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# India's Role in Mongolia's Third Neighbor Policy

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*SIT Study Abroad*

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Brandon Joseph Miliate  
SIT: Mongolia Fall 2009  
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**Abstract:**

Mongolia's Third Neighbor policy is receiving much attention from international scholars. This dynamic policy is an effort on the part of the Mongolian nation to balance the influence from its two huge neighbors, the Peoples' Republic of China and the Russian Federation. While this policy was formulated in the early years of Mongolia's transition to a market economy and democracy, the whole concept of additional neighbors beyond the physically geographical sense has something of a long history, especially in respects to one nation in particular- India- the countries spiritual neighbor. The ties between the two countries are as dynamic as they are historical. This paper seeks to establish a basic constructional understanding of these relations, while at the same time looking specifically at the current role of India and Mongolia in each other's foreign policies.

**Introduction:**

It is the opinion of the author that Mongolia's third neighbor policy is in the interest of both Mongolia and India. While other nations, such as the US, may have similar reasons for relations with Mongolia, India's own developing status leaves it at a much more critical line of threat from growing Chinese influence. Additionally, India as a country and collection of related cultures is attempting to spread its soft power through out the region to counter China's role in most of Asia. Chinese influence in Central Asia is quickly catching up with the Russified history of the region, Southeast Asia appears to be in between India and China for the time being, and India's own South Asian dominance is also being encroached upon with the issue of Tibet, Pakistan-Chinese relations, and the vulnerability of such de facto protectorates as Nepal and Bhutan. Mongolia then can appear as a country where Chinese influence is resisted (vainly?), a nearby democracy, and a nation with already favorable ties with the Indian subcontinent through religion and past Indian-USSR relations.

For Mongolia the benefit is even clearer. Beyond the already expanded upon issue of China, Mongolia is already seeing benefits of relations with India from trade deals ranging from India's world-class IT sector to a budding nuclear deal. Energy independence may be a the new trendy issue in international relations, but Mongolia is only too aware of its dependence on Russian gas as well the net-value of its energy trade with China in coal and other mineral resources. Mongolia's contribution to the world's copper supply is also an important factor in supplying the IT sector, potentially of India. Recent

diplomatic gestures such as state visits and the celebration of 50 years of diplomatic relations have led to a cutting of visa requirements for diplomatic and official passport holders, culture development agreements, and even the naming of a street in Mongolia as Gandhi Street, and the street leading to New Delhi Airport in India as Ulaanbaatar Street (BBC 2005).

India is one the world's fastest growing economies as well as the largest democracy in history. As part of the Western discourse in the rise of Asia (centering on India and China), it has also been placed in a position of competition with China. Mongolia's complex relations with China as well as its unique foreign policy leaves India and Mongolia in a situation where bilateral ties will be increasingly helpful and politically appropriate. My limitations in time will be best dealt with in keeping the project as a larger overview, rather than looking into too many specifics and historical constructions. Research such as this proposal is essential to maintain a fresh outlook on both countries foreign policies as well as looking at the relations between developing countries as part of their own historic bloc.

**Discussion:**

In looking at the dynamics of the current Indian-Mongolian relationship, the foreign policy of each state as well as the general history of relations should be understood. By looking at the foreign policy one can better understand where each state fits with the other. Mongolia's foreign policy represents that of a small

developing state between two powerful neighbors, while India formulates its own policy as a growing power in the Asian region.

Mongolian foreign policy is constructed with a firm eye on the security of the country. Mongolian national interests focus on the preservation of the Mongolian people and their civilization, the country's independence, territorial integrity, and relative economic independence. Following on these four themes, Mongolia's concept of security is broken into nine sectors: existence, social order and state system, citizen's rights and freedoms, economic concerns, scientific and technological development, information security, preservation of Mongolian civilization, protection of the population and gene pool, and ecological security. These are then further divided into internal and external, plus time markers such as immediate, temporary, long-term, or permanent. All of these are ensured by social, political, organizational, economic, diplomatic, military, intelligence, legal, unilateral, and international co-operations.

