

Sino-Pakistani Relations from 1960 to 1974

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Čínsko-pakistanské vzťahy v rokoch 1960–1974

Resumé Štúdiá analyzuje bilaterálne vzťahy medzi ČĽR a Islamskou republikou Pakistan v období rokov 1960–1974, ktoré započali nadviazaním diplomatických vzťahov a skončili sa rozpadom Pakistanu na dva štáty, čím sa zmenila geopolitická situácia na indickom subkontinente. Po ochladení vzťahov v druhej polovici 60. rokov, sa obe krajiny od roku 1970 opäť zblížovali.

Abstract This study analyses bilateral relations between PRC and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan from 1960 to 1974, which began with the establishment of diplomatic ties and ended with the disintegration of Pakistan into two states, which changed the geopolitical reality on the Indian subcontinent. After a deterioration, there was a growing convergence in relations from 1970.

Keywords 'Cold War' (1947–89) · International Relations, China-Pakistani Relations · Sino-Pakistani Border Demarcation Agreement

Official government circles in China and Pakistan often present mutual relations between these two countries as being sweeter than honey, higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the Indian Ocean—i.e. friendly in every kind of weather and proven over time.¹ Generally, it is true that in the 1960s bilateral relations between China and Pakistan were quite close, and there was a certain

1 William J. Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability amidst Discontinuity«, *The China Quarterly* 63 (1975), 463.

level of economic and security cooperation. However, in reality bilateral relations between China and Pakistan are a complex of political lines and factors which had been evolving over time, and their bilateral relations were certainly not always so close as they are often presented. This study will analyse variations of Sino-Pakistani relations in the first phase of their development, with a major focus on the military conflicts between China and India, and Pakistan and India, in the mentioned period. Another no less important factor is the Sino-Pakistani Border Demarcation Agreement, which has had geopolitical consequences for the entire region.

It is reasonable to state that China has an exclusive place in Pakistan's foreign policy in the three major fields of security, politics and the economy.² In the case of China's foreign policy, Pakistan has a very specific position. Pakistan is the most important and constant Chinese ally in the region of South Asia and mainly plays the role of being a counterbalance against India. However, it is also a mediator in relations between China and the Muslim world; this is something which was evident during the first years of the existence of both countries and essentially remains valid at the present time. What makes the bilateral relationship with Pakistan interesting from Beijing's point of view is the fact that it is possible to qualify it as exceptional, not only concerning China's relations with its neighbours but also within the whole of Asia and globally. This exceptionality is present in the two countries' bilateral relations and the extent of their mutual cooperation, primarily in the areas of security, the armed forces and technology transfer. There is no other country—with the exception of the Soviet Union in the first years of the PRC's existence until the Sino-Soviet Split and perhaps the partial exception of present-day relations with the Russian Federation—with which China has enjoyed such close relations in the fields of security and military technologies.

2 »Pakistan Country Profile«, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu 中華人民共和國外交部*, <www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_chn/gjhdq_603914/gj_603916/yz_603918/1206_604018/1206xo_604020/> (last retrieval 27 May 2015).

In the 1950s Pakistan was part of the system of Western alliances (SEATO and CENTO)³ created by the US, which was aimed against the spread of communism in Asia and therefore against China. From the perspective of Cold War logic, China and Pakistan were in opposite camps. What was exceptional was the fact that even though Pakistan was a part of the abovementioned alliances, from the beginning of its existence it did not position itself in a hostile way towards China; in 1950 it became the third non-communist country to be diplomatically recognized by the PRC, and in 1951 it established diplomatic relations with the PRC.⁴ The exchange of ambassadors between the two countries occurred almost two years later. The reasons for this were Beijing's effort to probe Pakistan's position regarding Taiwan and Pakistan's request to set up a general consulate in Kashgar in Xinjiang Province, which Beijing considered to be dangerous given the region's Muslim character, based on the logic that if the regions with a Muslim majority in India received their independence, the same thing could happen in similar regions in China. In addition to the question of Taiwan (the Republic of China), in which Pakistan supported China's claim to a seat in the UN in September 1950,⁵ there was the factor of the Korean War. While Pakistan supported the resolutions proposed by the US, it did not participate in the conflict and did not support a resolution in 1951 denoting China as the aggressor.⁶ Three days later Beijing announced the setting up of diplomatic relations with Pakistan. However, the exchange of diplomatic missions required another year and a half. The official date of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries was 21 May 1951.⁷

3 The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was founded in 1954. The Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) was founded in 1955.

4 Diplomatic recognition occurred on 4 January 1950. Jagdish P. Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I* (New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1974), 7.

5 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 469.

6 William M. Dobell, »Ramifications of the China-Pakistan Border Treaty«, *Pacific Affairs* 37,3 (1964), 284.

7 »Sino-Pakistani Relations« (*Zhongguo tong Bajisitan de guanxi* 中國同巴基斯坦的關係), *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, <www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_chn/gjhdq_603914/gj_603916/yz_603918/1206_604018/1206x0_604020/> (last retrieval 14 Dec 2015).

I 1950–1960: *The First Decade of Mutual Relations*

In 1954 the Pakistani government repeatedly signalled to Beijing that Pakistan's membership in SEATO was not aimed against China,⁸ and consequently China did not send any official protest to Pakistan regarding its membership in the alliance.⁹ Beijing saw Pakistan's participation in SEATO as being primarily aimed against India. This stimulated Karachi's effort to get closer to Beijing, which was a characteristic move in 1956, when there were official visits by Pakistani Prime Minister Suhrawardy and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai to each other's countries.

It was against this background that the Association of Sino-Pakistani Friendship (Chin. *Bajisitan Zhongguo youhao xiehui* 巴基斯坦中國友好協會) was founded in June 1956.¹⁰ In 1956 and 1957 China was Pakistan's fifth largest trading partner, and Pakistan was China's sixth largest.¹¹ Naturally, Karachi wanted to preserve the positive nature of the mutual relationship. Then on 3 September 1958 Muhammad Ayub Khan, the supreme commander of the Pakistani army and the incoming prime minister,¹² said during a session of the National Assembly that Pakistan had commercial ties with all of the communist countries. In December of that year, a joint communique was issued which, in addition to the abovementioned topics, contained a declaration by both the

8 Based on the conversation of Mohammed Ali with Premier Zhou Enlai during the 1955 Bandung Conference. Bhupendra N. Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1971), 32–33.

9 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability amidst Discontinuity«, 469.

10 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 45.

11 Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 28.

12 Muhammad Ayub Khan was Prime Minister of Pakistan in the period between 7 October and 27 October 1958. Then from 27 October 1958 to 25 March 1969 he occupied the position of President of Pakistan.

