



CHRIS OGDEN

CHINA  
AND  
INDIA

*Asia's Emergent Great Powers*





# China and India

For my sisters: two of life's other great powers

# China and India

Asia's Emergent Great Powers

Chris Ogden

polity

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# ABBREVIATIONS

AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BRICS	Brazil–Russia–India–China–South Africa [grouping]
CAFTA	China–ASEAN Free Trade Agreement
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CMAC	Central Military Affairs Commission (China)
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CYLC	Communist Youth League of China
DPRK	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
FDI	foreign direct investment
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	gross domestic product
IAF	Indian Air Force
IBSA	India–Brazil–South Africa Dialogue Forum
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Indian National Congress
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
IR	international relations
LoC	Line of Control
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs (India)
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (China)
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NDB	New Development Bank
NFU	no first use
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NPT	[Nuclear] Non-Proliferation Treaty



## ABBREVIATIONS

NSA	National Security Adviser (India)
NSC	National Security Council (India)
P5	Permanent Five [UN Security Council Veto Members]
PAP	People's Armed Police (China)
PLA	People's Liberation Army (China)
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy (China)
PMO	Prime Minister's Office (India)
PPP	price purchasing parity
PRC	People's Republic of China
RMB	renminbi
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SOE	state-owned enterprise
UNPKOs	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Edinburgh, September 2016



# INTRODUCTION: GREAT POWER AND THE RISE OF CHINA AND INDIA

China and India's contemporary rise to prominence will significantly impact upon geopolitics over the coming decades. Providing a comparative analysis of their shared emergence as great powers within the international system, this book evaluates the impact of Asia's two largest powers upon the definition, delineation and nature of power politics. Focusing upon the factors integral to such a phenomenon (from both historical and theoretical perspectives), and through a wide-ranging analysis of our understanding/definition of great power, we will build up a comprehensive and detailed understanding of these two states' past, contemporary and future global significance. With their world-leading economic prowess, mounting military expenditures and increasingly heard – and sought after – diplomatic voices, both China and India are resolutely on the rise. As a key dimension of present-day international politics, it is the *shared* emergence of these two immense states that is also of particular significance, especially their geographical presence within the same – if highly complex – world region that is Asia. Their simultaneous analysis therefore not only provides us with an appreciation of their similarities and differences as they endeavour to fulfil a common goal, but also helps us to determine what great power represents and symbolizes in the twenty-first century – a century that appears set to be largely Asia-dominated and Asia-centric.

Within traditional Western paradigms, India and China are often expected to rise in much the same way as the current and previous great powers, primarily via the accumulation of traditional material and military measures. This volume strongly contends, however, that domestic political/cultural values and historical identities are central driving forces behind their mutual status ambitions and worldviews. Indicating as it does that both states will necessarily follow their own

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Table 1 Percentage share of world GDP (1–2008)

	1	1000	1500	1700	1820	1900	1950	1975	2000	2008
<b>China</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>17.5</b>
Europe	13.7	9.0	17.8	21.8	26.6	34.2	26.2	25.1	20.6	17.1
<b>India</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>6.7</b>
Japan	1.1	2.6	3.1	4.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	7.6	7.2	5.7
Russia	1.5	2.3	3.4	4.4	5.4	7.8	9.6	9.4	3.5	4.4
US	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.8	15.8	27.3	21.1	21.9	18.6

Source: Maddison Project, 2013.

unique pathways to achieving great power status, the book argues that how their elites understand – and then attempt to realize – such a vision gains ever greater importance. With the current presence of ardently nationalist leaders in both China and India, in the form of, respectively, Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi, the acquisition of such a status, and the respect and esteem that it brings, is being openly pursued. Through regular exhortations, these leaders (and their many predecessors, if somewhat more reservedly) have declared their states to be in the world’s top tier, with a global significance that cannot be ignored, and that they – just as other great powers have done – will shape our world. In turn, as our analysis will show, both India and China envisage a multipolar world order of several great powers, a perspective that differs from the common Western view of a dominant hegemon. At its core, this vision innately threatens the continued global dominance of the United States.

Crucially, as Kissinger notes, China ‘does not see itself as a rising, but [as] a returning power, . . . [not] an unnatural challenge to the world order but rather a return to a normal state of affairs’ (2012: 546). Much the same is true for India, whose leaders proclaim a willingness to rediscover a glorious past before their subjugation by colonial Britain, when they were also a power of global centrality. Their historical shares of world gross domestic product (GDP) over the long span from AD 1 to 2008 serve to highlight these historically rooted sentiments, as detailed in Table 1.

