policy stance responds to China’s growing security presence in the region. New Delhi has endorsed an open, inclusive, and “polycentric” security environment in Southeast Asia. In addition, the unofficial Act East policy includes increased defense spending and political engagements with ASEAN, such as the provision of patrol vessels and lines of credit to the region. The increasingly active Indian security cooperation with ASEAN nations, along with its economic integration, contrasts significantly with Indian policy in bilateral relations. New Delhi will likely become a serious regional player, and in the process, it may be able to force some deference from China in the region. This reversal in asymmetry—or, more likely, evening of asymmetry—results in part from the addition of actors in regional balancing. Involvement with ASEAN nations will determine the future of India and China’s ability to balance, and potentially cooperate, in Southeast Asia.

Looking at China’s attitude towards the Look East Policy, a 2011 editorial in the official newspaper of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA), PLA Daily, argued that New Delhi’s new security posture was an attempt to contain China. While public discourse acknowledges India’s growing regional influence, Beijing’s criticism of LEP often contains doubt that India will become an active regional leader. The asymmetric power balance theory, therefore, still exists at the regional level at least to the extent that China has yet to see India as a challenger to its own regional goals. Nonetheless, security and economic competition renders the regional forum more promising for the equalization of Sino-Indian asymmetry than the bilateral forum.
Southeast Asia, the former may eventually defer to the growing power of the latter—thus defying Womack’s theory.

**Forum 3: Coexistence in a Multipolar World Order**

The third and final forum of Sino-Indian relations is multilateralism. As discussed above, domestic border disputes enforced Womack’s theory of asymmetric power politics, and changes in regional balancing present nascent transformations in how the states cooperate and compete with each other. However, their participation in global policy forums like the BRICS and Bretton Woods institutions marks a new evolution of how China and India see each other. These two emerging powers share an interest in multipolarity, and through both the expansion of Indian soft power and the global restraints on Chinese actions, New Delhi can defy the asymmetry defining their relationship today. In a truly multipolar global system, India will no longer ask for recognized autonomy from China, and China will no longer be able to demand deference from India.

*Soft Power in BRICS Leadership*

The BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—challenge the traditional division between developing and developed countries. Two of these nations—India and China—distinguish themselves from the other three members of this abbreviation, for their population and economic growth have made them models for other developing countries. As stated at the fourth BRICS summit in New Delhi in 2012, the member countries present a platform “for dialogue and cooperation amongst countries that represent 43 percent of the world’s population, for the promotion of peace, security and development in a multi-polar, inter-dependent and increasingly complex, globalizing world.” With the BRICS nations accounting for about half of global economic growth today, cooperation between India and China will be essential to bring global attention to developing-country interests. Strong leadership is required for the BRICS to succeed, and it thus presents an opportunity for India to challenge Chinese economic domination with normative appeals to other developing countries.
Starting with Beijing’s approach to the BRICS, many Chinese scholars see the forum as a pathway to challenge traditional United States (US) hegemony. Promising to never act as a hegemony, Chinese foreign policy has historically centered on the autonomy of all nations. To achieve autonomy and a multipolar system, Chinese scholars point to two key trends that must occur: first, a high level of global economic and financial integration; and second, the multipolarization of global politics. The focus on economic integration explains China’s collaboration with the other BRICS powers, whose simultaneous growth is essential to the challenge of the current US-dominated world order. In contrast with China’s outwardly anti-Western attitude, India’s approach to the BRICS—along with the Group of 20 (G-20)—has primarily addressed issues of economic and political global governance in general. This difference in approach to the BRICS marks a key opportunity for India to represent developing nations in a way that China has failed to do so. Because the BRICS institutions represent a new world order with greater power in the hands of developing nations, New Delhi should focus on harnessing its soft power to advance its position among the BRICS.