Chinese and Pakistani leaders stating that there was no conflict of interest between the two countries.¹³

The first decade of mutual relations was concluded with Pakistan preserving its pro-Western political line and even strengthening it by signing a bilateral agreement of cooperation with the US on 5 March 1959, wherein Washington pledged to help Pakistan even in the case of aggression by a non-communist country. Beijing saw this agreement as being primarily aimed against India and Afghanistan. The warm reception of the Chinese Muslim mission from Taiwan by Pakistan's minister of foreign affairs on 4 July 1959 was another case in mutual relations between Pakistan and the PRC. Beijing reacted by issuing a protest note.¹⁴ Beijing also criticized Pakistan's attitude regarding Tibet¹⁵ and its proposal of a joint defence pact with India.¹⁶

2 Sino-Pakistani Relations from 1960 to 1965

2.1 Gradual Convergence

Approximately two years before the question of a border demarcation agreement between China and Pakistan became the subject of official negotiations, a number of unofficial negotiations took place which seemed to be initiated by Beijing. These initiatives happened against the background of deteriorating relations with India, which was the result of the suppression of Tibetan autonomy, Chinese territorial claims against India, the 1959 Kongka Pass Incident and worsening Sino-Soviet relations due to Moscow's neutral attitude

13 »Sino-Pakistani Relations«, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, <fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_chn/gjhdq_603914/gj_603916/yz_603918/1206_604018/sbgx_604022/> (last retrieval 14 Dec 2013).

14 Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 40.

15 The Chinese attempt to change traditional Tibetan life and the oppression of Tibetan rights became the subject of discussion in the UN in 1959. In this regard, Pakistan supported the resolution hammered out by the West.

16 Dobell, »Ramifications of the China-Pakistan Border Treaty«, 283.

to the Sino-Indian dispute.¹⁷ China was trying to secure its borders by signing border demarcation agreements, agreements of friendship and non-aggression pacts with as many neighbouring countries as possible. Sometime in 1959 Beijing began to probe the possibility of conducting similar negotiations with Pakistan by sending to Karachi a map of the shared border region.¹⁸ Another reason was the effort to eventually use negotiations with Pakistan as a tool of pressure against India during upcoming negotiations in 1960 as well as to test the reactions of the Cold War superpowers—the US and the Soviet Union. China saw Soviet neutrality in the case of the Sino-Indian dispute as a complicating factor, pushing it to conclude a border agreement with India as soon as possible. Therefore, even after commencing unofficial negotiations with Pakistan, Beijing continued to assure New Delhi that the question of their shared border was not the subject of negotiations with Pakistan and that they were reluctant to start official negotiations with Pakistan.¹⁹ Only after the possibility of agreement with India was definitely quashed in February 1962 did Beijing refuse to negotiate with New Delhi about the territory westward of the Karakoram Pass in Kashmir which was under Pakistani control and agree to commence official negotiations with Pakistan.²⁰ This meant that Beijing essentially contested Indian sovereignty

17 Mohammad H. Sidky, »Chinese World Strategy and South Asia: The China Factor in Indo-Pakistani Relations«, *Asian Survey* 16,10 (1976), 966.

18 The possibility that the initiative to negotiate in 1959 came from the Pakistani side is unlikely for several reasons. Firstly, the first official initiative concerning negotiations on border demarcation came in the form of a diplomatic note from 28 March 1961. Secondly, the fundamental orientation of Pakistani foreign policy in this period was pro-Western, which is supported by Pakistan receiving the Chinese Muslim mission from Taiwan, the signing of a cooperation agreement with the US, Pakistan's voting in the UN concerning the PRC's membership and the initiative to create a joint defence pact with India. Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 84.

19 *Ibid.*, 85.

20 China, which by that time had already resolved its territorial disputes with Myanmar (1960) and Nepal (1961), was trying to solve in a mutually acceptable way as many border disputes as possible. From an Indian perspective, the solution of the disputed border with Pakistan could

over the whole of Kashmir. However, even at this time Beijing did not completely abandon the idea of reaching an agreement with India, and therefore its preparations for negotiations with Pakistan proceeded gradually.

Regardless of the ongoing negotiations, the Chinese presence in Ladakh was perceived in Karachi as aggressive because Pakistan laid claim over the whole of Kashmir. Due to the Chinese occupation, Pakistan closed its shared border with China and strengthened military units in the area.²¹ Chinese maps showed the territory, which had an area of 6400 km² and which was controlled by Pakistan, as being part of China. The strategically important Kilik and Shimshal Passes, which control the roads connecting the Chinese region of Xinjiang to Pakistan, were marked as Chinese territory. By contrast, Pakistani maps showed these passes far to the south of the shared border. However, during his press conference on 23 October 1959 President Khan proclaimed that the Chinese government had not laid any claim to Pakistani territory; there was only a map which had been received by Pakistan's foreign ministry which showed certain Pakistani areas as being part of China.²²

Meanwhile Beijing allowed Pakistan to publish information about the ongoing negotiations regarding the demarcation of the border. China remained quiet, and nothing was confirmed or denied. Beijing could not do anything because official negotiations with India were still going on. The probable purpose was to create disagreements between Islamabad²³ and New Delhi with

probably have been seen as an effort to show China as reasonable and India as stubborn. Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 471. In 1962 China signed a similar border agreement with Mongolia (1962). Dennis J. Doolin and George Patterson, »The Unquiet Frontier: Border Tensions in the Sino-Soviet Conflict«, *The China Quarterly* 31 (1967), 170–171.

21 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 85.

22 Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 46.

23 Karachi was the capital city of Pakistan from 1947 to 1958. From 1958 to 1960 the capital was Rawalpindi, and since 1960 the capital has been Islamabad. In this study, the names of these cities are used for the times these cities were the capital cities of Pakistan, and therefore can be used as meaning the Pakistani government or state.

the aim of progressing in negotiations with India. In the case of a failure of negotiations with India, Beijing was prepared to start official negotiations with Pakistan.²⁴ Despite China's territorial claims, Pakistan saw eventual Chinese support against India and Afghanistan as useful. In addition, Pakistan got closer to China regarding border negotiations only after China refused to negotiate with India about the territory west of the Karakoram Pass.²⁵

In the middle of 1960 an initiative came from Pakistan. However, China took its time answering.²⁶ In the beginning of 1961, Islamabad sent a note to Beijing which expressed its effort to secure peace along the common border and proposed the commencement of negotiations on border demarcation. This official note, which materialized after two years of unofficial negotiations, meant that Pakistan had to have some sort of assurance from Beijing regarding its willingness to enter into official negotiations. However, informal contact between the two countries, and even the official note, had no effect on official bilateral relations or Chinese behaviour in the international arena. Also, Pakistan still participated in SEATO and CENTO meetings, and supported the positions of the West. The reason why there was no progress in the negotiations on border demarcation, which allegedly took place even before the official note was sent and to which Beijing did not answer for a long time, was China's request for Pakistan to show good faith before it would approve progress in such negotiations. The price Beijing demanded was Pakistani support for China in the

24 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 471.