### Common Conceptions of Great Power

Despite the prevalent usage of the term ‘great power’, there is little consensus within international relations (IR) concerning what elements constitute this status. Reflective of the central understandings of

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IR's various theoretical approaches, which place a differing emphasis upon material and/or ideational aspects, the concept of great power – whilst generally assumed – remains inconsistent. As Levy notes, the 'widespread recognition of the importance of the Great Powers is not matched by analytical precision in the use of the concept' (1983: 10). Matching this uncertainty has been a proliferation of terms to describe those elite powers situated at the top of the hierarchy of international states, with great power being used interchangeably with 'major power', 'dominant power' or 'essential actor.'<sup>1</sup> These terms contrast with other labels, such as 'minor powers', 'regional powers' and 'small states', and serve to indicate difference and ordering, as well as relative superiority/inferiority – and exceptionality – among actors. Essential to the international system, and reflective of particular eras, great powers remain, however, the central actors without whom IR would not be what it is.

Whilst such centrality is undeniable, the abundance of terms to describe these top-tier actors has been accompanied by an ever-multiplying spectrum of elements deemed to be essential to their identification. Albeit dependent upon which scholarly perspective is undertaken, determining great power can thus be seen to rest upon an overall synthesis of multiple interconnected variables, criteria and indicators. As discussed below, this mixture encompasses both 'hard' and 'soft' power attributes representative of material (primarily objective) and perceptual (mainly subjective) characteristics. When taken in combination, great power is therefore 'an all-round characteristic with multiple determinants' (Buzan, 2004: 60). Besides capturing tangible and intangible elements, as IR has developed over time its remit has also broadened from solely covering traditional aspects such as war, conquest and trade to include non-traditional indicators like terrorism, environmental degradation and transnational crime. Pointing to mounting complexity, this combination of influences remains dependent upon structural factors – i.e. the nature of the international system and the dominant understandings underpinning these workings, as shaped by its constituent states – that are mutually constraining and co-constitutive.

This proliferation of reference points further underscores the contested nature of great power. Such debates largely oscillate between those scholars concerned with the preponderance of military power (realism in most of its forms) and those concerned with economic and

<sup>1</sup> In this volume, the term 'great power' will be utilized, despite sharing characteristics associated with 'major power'.

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institutional power, including the provision of responsibility (most strands of liberalism). Other perspectives involve ideational sources of great power, which largely examine identities, norms and perceptions (various kinds of constructivism, along with classical realism). These latter approaches argue that such foundations act as intervening variables between states and their material capabilities, allowing for an approach that emphasizes domestic factors, history and values. An overview of these perspectives is detailed below, from which we identify four key prisms of analysis that will guide the analysis of the book's main chapters. Such elements are critical to our analytical focus on China and India, and will provide for a more state-specific approach towards the two entities. Moreover, this volume contends that our conception of great power is often illustrative of a particular point in time, thus acting as a historically contingent *mélange* of material and ideational understandings which echoes the distribution of myriad power sources in the international system. Great power is therefore adaptive in terms of its definition, its constituent actors and the global system it seeks to exemplify.

### *Material Capabilities*

The intrinsic quality of a great power is that of being a self-sufficient state that is able to maintain its independence versus any other power, and meet its security needs (and those of allies) via its own capabilities. This self-reliance includes the safeguarding of national military, economic, territorial and ideational interests. For traditional realist conceptions of great power, this autonomy is based upon military power, which for offensive realists can be proactively used 'to put up a serious fight in an all-out conventional war against the most powerful state in the world' (Mearsheimer, 2001: 5). Such power is therefore both comparative and ranked, as a great power possesses a higher level of military capabilities relative to others. The global distribution of material (including economic) power is thus critical to the structural realist outlook. Within this outlook, which is emblematic of periods during which the conduct of war was a central feature, a link persists between great power status and war, and, by extension, varying types of military power. Some accounts hence emphasize land power as the means to conquer and control territory, whilst others stress sea power (especially for access, commerce and trade) and others air power, so as to expand the scope of conflict unrestricted by geography. To these types of military power can be added nuclear weapons as the '*sine qua non* for major powers of the modern age'



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(Danilovic, 2002: 46), although their wider proliferation can also dilute great power authority and increase global instability.

