

Vietnamese-Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1964-1980: An Exploratory Analysis of Exchanged Telegrams

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Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union are the countries with the largest ground forces in the world, each holding 1 millions, 3.6 millions, and 1.8 millions men respectively. Furthermore, they were recently involved in war: Vietnam fought one of the most toughest wars against the US for many years before 1973; China and the Soviet Union experienced brief military border clashes in 1969; China struck a bloody and costly intervention into Vietnam in 1979. And most importantly, these countries manifested dramatic changes in alignment structure among themselves during the course of these conflicts. This article analyses the triangular relationship on the basis of the telegrams exchanges among the leaders of these countries, as published on *Nhan Dan*, *Renmin Ribao*, and *Pravda*, 1964-1980. First, policy appeals in the telegrams are systematically examined in order to show where and when the three countries converge and diverge in their policy positions on major international issues. Second, friendship-hostility indicators are constructed, using attributes of these exchanged telegrams to show the metricised trend of the triangular relationship. This article constitutes the first part of a larger work, the purpose of which is to analyse systematically the dynamics of realignment.