In respect to the topic of Indian-Mongolian relations, four of these factors seem particularly relevant: existence, economic, scientific/technological, and concerns of civilization. Mongolia perceives its existence as reliant on peace in its immediate region as well as the general Asian-Pacific region. To this extent one can see that Mongolia is only too aware of its past. The security papers clearly state that the country's existence would be in peril should it be turned into a satellite state, or if the country experienced a huge surge in immigration (i.e. China). Economic security to Mongolia means the avoidance of direct dependence on any one country, sharp increases in foreign citizens in the



workforce; it also looks at maintaining access to seaports outside of its own territory. Scientific and technological security is meant to ensure priority development to artificial intelligence management and biotechnology development. Special attention is paid to electronics and renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. Finally, Mongolia is striving to develop an integrated telecommunications network, which is seen as critical to the continued development of the country. Mongolia's seventh security concern is focused on the preservation of perceived Mongolian uniqueness. To this end the government recognizes two threats on completely different sides of the scale. The first threat would be the emergence of a watering-down of Mongolian culture so that the country's political, economical, and/or socio-cultural policies were driven by a foreign culture. The second threat is the exaggeration of Mongolia's own history to such an extent that it could lead to isolation of the nation and its people. Many of these factors reflect the realities of Mongolia's long history of engagement with its two neighbors as they exerted varying degrees of control over the small nation.

Mongolia's foreign policy takes into account all the factors of the nation's security policy. Much of the written policy is focused on Mongolia's immediate neighbors. To this end the state will not interfere in conflicts between Russia and China unless such a conflict affects the nation directly and will avoid military alliances against either. The second direction is relations with highly developed countries from the East and West, such as the United States, Japan, and Germany. Also, the country will maintain friendly relations with India, South Korea,

Thailand, Singapore, Turkey, Denmark, Netherlands, Finland, Austria, Sweden, and Switzerland in an appropriate level according to economic and other considerations. The third direction: integration into regional regimes in the Asia-Pacific, Northeast and Central Asia, as well as with international organizations such as the UN, IMF, WB, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Mongolia will maintain friendly relations with former and currently communist/socialist states with which it enjoys a positive legacy; however, the nation will develop relations according to the new international political reality. The final direction of Mongolia's foreign policy is keeping up a continued dialogue with other developing countries through mediums such as the G77, UN, and Non-Aligned Movement (MFA webpage). Mongolia essentially seeks to maintain good relations on a global scale, while continuing to develop its own culture, language, and tradition.

India's foreign policy reflects India's status as a rising power and its need for regional and continental representation. Indian foreign policy is said to favor five principles: conventional security, economic growth, energy security, nuclear capability/non-proliferation, and prestige security (Dormandy 1). Like Mongolia, India's colonialized past clearly drives some of the nation's diplomacy. As a founder of the NAM it has some degree of clout and "moral authority". Also like Mongolia, India was in need of good relations with the West after the fall of the Soviet Union. Other characteristics of Indian foreign policy include the following:

- Weary of regional interference and deployment of military (without UN auspices) after situation in Sri Lanka in the 1980s;

- Third-largest provider of peacekeeping forces to the UN;
- India seeks more integration outside of its traditional role in South Asia, as China engages Pakistan, Myanmar, and even Sri Lanka. [Integration would focus on involvement in regional organizations such as the East-Asian Summit (which Malaysia and China are accused of purposefully keeping India out), as well as closer engagement with ASEAN and the ARF].

Additionally, New Delhi is keen to integrate itself into the larger Asian international regimes such as APEC and ASEAN/ARF. However, the lack of any comprehensive, wide-ranging security agreement, such as that provided to Europe by the EU, complicates relations between all Asian states and regional actors (Rapkin and Thompson 332).