Such predominantly realist conceptions thus collectively rest upon an overall combination of various military power types, with large armies being supported by air and sea power capabilities, and so on. These power means have a spatial element, allowing great powers to project their influence beyond their borders, and to 'think of their interests as continental or global rather than regional' (Levy, 1983: 16). Great powers are heavily interconnected with the various states and regions of the world, and thus their status indicates a relational quality that allows them to influence and change the behaviour of smaller states. To capture this relational quality, several scholars have attempted to quantify (material) great power objectively. Thus, in assessing the great powers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Rothstein counts a state's infantrymen (1968: 14), while Modelski suggests that a great power holds at least 5 per cent of available military power in the global system (1974: 2). Significantly, these evaluations link to other kinds of power, with scholars stating that it is necessary for a great power to have more than 10 per cent of the system's available capabilities (see Geller & Singer, 1998). Interlocking with other factors, materialist accounts of great power thus recognize how controlling and increasing economic resources (initially coal, iron and steel but now technological production) augments such power. As such, the effective size of a state's military size is dependent upon the conversion of economic capabilities, in terms of its overall wealth, which is enhanced by having a large population that allows higher production.

This critical interconnection of one source of power with another highlights Robert A. Dahl's concept of 'culminative inequalities', whereby 'greater control over one resource, such as wealth, is closely related to greater control over most other resources, such as knowledge, social standing, military prowess and the like' (quoted in Modelski, 1972: 176). Moreover, economic power acts as a uniquely fungible entity that is translatable into other (including non-material) forms of power. Akin to military capabilities, the relative size of a state's economic resources vis-à-vis others can be crucial in determining its international status, particularly concerning its stage of development, and levels of self-sufficiency, innovation and technological capacity. These benefits are exponential, in that the industrial worker can produce more than the non-industrial worker, and capital resources can be subsequently invested to harvest more (economic) power. In an international system dominated by economics (in the

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current post-Cold War era), such power not only provides a means of diplomatic leverage against other states, but also readily converts into political power, whereby the richest states often have the greatest stake, voice and influence in the system. These states also commonly have high energy consumption rates, which forces them into the international system, both to satisfy their energy security needs and to find the markets/investment by which to pay for them – therefore interconnecting them with more states. In these ways, Paul Kennedy notes a ‘causal relationship between the shifts . . . [in] economic and productive balances, and the position occupied by . . . [great] powers in the international system’ (1988: xxiv).

### *Structural Centrality*

Beyond delineating their status within the grouping of international states, scholars hence hold great powers to possess ‘system determining’ (Keohane & Nye, 1977: 295–6) properties. As critical lynchpins, and through their extra-regional presence – especially in the context of globalized trade – great powers have worldwide interests, and thus a central role within the dynamics of the international system, courtesy of their larger material capabilities. From this liberalist position, great powers are, furthermore, able to ‘establish and enforce the basic rules and rights that influence their own behavior and that of the lesser states in the system’ (Gilpin, 1981: 30), with their material capabilities translating into great power authority and system-ordering. Called upon at key historical junctures, such as at Vienna in 1815, Versailles in 1919 and Potsdam in 1945, or at other times of crisis, great powers use such opportunities to craft the world in their own image, thus shaping ‘the parameters of life in the international system’ (Bisley, 2012: 5). From this basis, which is context-specific, they have greater responsibilities than most other states concerning upholding international order, maintaining peace and security, and managing the global commons, and their influence is deemed indispensable for any negotiation to be effective and legitimate.

For these reasons, great powers can often be regarded as being ‘structural powers’ (Strange, 1987: 565–6), as they can determine certain values and understandings upon which the system functions. Such power – both materially (military and economic) and ideationally (values and beliefs, see below) – is ‘architectonic’ (Modelski, 1972: 152), including the creation of international institutions. By protecting key interests and values, multilateral and regional institutions can also act as a wider form of great power control or ‘great

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power managerialism' (Bisley, 2012: 4–5). Such role-taking and role-making reflect a self-ascribed elite belief among great powers that their state is an actor that is essential to global affairs, and that they have the ability to define the international sphere: for example, using the agency garnered from their material power capabilities to furnish themselves with resultant international influence. This superiority also manifests itself in role-giving by smaller states towards perceived great powers, who recognize and identify them via the granting of special privileges, for instance the allocation of a permanent veto seat on the UN Security Council. Such a process involving multiple actors is collusive through a mutual acquiescence to shared goals, ambitions, visions and ordering, and is legitimized (and often legalized) by the practices of multilateral regimes. Identification in multilateral settings therefore bolsters the social recognition that gives great powers primacy, and crucially conjoins material and perceptual aspects of power. A mutual diplomatic need for partners/allies impacts upon this calculation for minor entities, which is itself dependent upon the wider distribution of material and (to a lesser extent) ideational power.