Joseph Nye, who first established the theory of soft power in international relations, defines it as the “attraction that makes others want what you want.” Soft power differs from coercion, or what Nye calls “sticks,” and economic payment, or “carrots,” in that it rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others to align with one’s own. Following to a certain extent their overall visions of the BRICS, Indian and Chinese soft-power strategy will be a key determinant in their leadership of other developing nations. For instance, China’s soft power relies heavily on the appeal of its growing economy, which coincides with expanded Chinese foreign investment and humanitarian aid in developing countries. On the other hand, being the world’s largest democracy, Indian soft power derives from its image as a political model for developing nations. Amit Kumar Gupta explains that India’s soft-power strategy has also centered on capacity building among developing nations, whereas China primarily directs its resources towards infrastructure building. If India continues to distinguish itself from China as a democratic state that works to improve the political and economic capacity of its fellow developing countries, it will strengthen both its soft power and its leadership presence among the BRICS. Womack’s theory, which focuses on the physical or economic size of states, fails to
consider the role soft power plays in the relative global positions of states. In some cases, relative soft power can be more important to a state’s ability to cooperate multilaterally than pure economic power, which is essential to India’s emerging leadership in the BRICS.

_Bretton Woods, Multipolarity, and Mutual Interests_

In addition to soft power in BRICS leadership, the Bretton Woods institutions reveal the shared stakes China and India have in multipolarity. Because Chinese scholars see global economic integration as a necessary element for multipolarity, Beijing’s critiques of the Bretton Woods institutions provide insight into Chinese multilateral strategy. For instance, Beijing has criticized the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank for their lack of transparency and slow pace of voting-rights reform, which favor the US and other Western powers based on their monetary contribution to the institution. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) are direct responses to the lack of reform of these Bretton Woods institutions, respectively. Finally, exposing the tension between Beijing’s vision for international trade and that of Washington, D.C., China has been involved in more anti-dumping and countervailing trade disputes in the World Trade Organization (WTO) than expected at its entry. Overall, Beijing’s approach to challenging these Bretton Woods institutions exposes its attempts to balance the US and Europe.

Arndt Michael calls India’s approach to multipolarity and global institutions “Panchsheel Multilateralism,” which refers back to New Delhi’s emphasis on peaceful coexistence as outlined in its 1954 agreement with China. Following the ideal of multipolar peaceful coexistence of all states, Indian discourse in regards to the Bretton Woods institutions focuses on the democratization of the decision-making process. In the IMF, India has criticized the slow pace of voting rights reform similar to China, but it has also called for more general reform of the governance structure, to improve equality among states parties. Next, New Delhi has demanded that World Bank policy become friendlier to developing societies and economies. Finally, India has faced anti-dumping and countervailing trade disputes in the WTO, but in contrast with China, complaints have rarely come from the US and Europe. For India, the Bretton Woods
institutions, thus, provide an opportunity to promote greater equality between the global North and South.

Although Sino-Indian competition still exists at the global level, the root of their interests in reform lies in one shared goal: multipolarity. Whether the world eventually follows India’s norm-based, Panchsheel Multilateralism or China’s economic-based, anti-Western multilateralism, both powers’ stakes in multipolarity create a policy forum for Sino-Indian cooperation. Neither India nor China can reform institutions like those of Bretton Woods without the other, so the intersection of multilateral interests defies Womack’s theory of asymmetric power balancing. If we base Sino-Indian relations solely on each state’s size or economic might, China would be Womack’s state A, or the large power. However, with the addition of variables like soft power and shared interests, India becomes more important to China’s long-term policy goals. As the difference in power between the two states diminishes on the multilateral stage, China can no longer expect complete deference from India. Womack’s asymmetry theory crumbles in this third forum, which explains why multilateralism is the ideal forum for Sino-Indian relations. Not only does the division between Indian and Chinese power diminish in global interactions, but the likelihood of conflict falls with multilateral cooperation compared to borders disputes. With widening mutual interests, the multilateral forum increases the costs of non-cooperation, therefore forcing both India and China to cooperate in ways unlikely in their bilateral and regional relations.