Having established the base for each country in their relations internationally, historical factors to the relationship must be taken into account. Mongolian contacts with India consist of ancient civilizational ties and modern state-to-state relations. Ties between them are generally agreed to have started 2700-3000 years ago. These connections are largely the result of the spread of Buddhism through Tibet, into Central Asia and Mongolia. Mongolians originally referred to India not as *Энэтхэг* but as *Жагар*, making reference to India as the location of Buddha's birth and enlightenment. Keeping this in mind, Mongolia and India are often said to be at the two ends of the Buddhist arc: the southern and northern. Northern India, namely the Himalayan regions such as Sikkim and Bhutan, contains a large

demographic of Mongoloid peoples. These Mongoloid peoples are cited as evidence of old migrations of Mongolians into what is now considered Indian territory. There is some evidence to support actual cultural ties in the form of national sports-wrestling- and even some linguistic ties despite lack of any mutual intelligibility. Other ancient ties are cited in the *Mahabhrata*, where Kirata people (an Indo-Mongolian ethnic group) are mentioned by name (Nyamdavaa 14). Although it is important to mention that in Sanskrit, Kirata doesn't refer to a specific group but rather is used to describe all forest peoples not part of the larger Sanskrit society.

As with anything Mongolian, Chingis Khaan and the Mongolian Empire is a factor to be considered when discussing Indo-Mongolian relations. In this topic, there are both legendary references and actual physical evidence of ancient relations between the two great powers. It is said that there are two reasons Chingis Khaan never invaded India:

- 1) It was too hot for his tastes so he turned and invaded west into Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- 2) When the army was preparing to invade Northern India, a deer came up to the great Khaan and fell in front of him. According to Buddhist animalistic tradition, this would be considered a sign not to continue with the expedition (as dictated by Nedi: Officer of Affairs).

While such stories are nice reading material, there is a physical testament to Mongol-Indian ties during this time period. In New Delhi there is a district called Mongol Puri, or Mongolian town. Historical sources point to the King Jalaluddin

as the source of this district. It might well be that in an attempt to solve the problem of Mongol invasions into his territory, the King may have resorted to the time test method of matrimonial alliance. These same Mongols would then have concentrated in one district where they received special treatment and encouragement to settle in the city (Nyamdavaa 15) . This established a lasting line of Mongolians in Dehli.

Modern state-to-state relations between Mongolia and India are divided into four distinct parts by scholar and diplomat O. Nyamdavaa, according to times in Mongolia's own contemporary historical development and India's rise onto the world stage. While Mongolia may have gained formal independence from Manchu rule in 1911, India did not become a sovereign nation until 1947, this belated the formation of diplomatic relations until 1947. Soon after independence, the Asian Relations Conference was held in Delhi. A Mongolian delegation attended the conference and basic level contacts were established between the two states.

Formal diplomatic relations were declared December 24, 1955. This communique became realized with the Mongolian Embassy in New Dehli in 1956, and the Indian Embassy in Ulaanbaatar in 1970. This beginning of formal diplomacy developed into something of a small scale Mongolian-Indian bloc, where India campaigned tirelessly for the inclusion of Mongolia into the United Nations, along with regular high-level visits between the two. The third phase in relational development is marked by the signing of the «Joint Indo-Mongol Declaration» during the second official visit of Prime Minister Yu. Tsendenbal of

the Mongolian Peoples' Republic to India in 1973. This declaration established the eight guiding principles of Indo-Mongolian relations:

- 1) Development cooperation in the fields of politics, economics, culture, science, and technology
- 2) Peaceful co-existence (between states with different socio-political systems
- 3) Independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity
- 4) Equality and non-interference
- 5) Renunciation of the use of force in disputes
- 6) Cooperation in the UN and other international organizations
- 7) Peaceful and friendly relations between the Asian states and Mongolia and India.
- 8) Regular mutual consultations

Many of these same principles are backbones of Mongolian and Indian foreign policy to-date. In 1988 during the President of the Republic of India, Ramaswami Venkataraman's visit to Mongolia a two-year agreement on cooperation in scientific and technological spheres particularly as those fields apply to agriculture as well as general research and educational endeavors was signed. In 1989, the Mongolian Studies department was established in Jawaharlal Nehru University as a result of the earlier mentioned agreement. These agreements paved the way for the newly democratic Mongolia and increasingly powerful India to establish their current relationships as part of (but also a continuation of, to some extent) Mongolia's "third neighbor policy".

