

# 中印邊界潛在衝突之分析—— 從國族與民族不平衡的觀點

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## 摘要

這幾年中國在釣魚台、南海與鄰國的領土主權爭議態度轉趨強硬，其實中國在中印邊界的糾紛，自 2006 年也轉趨修正而變得更激進，但中印邊界潛在衝突卻一直為外界所忽略。然而，中國在中印邊界態度的轉變，與東海與南海海域糾紛不同，對區域安全的衝擊與結果也不同，本文認為，中印邊界爭議，不像南海糾紛，美國等大國並沒有扮演重要角色，本文試圖從 Benjamin Miller 的「國族與民族不平衡」的分析架構來闡述，治理西藏問題為中國帶來嚴重的不安全感，促使中國在 1980 年中期與 2006 年，二度修正對中印邊界的主張，尤其是最近十年，中國重申對印度的阿魯納恰爾邦與藏傳佛教重鎮賴旺的領土主張，再度使邊界協商陷入僵局；同時中國為控制西藏，加強基礎建設與軍事部署，被印度解讀為中印邊界的安全威脅，使印度也在邊界加大基礎建設與部署軍隊，變成雙方進行基礎建設與軍事部署的競賽，加上印度頻頻指控中國入侵中印邊界，使中印邊界問題雪上加霜。西藏問題所引起國族與民族的衝突，是加劇雙方安全困境的主因之一。

**關鍵詞：**中印邊界糾紛，西藏問題，中印安全困境，國族與民族不平衡

# **The Analysis on the Potential Conflicts along the Sino-Indian Borders - From the Perspective of State-to-nation Imbalance**

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## **Abstract**

China's attitude has been changed to its foreign policy over maritime territorial disputes in Diaoyutai (釣魚台) islands and the South China Sea with its neighbors. Also, China has become more assertive in its border dispute with India since 2006. However, the irritants of Sino-Indian border disputes were often neglected by analysts and security establishments. Unlike the territorial disputes in East China Sea (東海) and South China Sea (南海), the great power involvement, such as the US, has been played a limited role in the Sino-Indian border dispute. This paper applies an IR theorist Benjamin Miller's theoretical approach—state-to-nation imbalance—in order to identify the factors of influencing Sino-Indian border disputes in regional and domestic level of analysis. Therefore, this paper highlights the state-to-nation imbalance derived from the Tibet (西藏問題) issue, which is an underlying factor to contribute to Chinese revisionist claims on Sino-Indian border disputes. Given its insecurity on Tibet, China revised its territorial claim on India's Arunachal Pradesh and Tawang, thus putting the boundary negotiation into deadlock. Meanwhile, China's moves of strengthening infrastructure and increasing deployment of troops in Tibet were perceived by India as a security threat; therefore, it caused mutual military competition and premeditated 'border intrusion' along the Sino-Indian borders, which in turn intensified Sino-Indian security dilemma.

**Keywords: Sino-Indian border disputes, Tibet issue, Sino-Indian security dilemma, state-to-nation imbalance**

## Introduction

Boundary issues have been the highest agenda in Sino-Indian relations. During Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's visit to China in May 2015, he claimed that "We must try to settle the boundary question quickly (Patronobis, 2015). However, the boundary issues persistently cast shadow on the official-led Sino-Indian entente. For example, India accused Chinese border incursions when Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) brought \$ 20 billion investment deal to India in September 2014 (The Economic Times, 2014). Just one month before Chinese Premier, Li Keqiang (李克強) visit's to India in 2013, Sino-Indian border burst out a most serious two-week military standoff in Ladakh (China called Aksai Chin) (阿克賽欽) for the last two decades (NDTV, 2013).

As a matter of fact, Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit to China initiated a Sino-Indian rapprochement that has institutionalized border negotiations and established a series of CBMs (confidence building measures) in order to let these two Asian giants normalize their relations and focus on their domestic economic development. As Indian former National Security Adviser, Shinshankar Menon, states, the Indo-Pakistani borders, for which there is an agreement on the Line of Control (LOC) together with an official ceasefire— but where shooting and casualties still regularly occur— Sino-Indian border has never been formally demarcated on the ground or delimited by treaties, yet it has been well managed and remains tranquil and peaceful since the last shootings in 1967 military clash (Talbot, 2014). Also, the 2013 Ladakh standoff was peacefully resolved through flag meetings and diplomacy.