### *Values and Identity*

A variety of other factors beyond military, economic and structural elements play into the designation and achievement of great power. As noted, a large population (and their relative level of development) has been considered paramount in relation to military and economic capabilities, especially in the modern era. In addition, we can consider a state's geographical position, especially topography (whereby natural barriers and size may aid national defence); climate; number and size of neighbouring states (including land and maritime border lengths); sea access; colonial assets; number of embassies; and access to – and control of – markets and trade routes. Crucially, attitudes towards the active taking of territory have largely shifted from the pre-1945 and colonial era, whilst globalization has deeply diminished the literal meaning of space and territory.

A state's dynamics are also critical in harnessing national power to its maximum potential, with internal cohesion and bureaucratic capabilities being intrinsic to great powerdom. Thus, political capacity, organization and development all depend upon the 'penetration of the national society by central governmental elites to control as many subjects/citizens as possible within the political jurisdiction of the state; and the capability of the government to extract resources from its

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society' (Organski & Kugler, 1980: 72). Internal stability and administrative effectiveness complement such capacities, and enhance the functioning of domestic infrastructures – civilian, military, intelligence and economic – for external purposes. As Morgenthau notes, 'the quality of a nation's diplomacy combines those different factors into an integrated whole' (1973: 146), while notions of strategic culture and grand strategy vitally inform such perspectives (see Chapter 2).

These understandings are largely antithetical to structural realists, who contend that international politics is determined by external not internal factors. Yet, as is more appreciated by classical realists and wholly embraced by constructivists, values, principles and national morale are inherently crucial measures of what a great power is. Central to such an assertion is that 'power is the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate' (Barnett & Duvall, 2005: 42). Self-image is critical here, such that the aspiration to be a great power denotes a certain attitude, including a state's proactive demand for rights, acceptance of responsibilities and self-perception as a manager of the international system. Moreover, this self-asserted role-taking/role-making desire – among elites and their populations – rests upon an established worldview of gaining prestige and superior ranking vis-à-vis others, something that is very much evident within China and India. These contentions indicate a need for some essence of ego through which a state's status is proactively presumed, whereupon material capabilities intertwine with a perception of its self-importance.

Being a great power can therefore be regarded as an understanding – an ideational construct premised upon a selection of criteria that are often self-reflecting and self-validating, whereby 'to be a great power is to act like a great power' (Domke, 1989: 161). Thus, how the status of great power is *manifested* reflects inherently how the term is *conceived* and accepted by the comity of states. This conception then becomes embedded through consequent practices, international interactions and resultant (social/institutional/structural) understandings. As great powers have the most invested in the system, they have the largest stake in its overall interests, and hence they shape – and are integral to – the values upon which that system rests. However, just as the role-giving element essential to gaining pre-eminence in international regimes must come from others, so too must the social recognition of being a great power. This process highlights the role of perception and – notably for our analysis of China and India – expectations of future performance. Consequently, being a great

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power is ‘a social category . . . [determined] by your peers in the club’ (Hurrell, 2006: 4). Such recognition and acceptance act as a form of socialization for emergent great powers, confirming the efficacy of our constructivist analysis. Most critically, existing great powers have the ‘capacity to extend or withhold legitimacy’ (Singer & Small, 1972: 21) to would-be, aspirant or potential great powers, and such contender states may also often purposely play ‘recognition games’ (Ringmar, 2002) in order to gain the approval of others by conforming to their values.

To reiterate, great powers are thus ‘differentiated from other states by others’ images and perceptions of them’ (Levy, 1983: 17). Whilst great power status is based upon either actual or imagined (present or future) material capabilities, it is the values, principles, norms and perceptions of the state under question – and the history that helps shape these – that is of significance. These values help form a great power’s self-conception, its understanding of what it is to be a great power, the significance it places on particular attributes, and – by extension – the very nature of institutions that it may form. They also influence its outlook concerning the essence of the international system, and overall the system reflects the dominant values *within* that system. Such an emphasis on values – in conjunction with social recognition and their role in making international regimes – leads us to a further (great) power type, that of soft power. Typically defined as ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments . . . [via] a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies’ (Nye, 2004: x), soft power is non-material and ideational in content. The acceptance by others of a projected worldview, and its incumbent values, hence acts as a further form of international legitimacy, which great powers can use to significantly shape the behaviour of others – both diplomatically and popularly, if it gains global credence. Some scholars note, however, that soft power’s efficacy is limited if seen in isolation, since principles and norms ‘can be extremely effective [but only] if translated into blood and iron’ (A.J.P. Taylor, 1952: 44). Such remarks verify how power capabilities are vigorously interconnected when defining/making great power.