25 Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 49.

26 There were two reasons behind Beijing's attitude. First of all there was the fact that the constitutional status of the Northern Areas was different from the territory of Kashmir, which Beijing was using to create a semblance: these territories were not part of Kashmir and therefore did not fall under Indian jurisdiction. The second reason was the Pakistani requirement to create a line which no side would cross, meaning a clear border line recognized by both sides. *Ibid.*, 49-50.

case of China's membership in the UN.²⁷ Regarding this support, Pakistani President Khan proclaimed during his visit to Washington that Pakistan would certainly support the membership of the PRC in the UN. To alleviate Washington's criticism, Pakistan abstained in voting on the American proposal to consider the PRC's membership in the UN as an important matter which would require a two-thirds majority to be approved. Beijing was not completely satisfied with this because it had demanded full support from Pakistan, but Khan required reciprocal concessions, i.e. progress in negotiations on the demarcation of the border. In the context of stagnating negotiations with India, Beijing could not ignore this Pakistani gesture and their requirements. On 27 February 1962 they responded with a note containing the remark that China and Pakistan should reach an agreement of a provisional character reflecting the current status regarding the continuing dispute over Kashmir. The Chinese note was formulated carefully and avoided stating it was a definitive agreement, it just mentioned it was an agreement of a provisional character. Islamabad answered swiftly on 19 March 1962. The provisional character of the agreement suited Pakistan very well because Pakistan was not forced into any commitment having an impact on its dispute with India over Kashmir.

The joint official announcement to demarcate the border between Xinjiang in China and Pakistani-controlled territories was issued on 3 May 1962. Perhaps the most important part of it was the remark that Pakistani-controlled Kashmir had never had demarcated borders. This was in contrast with the Indian claim that the whole border had been fixed but had not been demarcated. After the signing of this joint communique, Pakistan started to follow its own course of foreign policy towards China and hold pro-Chinese positions.²⁸ The Sino-Indian War erupted before the start of negotiations on border demarcation. This was a definitive impulse for China to initiate formal negotiations with Pakistan, which started on 12 October 1962 in Beijing. China wanted to avoid Pakistan joining the conflict on India's side. Although Pakistan subsequently temporarily interrupted negotiations with China, the Pakistani leadership kept

27 »Pakistan: Bilateral Relations«, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, <www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_chn/gjhdq_603914/gj_603916/yz_603918/1206_604018/1206xo_604020> (last retrieval 27 May 2015).

28 Tapan Das, *Sino-Pak Collusion and U.S. Policy* (New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1972), 89.

its pro-Chinese positions.²⁹ This had to do with the Chinese unilateral proclamation of an armistice and its willingness to pull back 12 km behind the so-called line of actual control.³⁰ The Sino-Indian War convinced Pakistan of Beijing's hostile attitude towards India and was the beginning of perceiving China as a friendly country.³¹ This kind of manifestation of support for China was at a time when the West was sending military equipment to India. The Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp took a neutral position and Third World countries supported India. Pakistan's support for China was especially valuable for Beijing because it helped foster a peaceful image of China among Muslim countries in the Third World.

Probably with the effort to thwart a possible accord between India and Pakistan and their joint posturing against China,³² Beijing announced an agreement on 26 December 1962 which was complete in principle on the demarcation of the border between China and Pakistan.³³ Shortly afterwards in January 1963 a Chinese trade delegation came to Pakistan. As a result of this visit several agreements on the purchase of cotton, jute and industrial products were signed. The most important was a trade agreement on 5 January 1963, which was the first of its kind between the two countries. A list of products which were covered by the agreement was attached to it, and it was agreed that products which were not included could be added in the case of need.³⁴

It is interesting to note that while the official Pakistani announcement and the sending of the diplomatic note expressing Pakistan's willingness to start negotiations on the demarcation of the border occurred one and half years after the unofficial negotiations had started—subsequently it would take another nine

29 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 81.

30 John W. Garver, »Sino-Indian Rapprochement and the Sino-Pakistan Entente«, *Political Science Quarterly* 111,2 (1996), 339.

31 Jain, *China Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 63.

32 Dobell, »Ramifications of the China-Pakistan Border Treaty«, 285–286.

33 Jagdish P. Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh II* (New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1974), 44.

34 Yaacov Vertzberger, »The Political Economy of Sino-Pakistani Relations: Trade and Aid 1963–1982«, *Asian Survey* 23,5 (1983), 637.

months for Beijing to express its approval with this kind of negotiation and another five months until the official communique was issued—the negotiations themselves took only two months and saw a complete agreement reached regarding border demarcation; all problematic issues were resolved and there was an exchange of topographic maps. The Chinese effort not to delay negotiations and their willingness to make concessions was probably caused by the Sino-Indian War.

2.2 *The Border Agreement*

The Border Demarcation Agreement was signed in Beijing on 2 March 1963.³⁵ Article I of this agreement contains the proclamation that »the border between Chinese Xinjiang and adjacent contiguous areas, the defence of which is under the actual control of Pakistan, has never been formally delimited ... «,³⁶ and that »the two parties agree to demarcate this border on the basis of the traditional and customary boundary line while simultaneously taking into account the physical terrain «³⁷

Article II contains concrete provisions about the demarcation of the border. Paragraph I, Clause A defines the common boundary line between the PRC

35 Border Agreement Regarding Frontier of Chinese Xinjiang And Pakistani Controled Adjacent Territories Between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhengfu he Bajisitan zhengfu guanyu Zhongguo Xinjiang he you Bajisitan shiji kongzhi qi fangwude gegediqu xiang jierangde bianjiede xieding] (中華人民共和國政府和巴基斯坦政府關於中國新疆和由巴基斯坦實際控制其防務的各個地區相接壤的邊界的協定), *Law Library (Falü tushuguan 法律圖書館)*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval 6 Jun 2011).

36 Zhongguo Xinjiang he you Bajisitan shiji kongzhi qi fangwude gege diqu xiang jierangde bianjie congwei zhengshi huading... 中國新疆和由巴基斯坦實際控制其防務的各個地區相接壤的邊界從未正式劃定... *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval 30 Jun 2011); »Sino-Pakistan Agreement«, *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sino-Pakistan_Agreement> (last retrieval 29 May 2015).