**Conclusion**

Brantly Womack’s theory of asymmetric power relations predicts that when power asymmetries exist, a larger power will demand deference and a smaller power will demand autonomy. Applying Womack’s theory to Sino-Indian relations at the bilateral, regional, and multilateral level, this paper found that an asymmetric power balance primarily exists in the first of these three policy forums. Regional and multilateral competition mark a transition in the balance between India and China, in which the costs of non-cooperation expand with the number of external state actors and the overlapping of political interests. Consequently, the larger the cost of non-cooperation, the less asymmetric both players become. New Delhi and Beijing may still
see each other as competitors, but the future symmetry of Sino-Indian relations lies in their ability to peacefully balance and collaborate multilaterally. Cooperation has already occurred, and will likely continue, in this third forum of their complex relationship. As former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh emphasized in various speeches, the world does have enough space for the growth ambitions of India and China, and this space begins with their participation in multilateral institutions.76
Notes


2 The legal definition of forum shopping is as follows: “when a party attempts to have his action tried in a particular court or jurisdiction where he feels he will receive the most favorable judgment or verdict.” For more information on legal applications of this theory, see: Rita F. Rothschild, “Forum Shopping,” Litigation 24, no. 3 (1998): 40, http://www.jstor.org/stable/29759995 (accessed December 9, 2017).


4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., 539.

7 Ibid.


9 Ibid.


12 Arndt Michael, “Panchsheel-Multilateralism and Competing Regionalism: The Indian Approach towards Regional Cooperation and the Regional Order in South Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, and the Mekong-Ganga,” in India’s Approach to Asia: Strategy, Geopolitics and Responsibility, ed. Namrata Goswami (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2016), 38.


14 Maxwell, 3877.

15 Sikri, 57.


17 Sikri, 65.


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 10.


23 Ibid., 45.

24 Ibid.


26 Ibid., 73.

27 Ibid., 79.


30 Ibid.

31 L. Gordon Flake et al., *Realising the Indo-Pacific: Tasks for India's Regional Integration* (Crawley: Perth USAsia Centre at The University of Western Australia, 2017), 18.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., 15.

34 Ibid., 16.

35 Ibid.


37 Ibid.

38 Zhongying and Sapkota, 223.


41 Flake et al., 33.

42 Ibid.

43 Ghoshal, 26.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid., 57.

47 Flake et al., 52.

48 Ibid., 34.

49 Ibid., 36.

50 Ghoshal, 47.

51 Flake et al., 19.

52 Ghoshal, 146.

53 Ibid., 55.

54 It is outside the scope of this paper to analyze India and China’s participation in all multilateral institutions. However, I focus on the BRICS because it represents a key challenge to Western-dominated institutions for both India and China; and on the Bretton Woods institutions because both powers have outwardly critiqued the structure of these organizations. For more information on issues like India’s bid to be a permanent member on the United Nations Security Council and China’s response, see: Panda, *India-China Relations: Politics of Resources, Identity and Authority in a Multipolar World Order*, 251.


56 Ibid.


59 Ibid., 203.


61 Ibid.
The Soft Power 30 Annual Report ranks countries with the strongest global soft power. In 2017, the report placed China in the twenty-fifth ranking, while India did not make it into ranking list of thirty nations. However, India’s soft power specifically among developing nations is still an essential element in its ability to challenge Chinese economic dominance in the BRICS. More information on the Soft Power 30 rankings can be found at: “The Soft Power 30,” USC Center on Public Diplomacy, https://softpower30.com (accessed December 9, 2017).


See introduction for a full explanation of the asymmetric power theory.

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63 Ibid., 48.
64 Ibid., 53.
65 The Soft Power 30 Annual Report ranks countries with the strongest global soft power. In 2017, the report placed China in the twenty-fifth ranking, while India did not make it into ranking list of thirty nations. However, India’s soft power specifically among developing nations is still an essential element in its ability to challenge Chinese economic dominance in the BRICS. More information on the Soft Power 30 rankings can be found at: “The Soft Power 30,” USC Center on Public Diplomacy, https://softpower30.com (accessed December 9, 2017).
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
69 Michael, 36.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid., 243.
73 Ibid.
75 See introduction for a full explanation of the asymmetric power theory.
76 Dingli, 142.