Modern Mongolian diplomacy is characterized by the Third Neighbor policy. This policy was the result of a remark made by a US Secretary of State on visiting the newly democratic Mongolia in the early 1990s. While the statement was that the United States of America would be a third-neighbor to Mongolia, it was quickly picked up and reinterpreted by Mongolian policy makers. As stated above, Mongolian foreign policy already declares that Mongolia will focus attention on developing friendly locations with states beyond its immediate/powerful neighbors. This policy was then titled the “third neighbor policy” under which Mongolia could strive to overcome its physical geographical location and increase its security internationally. To this end, Mongolia enjoys very close relations with the USA, Japan, South Korea, as well as developing countries such as the Southeast Asian nations (particularly in its involvement in ASEAN, ARF, etc.) and the Republic of India. India’s role in Mongolian diplomacy and Mongolia’s role in India’s under the distinctly modern notion of “third neighbor” politics encompasses a variety of topics and issues. These relations are focused in many sectors, the most important of which are often cited as information technology, education, biotechnology, agriculture, pharmacy, mining and other natural resources, and cultural ties (Anil K. 8).

In any close state-to-state relations, treaties become the central pillars of determining the direction of development between the states in question. The first treaty between a democratic Mongolia and India was signed in 1994: the Treaty of Friendly Relations and Cooperation. This treaty contained a total of twelve articles that are a continuation of the principles set forward in the joint declaration

of 1973, revised to fit the new realities of the global political sphere. Article 1 continues the idea of territorial integrity, sovereignty, non-violence/interference, equality, and mutual benefit. The second defines the above-mentioned spheres of cooperation. Article 3 sets a precedent for networking among the governments and public institutions of both countries. The fourth through ninth articles define the settings and nature of the cooperation, which is in line with Mongolia's own foreign policy of bi/multi-lateral relations and work in institutions such as the UN, NAM, etc. Article 10 declares the treaty subject or ratification, while article 11 and 12 set the timeframe of validity to the document and allow for amending, respectively (Nyamdavaa 140). The same year two other important documents were signed: the Agreement Between the Government of Mongolia and the Government of the Republic of India for the Establishment of a Joint Committee on Cooperation; Agreement Between the Government of Mongolia and the Government of the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes and Income and on Capital. While the titles of these agreements are rather drawn-out and exhausting, both serve a definite purpose. The first one establishes long-term relations between the nations encouraging fresh engagement and discussion on areas of cooperation. The second of them sets a foundation for the free, fair and uninterrupted development of economic ties between the two countries (Nyamdavaa 146-168). Over the past 15 years, many other documents and treaties have developed out of Indo-Mongolian cooperation efforts, building on the well-formulated articles of the 1994 agreements.



Mongolia has benefited tremendously from cooperation with India in the field of defense and other military concerns. Mongolia has been restructuring their military into an effective peacekeeping force for UN missions worldwide. India as the third largest supplier of forces to the UN is an excellent partner for Mongolia in training for such missions (Soni 56). Mongolia and India have recently started conducting several joint military trainings and war-games. The first of these was Khaan Quest 2006, where seven nations jointly conducted exercises. These seven nations were India, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Fiji, Thailand, Tonga, and the USA). The next year Khaan Quest was held again this time with Russia, Malaysia, and Japan attending as observers. The third of such games was Nomadic Elephant, the most recent. In India itself, trainings are conducted at the Jungle Warfare School at Vairangte near the northeast border with Myanmar.