37 Shuangfang tongyi, zhe duan bianjie yi chuantong xiguan bianjiexian wei jichu, bing canzhao ziran dixing... 雙方同意，這段邊界以傳統習慣邊界線為基礎，並參照自然地形... *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval 6 Jun 2011); »Sino-Pakistan Agreement«, *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, (last retrieval 29 May 2015).

and Pakistan: »Commencing from its north western extremity at a peak of a mountain the reference coordinates of which are approximately longitude 74 degrees 34 minutes east and latitude 37 degrees 3 minutes north.«³⁸ It further states that »the boundary line runs strictly along the main watershed between the Tarim River and its tributary the Yarkant River with all of its tributaries [...], and the tributaries of the Hunza River of the Indus River system [...],«³⁹ and reaches Khunjerab Pass (Hongqilafu shankou 紅其拉甫山口).

The following section of the boundary line is defined by Clause B, in which it is stated that the boundary line passes through Khunjerab Pass and then runs southward along the abovementioned main watershed, which it then leaves and follows the crest of a spur generally in a southeasterly direction and passes the watershed between the Akjilga River (Akejileigahe 阿克吉勒尕河), the Taghumbash River (Tadunbashenne 塔敦巴什河) and the Koliman Su River (Kelimanhe 克裡滿河). According to the map of the Chinese side, the boundary line, after leaving the south-eastern extremity of the spur, runs along a small section of the middle line of the bed of the Koliman Su River to reach its confluence with the Kelechin River (Keleiqing 克勒青河). According to the map of the Pakistani side, the boundary line, after leaving the south-eastern extremity of this spur, reaches the sharp bend of the Kelechin River, also called the Shaksgam River (Shenkesiganhe 什克斯干河) and Muztagh River (Musitagehe 穆斯塔格河).

In Clause C it is stated that from the abovementioned point the boundary lines runs up the Kelechin River along the middle line of its bed until its

38 »Cankao zuobiao dayue wei dongjing 74 du 34 fen, beiwei 37 du 03 fende yi ge shanfeng... 參考座標大約為東經74度34分、北緯37度03分的一個山峰...« *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval 6 Jun 2011); »Sino-Pakistan Agreement«, *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, (last retrieval 29 May 2015).

39 Bianjiexian yange yan liuru Talimuhe shuixide Tashenkelaoganhe zhu zhiliu wei yifang, liuru Yinduhe shuixide Hongzhahe zhu zhiliu wei lingyifangde da fenshuiling... 邊界線嚴格沿流入塔裡木河水系的塔什科老干河諸支流為一方、流入印度河水系的洪札河諸支流為另一方的大分水嶺... *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval Jun 6, 2011); »Sino-Pakistan Agreement«, *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, (last retrieval 29 May 2015).

confluence with the Shorbulak Daria (the Shimshal River or Braldu River). Clause D states that the boundary line then ascends the crest of a spur and runs along it to join the Karakoram Range. However, the Chinese and Pakistani maps differ on the exact coordinates of the peak of reference.⁴⁰

Clause E defines the further continuation of the boundary line, which runs generally southward and later eastward, strictly following the Karakoram Range's main watershed between the Tarin River and Indus River, and reaching the southeastern extremity of the Karakoram Range at the Karakoram Pass.⁴¹

Article VI states that the two parties have agreed that after the settlement of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India, the PRC government will reopen negotiations with the sovereign authority concerned so as to sign a formal boundary treaty to replace the present agreement. In the event of the sovereign authority being Pakistan, the provisions of the present agreement and the abovementioned protocol shall be preserved in a formal border treaty to be signed between the PRC and Pakistan.⁴²

40 *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval 30 Jun 2011).

41 *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval 6 Jun 2011). Plate 1 shows the concerned portion of the Chinese border.

42 Youguande zhuquan dangju jiangjiu ben xieding diertiao suo shude bianjie, tong Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhengfu chongxin jinxing tanpan, yi qianding yige zhengshide bianjie tiaoyue lai dai ti ben xieding, gai zhuquan dangju ru xi Bajisitan, ze zai Zhonghua renmin gongheguo he Bajisitan jiang qiandingde zhengshi bianjie tiaoyuezhong, yinggai baochi ben xieding he shangshu yidingshuzhongde guiding. 有關的主權當局將就本協定第二條所述的邊界，同中華人民共和國政府重新進行談判，以簽訂一個正式的邊界條約來代替本協定，該主權當局如系巴基斯坦，則在中華人民共和國和巴基斯坦將簽訂的正式邊界條約中，應該保持本協定和上述議定書中的規。 *Law Library*, <www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=94926> (last retrieval Jun 30, 2011); »Sino-Pakistan Agreement«, *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, (last retrieval 29 May 2015).

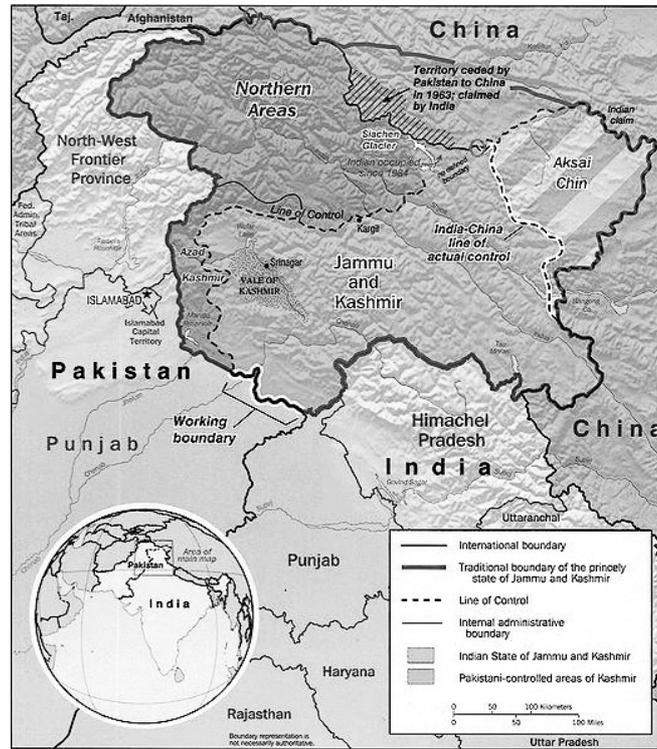


Plate 1:

The Sino-Pakistani border: the portion of the border which is covered by the 1963 Sino-Pakistani Border Demarcation Agreement is situated between the two circlets.⁴³

2.3 The Significance of the Border Agreement

Shortly after the official announcement of this agreement, the Indian ambassador in Pakistan submitted an official protest on 16 March 1963 in which India accused Pakistan of illegally handing over not less than 3200 km² of Indian territory to China, additionally stating that despite the fact that the agreement

43 <www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/kashmir_disputed_2003.jpg> (last retrieval 6 Jun 2011).

was defined as provisional, it was not the subject of ratification.⁴⁴ In 1963 there was a continuing exchange of notes between India and Pakistan and between India and China, but the majority of them just repeated the positions already mentioned in previous ones. The Announcement about the Completion of the Demarcation of the Border made on 7 March 1965⁴⁵ and the Announcement about the Signing of the Corresponding Agreement by the Joint Commission for the Demarcation of the Border made on 26 March 1965⁴⁶ were brought about by further Indian protest notes addressed to Islamabad and Beijing.