However, given undertaking through three stages, forty rounds in total, of border talks, Sino-Indian border disputes still were not resolved. From Chinese perspectives, apart from its offshore and maritime territorial disputes, China has resolved its territorial disputes with thirteen neighboring countries. India remained the only country with a substantial unresolved land border dispute with China <sup>4</sup> (Fravel, 2005:56-57; 2008:172). Moreover, it seemed that China took a more assertive and revisionist position on the Sino-Indian border after 2006. In November 2006, Chinese

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<sup>4</sup> Compared to Sino-Indian territorial disputes with 130,000 square kilometres, China has 269 square kilometres, a relatively minor land dispute with Bhutan.

ambassador, Sun Yuxi (孫玉璽), replying to a question by an Indian interviewer from CNN-IBN television about the border disputes, claimed that Indian administrated Arunachal Pradesh was Chinese territory, including Tawang. By contrast, China kept a relatively low profile, keeping this issue on the negotiation table rather than on the media and official domains in the 1990s and early 2000s. China's reclaim over Arunachal Pradesh not only caused a series of tit-for-tat events that affected Sino-Indian relations, but also led to the deadlock of border negotiations. It seems that border disputes continue to be an intractable problem for the Sino-Indian rapprochement. However, these two emerging regional powers with stable relationship are crucial for regional security and world order.

This article seeks to explain why China twice revised its territorial claims of Sino-Indian borders in the 1980s and after 2006 and what factors caused Sino-Indian security dilemma in the last decade. Most literature argues that China's aggressive behavior towards its neighbors on territorial disputes due to its increase of distribution of capabilities and its response of encirclement by India, the US, and its allies (Dutta, 2008; John W Garver & Wang, 2010; Mearsheimer, 2010). Sino-Indian security dilemma was derived from the geopolitical competition, the aspiration for regional hegemon, and asymmetrical capabilities between China and India (John W. Garver, 2002, 2010; Malik, 2011; Pant, 2013). However, this paper argues that the dominant explanation derived from defensive and offensive variants of realism tends to ignore the regional and domestic contexts (Miller, 2007:30; T.V.Paul, 2012:12). In particular, the prominent realist approaches in the systemic level might be contributing factors to explain China's assertive response but failed to explain why China changed its territorial claims in certain periods and were unable to support why Sino-Indian rapprochement still sustains in the context of unresolved border disputes (Fang, 2014:3). Consequently, this paper will apply a theoretical framework – the state-to-nation imbalance approach– derived from the IR theorist, Benjamin Miller, so as to identify factors influencing Sino-Indian territorial disputes.

Hence, this paper will organize in five sections. The first section will elucidate Benjamin Miller's analytical framework, then briefly introduce the historical disagreements of Sino-Indian border disputes, the third will review the literature for explaining why Sino-Indian disputes cannot be resolved. The fourth part will discuss China's twice revisions of territorial claims on the Sino-Indian border disputes and explore the factors underlying China's revisionist claims. The last part will discuss the

Sino-Indian security dilemma and the potential conflicts. This paper would argue that the state-to-nation imbalance, namely, China's insecurity on Tibet accounts for its revisionist territorial claims on India's Arunachal Pradesh and Tawang, thereby putting the boundary negotiation into deadlock and posing potential destabilizing effect on Sino-Indian relations. Moreover, China's moves of strengthening infrastructure and increasing deployment of troops in Tibet were perceived by India as a security threat; therefore, it caused mutual military competition and premeditated 'border intrusion' along the Sino-Indian borders, which in turn intensified Sino-Indian security dilemma.

## **1. The theoretical framework**

Benjamin Miller, a professor in the School of Political Sciences at the University of Haifa, Israel, proposes the theory of regional war and peace and provides an explanation of the transition from war to peace (2007). The work of Miller seeks to explain the reasons why regional peace and war broke out, in particular, he focuses on the transition from war to peace or vice versa and integrates two levels of analysis into one theory, taking systemic and domestic attributes into account.