China criticized the developments as a disguise for conducting counter-terrorism operations near or even beyond its border with India (Soni 57). While this seems unlikely, Mongolia and India have taken a joint statement on terrorism. The two countries issued a joint statement in January 2001, condemning terrorism and religious fundamentalism irrespective of the socio-political considerations used in its justification (Soni 55). Although, one has to wonder why China would be suspicious of such activity considering its own counter-terrorism role in the SCO. The India-Mongolia Joint Working Group commented on cooperation in the field of defense stating that the two ancient civilizations enjoy strong historical ties and that Mongolia stands to benefit from Indian experience in modernizing its military. Also, India provides training in English language, a de facto requirement

of internationally lead peacekeeping forces. For its part, India's traditional South Asian centric security policies are being expanded into East Asia and the Pacific as well as a northward movement into Central Asia. With an ever increasing liberal interpretation of regional security it may well be the case that East Asia as a division could expand into South Asia and northward to include Russia and Mongolia, bringing into question the whole issue of geographical divisions in an increasingly transnational world.

The Mongolian state has invested a lot of diplomatic time into ensuring it is declared an officially nuclear weapon free area. Mongolia's nuclear free status, and working towards a nuclear free Central Asia is seen as imperative to the country's continued existence. Mongolia perceives its nuclear-free status as a key indication of its neutrality between the nuclear-armed Russia and China (Bayasgalan). A potential complication to Mongolia's nuclear-free status is the large amount of uranium reserves in Mongolia's territory. As with many capital producing economic considerations in today's Mongolia, mining, in this case of uranium, is potentially profitable for Mongolia and very useful to energy starved India. Mongolia is the sixth nation to sign a civil nuclear pact with India since the 34 year-old ban on such agreements with the republic was lifted recently (BBC 2009). The other six nations range from superpowers to developing countries in line with Mongolia: the USA, Russia, France, Kazakhstan, and Namibia. The agreement, known formally as the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Development of Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Use of Radioactive Minerals and Nuclear Energy, establishes a priority to Indian mining co-operations trading

in uranium for access to Mongolia's resources. The fact that such a deal was signed with India, as opposed to Russia or China who already have high stakes in the Mongolian mining sector reflects two important considerations. Firstly, that Mongolia recognizes the need to develop economic deals with a diverse array of countries- as can be guessed from security and foreign policy concerns. Secondly, signing such a deal with India is a direct usage of the third-neighbor concept allowing for continued neutrality between Mongolia and its physical neighbors. Indeed, should Mongolia have provided uranium to either one of its neighbors calls into questioning the reasoning for demanding official nuclear-free status as either country could use the uranium to increase its own nuclear capabilities for use against the other.

At around the same time as the MoU was being drafted, India announced that it would be providing Mongolia with a soft loan in the amount of \$25 million for stabilization of the nation's economy following the world economic crisis, as well as a \$20 million project loan specifically for development of the nation's IT sector and livestock holdings (Negi). Continuing with hard economic relations, Mongolia is also host to about 25 Indian-owned businesses. Despite these signs of economic integration, trade and other business dealings between the two countries is limited in comparison to the huge influence of China. China's relatively huge trade volume with Mongolia is not only due to physical proximity, but also to the poor state of infrastructure in the greater Asian continent. Mongolia's railway connections can only run north into Russia and as far south as Beijing. Lack of seaports located on its territory also hampers the diversity of trade relations

Mongolia can feasibly handle. This is especially relevant considering Mongolia's expressed desire to partner with India more in the area of pharmacy. Mongolia actually does stock Indian pharmaceutical products, but those products are purchased not directly from the subcontinent, but through Russian pharmaceutical traders and suppliers (Nyamdavaa 19). Business relations between the countries, while on the rise, does not provide as much to both sides as is could.