The Pakistani minister of foreign affairs subsequently declared that by signing this agreement Pakistan had acquired grassland territory with an area of approximately 1200 km², access to all passes in the Karakoram Massif and control of two thirds of K2 mountain. However, advocates of this agreement assert that in fact no side gained or lost any territory which had been previously under its control. The only thing each side gave up was a theoretical claim to the territory under the control of the other side.

In reality the agreed border copied the line proposed by the British in 1899 to a great extent.⁴⁷ Variations from this line were in favour of Pakistan due to China's disclaimer and its physical retreat from the territory between Shimshal Pass and the Muztagh River with a total area of 1200 km². Even though Pakistan formally handed control of significant territories claimed by Beijing over to China, it is not true that this Chinese claim had no legal grounds⁴⁸ because the concerned territories were never directly part of Kashmir. The Indian claim was based on customs, traditions and an agreement signed with the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. By conducting negotiations and signing the agreement on border demarcation, Pakistan showed that it held the Chinese point of view, which proclaimed that the boundary line had never been demarcated. With this agreement, China formalized its control over territory with an area of

44 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 90.

45 Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh II*, 108-111.

46 *Ibid.*, 116-118.

47 Neville Maxwell, *India's China War* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1970), 215-217.

48 Neville Maxwell, »Reviewed work(s): A History of Sino-Indian Relations: Hostile Co-Existence by John Rowland, The Pakistan-China Axis by B. L. Sharma, Pakistan's Foreign Policy by Mushtaq Ahmad«, *The China Quarterly* 35 (1968), 160.

approximately 21,760 km² and shifted the official border from the Aghil-Khunlun watershed to the Karakoram Mountains just to the east of the Karakoram Pass.⁴⁹

During the first decade of its existence, the PRC had territorial disputes or unsettled borders with all of its neighbours with the exception of Laos. Beijing feared that all these countries (or at least some of them) would create an anti-Chinese coalition or alliance to enforce their territorial claims and theoretically create some sort of a broader political or military alliance based on cooperation in border disputes with China. Several, if not all, of these concerned countries could realistically create some sort of platform; later developments during the Cold War only confirmed such Chinese concerns. Even though the concerned countries had various social systems and geopolitical orientations, which would make such an alliance very improbable to hammer out, the possibility of their joint approach towards China was possible in the case of stubborn or even aggressive behaviour from China.

As China's relations with the Soviet Union and India worsened at the end of the 1950s, and due to the fact that these two countries were two major neighbours sharing a border which was thousands of kilometres long with China, Beijing had to be very cautious and act quickly. In the majority of cases of an unsettled border, Beijing preferred to preserve the status quo and just demarcate the border on the ground. Based on the border agreement China signed with its neighbours, it is possible to state that Beijing was inclined to make concessions, which was the case with Myanmar and North Korea. In this situation where China had an unsettled border with almost all of its neighbours, Beijing tried to sign as many border agreements with as many neighbouring countries as possible. However, perhaps with the exception of North Korea, this absolutely does not mean that China was rushing things and making ill-judged decisions. On the contrary, subsequent developments prove that many border disputes were solved many decades later, and some, i.e. the border dispute with India, have not been solved even today. However, at the end of the 1950s Beijing initiated different processes of border settlement with varied results. China was

49 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 90–92.

able to solve its territorial dispute with Myanmar, and in 1960 it signed a border agreement with that country. In 1961 Beijing signed a similar agreement with Nepal, in 1962 with Mongolia, and on 22 November 1963 with Afghanistan. During 1963 a secret border agreement was signed with North Korea.

As has been mentioned, the Sino-Pakistani border agreement was signed on 2 March 1963, meaning it was signed before the China-Afghanistan Border Treaty and probably before the China-North Korea border agreement as well. Therefore, it is necessary to perceive this Sino-Pakistani agreement in the larger context of the Chinese effort to settle its border disputes with as many neighbouring countries as possible, but not at the expense of too many territorial concessions or by any means.

However, unlike the other neighbouring countries with which China signed border agreements, which were mainly significant in terms of security, the border agreement signed with Pakistan meant mutual rapprochement and the beginning of a very close relationship in the area of military and political cooperation. Therefore, there were multiple benefits for Beijing. Not only did Beijing gain Pakistan's support in its request for membership in the UN and during the Sino-Indian War, it also gained Pakistan's support in its effort to spread the peaceful image of China in the Third World. After the Sino-Soviet Split, China presented itself in its foreign policy as a protector of Third World countries which were oppressed by the two superpowers. Chinese policy towards Third World countries in the middle of the 1960s contained the effort to organize a second Afro-Asian conference. In this regard Pakistan provided China with substantial help.⁵⁰ Through the Afro-Asian community, Pakistan tried to gain the sympathies of Third World countries regarding the Kashmir problem.

2.4 *Nascent Commercial Relations*

On 5 January 1963 the first ever trade agreement between China and Pakistan was concluded.⁵¹ This agreement granted both countries a most-favoured-nation clause in bilateral trade. The clause had a validity of one year and after expiration

50 Christopher Tang, »Beyond India: The Utility of Sino-Pakistani Relations in Chinese Foreign Policy, 1962–1965«, *Cold War International History Project* 64 (2002), 7.