### **Evaluating China and India**

From this appraisal, our consideration of China and India as emergent great powers rests upon the understanding that ‘while the great power function may appear to be a “natural” feature of international

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relations, it is in fact the product of specific historical, material and ideational processes, and as such is always subject to change' (Bisley, 2012: 10). Whilst recognizing that power has material and ideational aspects, this volume deploys a largely constructivist outlook that focuses upon state-specific (and primarily domestically derived) values, norms and identities as essential intervening variables between a state and its hard power /material capabilities. On this basis it is argued that power cannot be reduced solely to its material elements, and that the state itself must be acknowledged as a key factor concerning what we mean by, and what constitutes, great power. This volume's initial focus on domestic determinants and strategic cultures underlines this centrality. Acknowledging that great power is inherently difficult to measure empirically, we thus utilize a 'very broad understanding of power, . . . rather than the narrow understanding of politics that realism stands accused of adopting' (Williams, 2005: 109), so as to show its core complexities.

Our approach also seeks to be multi-dimensional, multi-relational and interlinked, as previously shown by the grouping of factors together by other scholars. In this regard, Danilovic notes 'Three Dimensions': material capabilities, spatial scope and formal/informal status (2002: 28). Domke also has three factors: that a state will not concede to others; has global interests; and will 'pick on small powers when expedient' (1989: 161–2). In turn, Levy focuses on 'Five Elements': military capabilities; global not regional interests; behaving like a great power; being perceived by others as being great; and being recognized in international institutions (1983: 16–18). Waltz, meanwhile, has 'Five Criteria'; 'size of population and territory, resources endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence' (1979: 131). Finally, Nayar and Paul's 'Ten Virtues' provide the fullest set of measures: four 'hard' – military, economics, technology and demographics – and six 'soft' – norms, culture, leadership of international forums, state capacity, strategy and diplomacy, and national leadership (2003: 32). These best mirror IR's gradual genesis to include material, institutional and ideational sympathies, which this book's chapters collectively reflect.

Our analysis of China and India further embraces the historical particularism associated with the identification, prevalence and nature of great powers. Crucially, Paul Kennedy's observation that 'economic shifts heralded the rise of new Great Powers' (1988: xxii) points to the current importance of the rise of India and China (see Chapter 4). It also underscores the significance of relative/relational power distributions, whereby a change in economic rank changes the

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overall international hierarchy. These assertions are supported by the growth, decline and shifting of global power centres over time: from Ming China, the Ottoman Empire (and its Muslim offshoot in India, the Mughals), Muscovy, Imperial Japan and European states in 1500; to a Eurocentric focus upon France, Britain, Russia, Austria and Prussia from 1660 to 1815; then to the vast land powers of the twentieth century – the United States and the Soviet Union – and rising challengers Germany (pre-1945), Japan, China and the European Union. This process crucially involves a ‘lag time’ between when economic strength is gained and when it is converted into great power (P. Kennedy, 1988: xxv). Such shifts also reflect diverse trade and manufacturing foci: from the Mediterranean to northwest Europe and the Atlantic from the 1500s onwards; from Europe to the world in the 1880s; from developed to developing states in the 1980s and 1990s; to China and India from the 2000s onwards.

### Prisms of Analysis

From this foundation, this book deploys four key analytical prisms with which to study China and India’s contemporary rise as Asia’s emergent great powers in the early twenty-first century. Importantly, they allow our study to encompass structural, behavioural and evolutionary axes *at the same time*, so as to produce an exact appreciation of these states’ key temporal dynamics.

#### *Interconnection*

Collectively highlighting tangible, structural and subjective quotients, the myriad variables central to great power are seen as being intimately interconnected. Such a synergy highlights a key constructivist assertion that the international system and its component states interact in a co-constitutive manner, and hence mutually influence each other. This focus also shows how both India and China’s internal/external – and domestic/international – spheres are in a constant interplay with each other, across their relative material, institutional and ideational tenets.

#### *Perception*

Since various factors – as well as states and the international system – are intertwined, how they interact with each other is also critical. Here