Unlike business relations, educational links between Mongolia and India are developing well as each country's historical ties produce mutual interests in academic and professional circles. The first cultural exchange program to come out of Indo-Mongolian cooperation was the exchange of faculty from the National University of Mongolia (NUM) to Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi. Unfortunately, this program was closed in the mid-1970s, but not before it could produce a range of Indian studies scholars at NUM, including Professor Enkhbayar Byambanorov. Other programs quickly took its place with a current number of about 1000 Mongolian students studying in India at any given time (Negi). The main studies conducted by such students are in the IT sector or English. ITEC students are funded through a specific fellowship, and the Cultural Exchange Program provides scholarships to students in other disciplines. In Mongolia itself, India has established a Communication and IT Institute as well as a Joint Mongolia-India high school taught by Indian teachers. These educational ties are further diversified with the Art and Production School named after Rajiv Gandhi in Ulaanbaatar. Education of Buddhist monks in India or on Indian culture (Sanskrit, Pali, Dharma, etc.) is also an indication of private, religious educational

cooperation. Gandan Hiid, for example, has been giving additional emphasis in its educational programs to Sanskrit along with Tibetan to develop a more rounded spiritual education for its pupils.

India is Mongolia's spiritual neighbor. This will be the statement encountered most frequently than any other by any researcher in Indo-Mongolian relations. Its frequency is testimony to its inherent correctness. This declaration is the result of Mongolia's adoption of Tibetan Buddhism, which like all forms of Buddhism cannot be wholly removed from India and its religious traditions and myth. Mongolians have absorbed some aspects of Indian culture directly through Buddhism. For example, the River Ganga is holy to Mongols and they will refer to a lucky person as Гангажал (this term may not appear in contemporary speech). Also, monastic feudalism was implemented as the working governmental structure for Mongolia up until the fall of Bogd Khaan's regime in 1911. This tradition develops out of India onto the Tibetan plateau and northward into Mongolia. Considering that this feudalism was cited as a direct reason for the revolution of 1921 and later declaration of communist state, India's historical ties to Mongolia may run even deeper than originally thought. Contemporary ties with India on the basis of religion are limited to the private sector of both secular nations. In India, a Mongolian operated monastery was open in Bogh Gaya, while in Mongolia itself, the previous ambassador from the Republic of India, Pethub Stangey Choskorling, personally funded the foundation of a monastery near Gandan Hiid with his name sake. This monastery now runs independently with its own traditional hospital and boarding facilities for its monks. A few years after its

completion, it was even blessed by the Dalai Lama and inaugurated by the Vice-President of India on 26, August 1999.

As a spiritual neighbor, Indian-based, religiously oriented organizations run a host of humanitarian efforts both in Ulaanbaatar and throughout the country. The research for this paper partnered largely with the neo-humanist organization Ananda Marga. This organization works worldwide providing disaster relief, spreading non-denominational Dharmic knowledge, as well as working in socio-economic development. The founder of Ananda Marga is also the political theorist that presented PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) as a way of dealing with capitalist and communist inadequacies and providing a balanced world economic framework. The organization itself is split into two parts divided sexually: the monks and the nuns. In Mongolia, the monks' organization is focused on providing education in yoga and meditation, but, more relevant to this paper, they also organize regular donational handouts in Ulaanbaatar's impoverished ger districts. These distributions take the form of food, blankets, clothes, etc. The nuns operate a far more established institution. The first nun from the organization to begin work in Mongolia, Didi Ananda Kalika, arrived in Mongolia for the first time 16 years ago. In that time she has established an internationally acclaimed orphanage, Lotus Children's Center. The center provides food and housing to homeless and/or abandoned children in Ulaanbaatar, as well as a recently opened primary school. Despite constant issues of corruption and odd legalities on the side of Mongolian authorities, Didi has managed to collect a consistent donor base, as well as continue expansion of the services and children

her organization can provide for. While the nuns and monks are responsible for funding all their own projects (they don't receive any funding from the central organizational authority), all four people that I met with from the organization cited Mongolia's Buddhist traditions and long history of respect for India as key reasons for the support they receive from the community.