51 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 94.

it was to be prolonged automatically. In terms of specific items of trade, the agreement covered the Chinese export of iron ore, steel products, coal, cement, industrial products, chemical products, various raw materials and agricultural seeds. Pakistan could export to China jute and jute products, cotton, textile products, hunting tools, medical devices and chromium ore. All payments would be made in British pounds.⁵²

After a short time an agreement on barter trade was signed on 30 September 1963 which covered the Chinese export of 100 thousand tonnes of cement to Pakistan and the import of cotton. After a decade of a decrease in cotton exports from Pakistan, in 1963 China became its biggest consumer, which considerably helped the Pakistani cotton industry. At the end of 1963 China offered the provision of interest-free credit of 60 million USD to Pakistan, with a schedule of due dates in 30 to 40 years. This credit would be bound to the purchase of heavy industrial machinery and entire factories for the production of sugar and cement.⁵³ It is interesting to note that the repayments were to be realized in the form of primary commodities, consumer goods, railway carriages, rails and orders for railway construction in Pakistan, which became the first non-communist country participating in the Western alliance system to receive Chinese economic aid.⁵⁴

Considering the fact that exports to China were a small share of total Pakistani exports, their increase did not bring about an emergent dependency on China. However, in the case of some important export commodities like cotton or jute, the Chinese market occupied a very important place. Therefore, when competition in the markets of these two commodities increased in the 1960s, the eventual loss of the Chinese market caused significant problems for the

52 Vertzberger, »The Political Economy of Sino-Pakistani Relations«, 637–638.

53 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability amidst Discontinuity«, 471.

54 Washington's reaction to this high level Sino-Pakistani economic cooperation was the suspension of a 4.3 million USD loan for the development of Dhaka Airport. Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 76.

Pakistani production of these commodities. Until 1971 bilateral trade was in favour of Pakistan; however, in the 1970s it started to move in favour of China.⁵⁵

An important step in the overall development of bilateral relations was the signing on 29 August 1963 of an agreement on air travel.⁵⁶ Pakistan was the only non-communist country which China signed this kind of agreement with. In 1963 another two agreements were signed: an agreement on radio broadcasting and photographic services, and an agreement between news agencies.⁵⁷ On 16 September 1963 a telecommunications agreement was signed.

In April 1965 an agreement on a maritime connection between China and Pakistan was signed, which set up a naval connection at an interval of one month.⁵⁸ In October 1966 a supplementary agreement was signed, enabling the ships of both countries to anchor in the ports of the other country and ship people as well as cargo.

Cooperation in the field of communications over land was mainly focused on roads connecting the two countries. The road connecting Pakistani-controlled Kashmir with Chinese Xinjiang through the Mintka Pass was put into use in September 1968. This road significantly shortened the time needed for transport from Xinjiang to Kashmir and vice versa through one of the most important Himalayan passes. In February 1971 another road connection between Xinjiang and Kashmir was completed; it passed through the Karakoram Pass and was built in six months.⁵⁹ The construction of the 800-km long Karakoram highway

55 Vertzberger, »The Political Economy of Sino-Pakistani Relations«, 639, 642.

56 In exchange for transportation rights for China Airways at Karachi and Dhaka Airports, PIA acquired similar rights in Canton and Shanghai, and a regular flight service between Shanghai and Karachi with stops in Canton and Dhaka was established. This agreement enabled PIA to broaden the territory it covered and increase its income. For Chinese companies, it provided a better connection with the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Klaus H. Pringsheim, »China's Role in the Indo-Pakistani Conflict«, *The China Quarterly* 24 (1965), 172.

57 The agreement between news agencies came into force on 23 July 1964. Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 78–79.

58 Vertzberger, »The Political Economy of Sino-Pakistani Relations«, 643.

59 Tarique Niazi, »Storm Clouds Ahead for the 'All-Weather Allies'? Today's Pakistan-China Relationship«, *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Asia Program*, <www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1462&categoryid=8EF8540E-E3B0-FA92-

passing through Khunjerab Pass was an admirable piece of engineering. Its construction was officially completed in June 1978, and it was put into public use in August 1982.

3 The *Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 and its Aftermath*

The second half of the 1960s was marked by the second Indo-Pakistani War in 1965. It is possible to state that this war was the result of the Pakistani government's frustration with its inability to resolve the Kashmir problem in a satisfactory way and its overconfidence in Pakistan's military capabilities.⁶⁰ It is also possible to state that it was a consequence of Sino-Pakistani rapprochement.⁶¹ In this regard, official Chinese representatives' proclamations about the common threat and China's military role played an important role.⁶²

In 1964 numerous violations of the Indian border occurred from the Pakistani side. At the beginning of 1965 armed clashes developed into a full-on conflict in the area of the Great Indian Desert. In May 1965 there were clashes in Kashmir as well. The overall situation gradually escalated and led towards war. Similarly as the Sino-Indian War in 1962, the Indo-Pakistani War in 1965 represented a milestone in Sino-Pakistani relations. From the moment Pakistan launched an extensive offensive against India, Beijing openly supported it.⁶³ In an effort to effectively support Pakistan and create pressure on India, Beijing

8727563242D93F67&fuseaction=topics.events_item_topics&event_id=494830> (last retrieval 1 July 2011).

60 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 473.

61 Pringsheim, »China's Role in the Indo-Pakistani Conflict«, 171.

62 Garver, »Sino-Indian Rapprochement and the Sino-Pakistan Entente«, 327.

63 Sheldon W. Simon, »The Kashmir Dispute in Sino-Soviet Perspective«, *Asian Survey* 7,3 (1967), 181.

sent a protest note to New Delhi on 8 September 1965, accusing India of serious violations of Chinese territory and sovereignty.⁶⁴ This can be understood as an effort to create a precondition for eventually joining the Indo-Pakistani War on Pakistan's side and creating a second front.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to say that the direct involvement or participation of China in this conflict was almost certainly out of the question due to the joint position of both superpowers. On the other hand, China's threats, its concentration of military power on the borders with Sikkim and all that turmoil provoked by Beijing⁶⁵ were not without consequences. The cooperation between the US and Soviet Union that attempted to prevent any further escalation of tension on the Indian subcontinent and minimize Chinese influence in the region was caused by Chinese actions.

After defeat in the war with India, the Pakistani policy of »a special relationship« with China, which was characteristic for the period from 1963 to 1965, was replaced by new political line accentuating balanced relations with the US, USSR and China. This political course became typical for Pakistani foreign policy from 1966 to 1969.⁶⁶

At the beginning of the Great Cultural Proletarian Revolution in the middle of 1966, Sino-Pakistani relations already had a solid foundation, with both countries realizing the advantages and limits of their mutual links. Beijing was also afraid that it would be unable to satisfy all of Pakistan's needs and requirements, and realized that Pakistan was only a partial counterbalance against India on the subcontinent. However, despite an understanding of its own limits, Beijing maintained its relationship with Pakistan, which was not demonized by Chinese propaganda during the Cultural Revolution and was the only non-communist country with which China preserved standard diplomatic ties.⁶⁷

There were several factors which enabled this kind of development. For one thing, there was not a numerous Chinese minority in Pakistan which could be

64 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 474.

65 Pringsheim, »China's Role in the Indo-Pakistani Conflict«, 174.

66 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 128.

