

The master's thesis examines the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture against the backdrop of the reconfiguration of international power relations in the form of the ever intensifying geopolitical rivalry between the United States and China on the one hand and its strategic rapprochement with India on the other. The thesis asks whether and, if so, how Pakistan's strategic culture has changed from the 1970s, when the country settled within its present borders, to the present. Strategic culture is conceptualized as a discursive construction. Therefore, the core of this thesis is interpretive qualitative research based on the methodology of discursive analysis. The thesis concludes that the strategic culture of Pakistan has remained constant despite significant changes in the external environment during the period under study. Thus, the stability of Pakistan's strategic culture confirms the relevancy of this concept as an analytical tool. Pakistan's strategic culture rests on two pillars: (1) rivalry with India, who is perceived as an existential threat, and the resulting (2) alliance with the PRC, who acts as a key security guarantee. From the analysed accounts of Pakistani policymakers and military officials, it is clear that Pakistan, as a result of its fixation on India, has often made strategic decisions that were in direct conflict with its strategic interests.