The political implications of these spiritual relations have positive and negative implications. Firstly, it was stated by Pethub Stangey Choskorling that the reemergence of Buddhism in Mongolia «shall prevail again and bring peace» to the nation. This statement is somewhat problematic as it implies that Buddhism is a key criteria in Mongolia's development. While it is important that Mongolian cultural traditions are revived and encouraged in a Mongol-driven manner, it is odd that this religious tradition would be such a strong factor as to promote peace. This may seem irrelevant, except when one reads another text stating the Buddhism united and civilized Mongolia as well as providing Indian philosophical knowledge on astrology, poetry, art, and medicine (Soni 51). I am uncertain as to the point was such bold statements made by scholars from both sides. Beyond this theoretical and dissecting argument, the simple tie to politically sensitive Tibet is a concern in Sino-Mongolian relations as it is in Sino-Indian relations.

The Chinese factor in Mongolia and India's foreign relations is a driving force in Mongolian-Indian relations. Officer of Affairs, R.L. Negi at the Indian Embassy in Ulaanbaatar gave me a one statement course on international diplomacy: A nation should always cultivate friendly and deep relations with the

neighbors of its most powerful neighbors. Ignoring that this is the most condensed and most completely correct method of how to work diplomacy to your greatest advantage, it has real meaning when one considers Mongolia, India, and China and the lines of intersection of each bilateral tie between them. China enjoys good relations with many South and Southeast Asian nations, most notably: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia. Three of these countries share a border with India, and the two that don't (Thailand and Cambodia) are part of India's traditional region of power projection: Southeast Asia. Interestingly, all five of these countries provide ports to Chinese military as part of China's «String of Pearls» project (Rapkin and Thompson 353). This project is a reflection of rising Chinese influence and its need to project itself militarily through special relational agreements with nearby coastal countries. The officer's comments seem extremely relevant.

This whole approach to international relations is actually of extreme benefit to Mongolia. Mongolia is China's main northern neighbor. (Here I use *main* as a reference to total length of the borders in question as well as in consideration of the fact that Russia is often incorporated in the Asian security delimitations). If we accept this statement as well the general realist reasoning behind state relations we see that all of Mongolia's third neighbors stand to profit from engagement with the small, underdeveloped, under-populated nation. China is also the most powerful and most threatening nation to Japan, South Korea and the USA. Therefore, it is essential that those countries make friends with Mongolia as a way of countering Chinese threat and providing some level of strategic



counterweight. This remains true even when one considers the declarations between Mongolia and China not to allow the use of their territory for actions to be taken against the other. All countries with good relations in Mongolia stand to profit from not allowing Mongolia to become dominated economically or ethnically by China, allowing for diversification of the greater Asian economy and freeing it from complete domination by a very capitalist, communist nation.

At one point, India was considering establishing an airbase to provide strategic leverage in Central Asia and to compliment its currently inactive base in Tajikistan (Sharma 1). This is a direct response to China's «String of Pearls» and its encircling of India militarily and politically. Indian relations with China are complicated by matters of Tibet, Kashmir, and other territorial considerations. During the Sino-Indian war of 1962, over disputed territorial demarcations including Arunachal Pradesh, the ceasefire agreement resulted in little change to borders and left the Pradesh in a still questionable position. (Recent activity and militarization on both sides of the border is a growing concern, although probably more a show of force than actual military engagement). China's punishing of India over alleged border transgressions is the type of behavior usually displayed by newly ascendent regional hegemons are prone. It is an effort to declare the international pecking order. India's top security concern was expressed by the republic not as Pakistan, but China in a recent statement. Other issues such as Tibet and the basing of the Tibetan Government in Exile in Dharmasala, with the notorious Dalai Lama are shared concerns of both India and Mongolia.