67 John Garver, »Reviewed Work(s): Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century«, *The China Quarterly* 171 (2002), 754.

dragged into political affairs. Furthermore, there was no communist party in Pakistan which could become a base for Maoists, which would have impacted on bilateral relations. However, these factors alone are not enough to explain the absence of criticism of Pakistan during the Cultural Revolution because there were many countries in the world which fulfilled such criteria and did not even have a conservative military regime in charge, and yet these countries did not escape Chinese criticism. This confirms the fact that Beijing's decision to preserve the relationship with Pakistan was pragmatic.⁶⁸

The period from 1965 to 1970 could be characterized as one of rivalry between the great powers over their influence in Pakistan. In 1968 shipments of military equipment from the US and the Soviet Union were stagnating or decreasing, and the Pakistani leadership realized that it could not get more shipments of military equipment or support against India from the superpowers. This caused Islamabad to turn to Beijing for economic and military aid.⁶⁹ In an effort to create stronger ties between the armies of the two countries, Islamabad sent a delegation to China composed of high-ranking military officers from the navy and air force. However, from the short-term perspective this did not result in a substantial increase of Chinese shipments of military equipment.

There was an improvement in Sino-Pakistani relations in 1970. During this year China completely recovered from the economic losses caused by the Cultural Revolution and Beijing tried to reinstate its activities in the international arena. Pakistan, with its rapprochement with China and the intensification of cooperation between the armies of the two countries, nonetheless tried to get more American and Soviet support. However, Pakistani efforts did not bring the desired effect. As a consequence, Pakistan got even closer to China. On 14 November 1970 an agreement on economic and technical cooperation was signed.⁷⁰ Sino-Pakistani relations in 1970 finished the year with Beijing acquiring that which had been lost from 1966 to 1969, and it consolidated its exclusive position in Pakistani foreign policy.

68 Goswami, *Pakistan and China. A Study of Their Relations*, 133.

69 *Ibid.*, 132.

70 Jain, *China, Pakistan and Bangladesh I*, 159.

4 *Sino-Pakistani Relations after 1971*4.1 *The Bangladesh Crisis and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971*

The failure of Pakistani political elites to resolve their political disagreements led to the outbreak of civil war in March 1971. During the Bangladesh Crisis and the third Indo-Pakistani War in 1971 Beijing had two options: to support the Bengalis in their fight for independence or continue its support for the central government in Islamabad because West Pakistan's antagonism against India was the reason why Islamabad appreciated good relations with China.⁷¹ In the end, after wavering and with some embarrassment, Beijing chose to support the central government.⁷² China made it clear that its support was not limited to words, and in May 1971 it offered 20 million USD of supplementary economic aid to Pakistan.⁷³ The hopeless position of Islamabad caused by the continuing conflict caused Islamabad to require more than just economic or diplomatic aid. Nevertheless, Beijing's proclamation generally covered only its support for the sovereignty and national independence of Pakistan, and not its territorial integrity.⁷⁴

There were several reasons for Beijing to be cautious. The Chinese leadership thought that the Pakistani government was unable to deal with the situation in East Pakistan. Another reason was that an independent Bangladesh would terminate Beijing's dilemma and make it possible for China to simultaneously support conservative West Pakistan as well as the radicalism in East Pakistan.⁷⁵ It can also be presumed that Beijing did not want to stand against the majority of the members of the international community due to the issue of its membership in the UN.⁷⁶

71 *Ibid.*, 161.

72 Sidky, »Chinese World Strategy and South Asia: The China Factor in Indo-Pakistani Relations«, 966.

73 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 483.

74 Das, *Sino-Pak Collusion and U.S. Policy*, 63.

75 *Ibid.*, 153–154.

76 China officially became a member of the UN on 25 October 1971.

In the spring of 1971 Pakistan played an important role in secret communications between the US and China regarding the rapprochement of these two countries, which can be evaluated as an important turning point in geopolitical relations between the great powers. Chinese dependence on Pakistan decreased after Kissinger's visit to China was made public on 15 July 1971 and after his second visit to China in October 1971, which strengthened direct contacts between China and the US.⁷⁷ However, Chinese gratitude persisted.⁷⁸

4.2 *Cooperation under New Circumstances*

After Pakistan's defeat in its war with India in 1971, China continued to extend its military and economic aid to Pakistan. Beijing took on the role of rebuilding the Pakistani army and supplied it with the most modern Chinese weapons (Table 1). China became the main supplier of military aid to Pakistan and re-equipped all three major parts of its military. Shipments of arms were supplied for free or under very advantageous terms. From 1970 to 1982 these shipments included the supply of more 800 tanks, 25 navy vessels and approximately 300 planes as well as surface-to-air missile systems, light firearms and ammunition. Generally these shipments contained the most modern Chinese weapons.⁷⁹ In 1976 Premier Bhutto convinced the Chinese leadership to include Pakistani requirements into the long-term production plans of the Chinese defence industry. Therefore, it is not a surprise that in 1982 Chinese weapons constituted the backbone of Pakistan's military equipment (75 percent of the

77 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 484.

78 Besides Chinese gratitude, there was conformity in the interests of the US and China regarding Pakistan and India, which in this period was getting closer to the Soviet Union. With Nixon's approaching visit to China, both sides wanted to demonstrate their ability to cooperate on some issues despite their differences in others. Despite different approaches, the regime in Islamabad was the major ally in South Asia for the US as well as for China. Das, *Sino-Pak Collusion and U.S. Policy*, 54–55.

79 *Ibid.*, 135.

total number of tanks and 65 percent of the air force), and this trend continued in following years.⁸⁰

Year	Tanks	Airplanes	Navy vessels	Other weapons
1970-71	110 T-54/55 100 T-59	MiG-19 (number unspecified)	9 gunboats	—
1972	100 T-59	50 MiG-19	6 gunboats (Shanghai Class)	—
1973	—	TU-16 (number unspecified)	—	—
1974	159 T-59	1 squadron Shenyang (MiG-19)	—	—
1975	—	—	—	—
1976	—	30 F-6	submarines, destroyers, patrol boats (number unspecified)	—
1977	50 T-59	30 F-6	—	—
1978	50 T-59	24 F-4	3 patrol boats (Hainan Class)	—

Table 1
*Chinese Military Aid to Pakistan from 1970 to 1982.*⁸¹

80 Vertzberger, »The Political Economy of Sino-Pakistani Relations«, 647.

81 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), World Armaments and Disarmament, SIPRI Yearbooks 1970-1977 and SIPRI Yearbooks 1978-1982.