Under Mongolia's various agreements with the Peoples' Republic of China, the country is required to direct relations in such a way as to imply compliance with the «One-China Policy» (Soni 10). To this end, Mongolia is forced in recognizing Tibet as part of China or lose its economic contact with the former. In 2002, the Dalai Lama visited Mongolia on a spiritual mission. China, not willing to allow such things so close to its borders, immediately halted traffic between itself and Mongolia for several days, highlighting the need for consistent movement of materials along this border, in case the Mongolian authorities forgot on this requirement to their national economy. This reflects the dissymmetry of China's relations, where Mongolia stands to lose more from any Chinese trade issue, and China is only moderately impacted with many alternatives. Mongolia's ties with Tibet are as ancient as they are with India. In reality, Tibet is probably much more Mongolia's spiritual neighbor than India, but politically Tibet cannot engage Mongolia in state-to-state relations. Additionally, Chinese claims to Tibet are probably somewhat worrying to most Mongolians. China claims Tibet and Xinjiang are its territorial heritage from the Manchu-ruled Qing Dynasty; at the same point in history all of Mongolia was also under Qing domination. This is a major driver in Mongolia's "third-neighbor policy" and its engagement with other powers on security concerns.

**Conclusion:**

The role played by the United States of America in India, Mongolia, and China seems to provide an additional complicating factor to these relations, which serve as a way of concluding the many statements and pages information provided in this document. The US has huge trade relations with China, a vested and growing interest in India, and a strategically significant relationship with Mongolia. China seems to object to any US engagement with its neighbors. India is emerging as an important regional partner as Pakistan fails on a state-level. In fact, some researchers have suggested that India may actually be the more appropriate partner for the United States in its Asian policy. Not only are both large, multi-ethnic democracies, but India's judiciary has a much more positive record of enforcing property rights and contracts making the relationship potentially more profitable in the long-term. The US engagement with Mongolia is quite strong compared to other nations in the region. (Although post 9/11, the US has shifted attention to Central Asia; however this engagement is almost solely military based). Mongolian governmental structuring and the welcoming of US involvement as a "third neighbor" makes it easy for the US to get a foot hold in a part of Asia it was completely rejected from only 20 years ago. China, despite its own encircling methods of security and foreign policy, is uneasy with Mongolian-US and Indian-US relations. These are only further exaggerated with the Indo-Mongolian ties as forming something of not-necessarily pro-China triad. To this extent, all four countries must seek to balance relations with each other in order to survive in the anarchical climate of Asian security affairs (Rapkin and Thompson 358-363).

**Methods:**

The methods of data collection for this paper involve secondary source collection, interviews and language study. Secondary sources were either accessed from Internet databases or provided to me from those I interviewed. I made every effort to get as diverse of a demographic of interviewees in various fields as was possible given time constraints. My interviewing structure was decidedly informal. I felt that this allowed the people I interviewed to freely express their own views on Indian-Mongolian relations without bringing to the table my own newly formed opinions on the topic. I feel that in the most part this worked out to my advantage in writing a paper based in fact and not general feelings in relations between states as dictated by some pre-established theory, such as Realism or Constructivism (although I naturally lean towards the later). Those interviewed can be broken down into scholars, professionals in the field, and humanitarian actors. Although some overlap is to be expected. It is important to note that several interviews were conducted via email with people not in Ulaanbaatar, and often not in Mongolia.

Language study makes a larger part of the field hours related to this paper than might usually be the case in month-long research assignments. I found that continued study of intermediate-level Mongolian was helpful in finding contacts and using Mongolian-language materials and/or websites without the need of a translator. I cannot imagine having establish dates with assistants, or discussing my reasons for needing to enter the Government Palace with the guards in

English. Additionally, several Mongolian language sources have been included in the paper, which in turn increases “native” perspectives on the topic. Total time in class was 7.5 hours per week for four weeks, plus homework and review time, making a total of approximately 60 hours of the total fieldwork time put into this project. Finally, it is important to note that I will be continuing research in Mongolia throughout my academic career, making it imperative that I continue to study the Mongolian language so that later research can be helped by knowledge.

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