Bhutto, who became prime minister in 1971, made an official visit to China in February 1972, where he received a cordial welcome.⁸² Beijing agreed to transform four already granted loans with a total value of 110 million USD into grants⁸³ and prolong the schedule of due payment dates for a 200 million USD loan provided in 1970 by 20 years.⁸⁴ At the end of 1973 there was an exchange of military delegations, which was a sign of continuing cooperation in this field.

After the declaration of Bangladeshi independence on 26 March 1971 and China's entry into the UN, China refused to recognize it as an independent country and blocked its entry into the UN. Beijing also refused to solve the problem of refugees, which took on massive proportions. According to Beijing, India was responsible for this due to its meddling in the internal affairs of Pakistan. On the other hand, Beijing did not consider its stance regarding Bangladeshi membership in the UN as invariable, but rather as temporary.⁸⁵ The requirements for it to change its stance was the solving of the problem of prisoners of war returning from India and the establishment of a general solution which would be acceptable to Pakistan. Therefore, relations with Bangladesh could wait.

82 Jain, *China Pakistan and Bangladesh II*, 207.

83 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 486.

84 Das, *Sino-Pak Collusion and U.S. Policy*, 130.

85 Despite the Chinese veto mentioned above, Beijing proclaimed that its reservations regarding Bangladeshi membership in the UN were just temporary. In November 1972 the Chinese representative to the UN proclaimed that basically China was not against Bangladesh's entry into the UN. He further stated that China had always preserved a deep friendship towards the people of East Pakistan, and hoped that the Bangladeshi political leadership would make decisions independently and soon meet with the Pakistani leadership to reasonably resolve problematic bilateral issues. This would be a sign of the fact that Bangladesh was really an independent country. At the end of his speech, the Chinese representative stated that in the current situation China could not agree with Bangladesh's membership in the UN until all concerned UN resolutions were implemented by all concerned sides, and until a reasonable solution to problematic issues between India, Bangladesh and Pakistan was reached. Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability amidst Discontinuity«, 486-487.

Chinese support and the blocking of Bangladesh's entry into the UN improved Pakistan's position in negotiations with India and Bangladesh. After initial support and adoption of the abovementioned stance, Beijing came to the conclusion that any change in its position before relations between India, Bangladesh and Pakistan were settled would harm its own reputation in the countries China supported. This is the probable reason why China did not try to thwart any negotiations, i.e. those leading to the Simla Agreement of July 1972⁸⁶ or those leading to the New Delhi Agreement of 28 August 1973 between India and Pakistan concerning the consequences of the 1971 war.⁸⁷ On 30 August 1973 Chinese Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei 姬鵬飛 proclaimed that the New Delhi Agreement created suitable conditions for a *détente* in South Asia and the normalization of relations between the concerned sides.⁸⁸

In February 1974 Prime Minister Bhutto announced Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh, and in April 1974 a meeting of foreign ministers of the three South Asian countries took place in which the last discrepancies regarding the 1971 war were resolved.⁸⁹ Therefore, when subsequently Premier Bhutto paid a visit to China in May 1974, the Chinese leadership repeated its support for Islamabad regarding Kashmir and expressed satisfaction over the normalization of relations between the South Asian countries.⁹⁰

Despite the fact that the Chinese policy towards Pakistan was not only determined by Sino-Indian relations,⁹¹ territorially-reduced Pakistan lost a portion of its significance as a counterbalance against India. The question emerged as to whether Beijing under certain conditions would try to normalize its relations with India with the aim of weakening India's ties with the Soviet Union. From the moment the Soviet Union made its first shipment of weapons

86 Garver, »Sino-Indian Rapprochement and the Sino-Pakistan Entente«, 326–327.

87 After signing the New Delhi Agreement in August 1973 regarding the repatriation of prisoners of war and refugees, Beijing proclaimed that it had come too late, and until 1974, when all problematic issues between the three South Asian countries were resolved, China continued to block Bangladesh's entry into the UN. Jain, *China Pakistan and Bangladesh II*, 233.

88 *Ibid.*, 232.

89 Barnds, »China's Relations with Pakistan«, 487.

90 Jain, *China Pakistan and Bangladesh II*, 239.

91 Garver, »Sino-Indian Rapprochement and the Sino-Pakistan Entente«, 337–345.

to Pakistan in 1968, India periodically tried to indicate to China its interest in a dialogue about the status of their bilateral relations. China did not show any interest for change until the beginning of the 1970s.⁹² But this time it was India which, due to unrest in East Pakistan, was uninterested. It remained so until 1974, when relations with Pakistan were normalized. In any case, after the declaration of an independent Bangladesh Beijing was not forced to re-evaluate its relationship with Pakistan, and there was an improvement in relations with India; this would have happened anyway in the context of an effort to fend off China's possible encirclement.⁹³ Close relations between Beijing and Islamabad also continued in the following years.

5 Conclusion

Despite the changing nature of Chinese foreign policy due to its varying moderate and militant approach, a very interesting feature during this specific period was Beijing's persistent effort to maintain good relations with Pakistan. From the 1950s the main goals of China's foreign policy practically remained the same; only the changing international environment and the changing Chinese view of it caused a significant shift in Beijing's policy and in its relations with other powers. Relations between China and Pakistan, which were never completely smooth, preserved a certain degree of stability.

Given that China and Pakistan have such different societies, it is difficult to see their cooperation coming from ideological affinity or mutual attraction. Their cooperation was primarily based on both countries' hostile relations with India. This was the major determining factor of Chinese policy during the initial

92 Arthur G. Rubinoff, »Reviewed work(s): China-South Asian Relations, 1947-1980. Volume 1: India, 1947-1980. by R. K. Jain China-South Asian Relations. Volume 2: Pakistan, 1947-1965; The Kutch Conflict; Indo-Pak Conflict of 1965; Pakistan, 1966-1980; Bangladesh Crisis and Indo-Pak War of 1971; Bangladesh, 1972-1980; Sri Lanka, 1951-1980. By R. K. Jain«, *Pacific Affairs* 57.1 (1984), 150.

93 Das, *Sino-Pak Collusion and U.S. Policy*, 151.

period, which could be described as cooperation with ‘the enemy of my enemy’. It is necessary to understand this in the context of competition between the great powers in the Indian subcontinent. However, Chinese rivalry with the Soviet Union and the US does not provide a complex picture of Chinese policy towards Pakistan.

Even during the time of cordial relations with India in the 1950s, China did not have hostile relations with Pakistan. This was a very interesting feature of the Chinese attitude towards Pakistan (a US ally) during the Cold War. The preservation of good relations with Pakistan during the Cultural Revolution can be seen as something unique. If this was not an accident, then it could prove Beijing’s ability to follow a consistent foreign policy on a bilateral level.

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