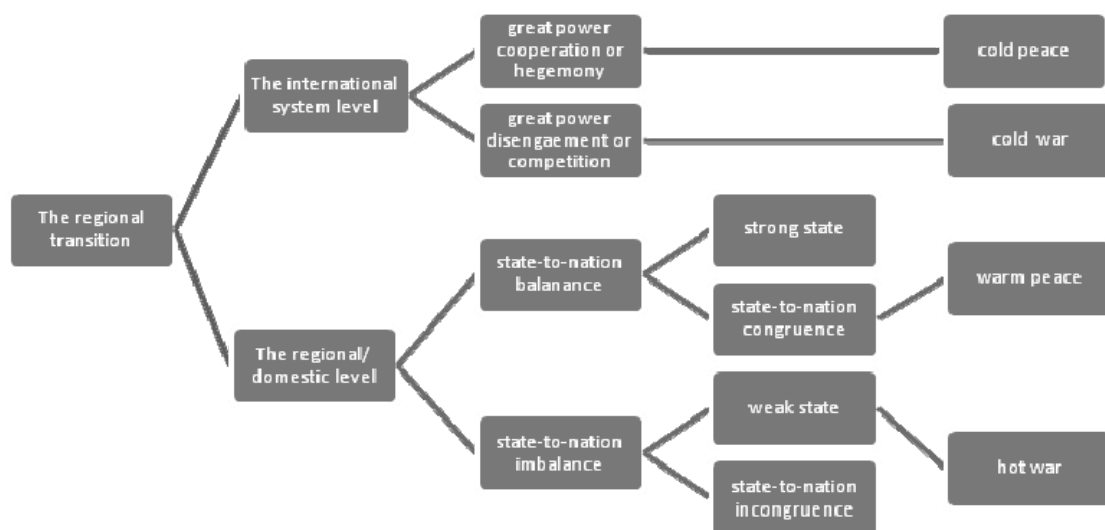
In order to provide a nuanced explanation, Miller distinguishes the regional war and peace into five types of outcomes, ranging from hot war at one end of continuum, cold war, cold peace, to warm peace, including normal peace and high-level peace, at the other (Miller, 2007:12). The underlying causes of the transition of regional order are based on three key concepts: state, nation, and international system.

Therefore, Miller (2007:13) proposes two factors in terms of international and regional level of analysis to account for regional transition. The first factor is great power involvement in international level, referring to different types of great power engagement in the region: competition, cooperation, disengagement, and hegemony, which affects the local states moving from hot war to cold war, from cold war to cold peace, or back to hot war. In particular, great powers play important roles to encourage local states undergoing a transition from cold war to cold peace. The second factor is the state-to-nation balance in domestic level, referring to (i) the degree of congruence between state's geographic boundaries and national aspirations and the political identifications of the people, and (ii) the prevalence of strong versus weak states, accounts for the occurrence of hot war and the emergence of warm peace.

This factor could lead to ‘hot’ outcomes. On the one hand, imbalance, which means local actors with domestic problems of irredentism or secessionism or ethnic conflicts, is the underlying cause of regional war proneness. On the other hand, the state-to-nation balance, referring to nation-building problems has being resolved, contributes to regional stability and warm peace.

Moreover, state-to-nation balance is comprised of two factors: state-building, referring to the extent of state strength, and the nation-building, referring to the national identity of people is consistent with the geopolitical boundary of state (Miller, 2007:54-55). The extent of state strength could be measured by two dimensions of state’s performance, (i) whether it has an effective set of political institutions, (ii) whether it is able to control the violence in its territory through a combination of armed force and domestic legitimacy. The second factor refers to state-to-nation congruence, depending on a success in nation building. By contrast, unsuccessful nation-building, which leads to state-to-nation incongruence, may be construed in two ways, (i) internal incongruence, whereby sub-state ethnic groups, claiming their right to self-determination based on demographic and historic grounds, demand to secede and to establish their own states.(ii) external incongruence, whereby a shared ethnic majority among states, based on the grounds of national affiliation and national-historical rights, advocate pan-national movements of unification or the irredentist claims of neighbouring states (Miller, 2007:56).

Figure 1: Miller’s theory of regional war and peace



However, Miller's theory does not explain why some ethnic groups use peaceful rather than violent means in expressing their secessionist desire. Saideman (2008) argues that Miller overstates the state-to-nation balance in Western Europe at a time when there were well-known secessionist movements – for instance, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales in Britain, Basque and Catalan in Spain, Corsican and Basque in France. Therefore, he states, not all secessionist movements fit into state-to-nation imbalance. Neither can institutions and incentives within each state explain why some secessionist movements choose peace rather than violence. The key reason for the difference in attitudes depends on whether these groups believe that violence is necessary in order to achieve meaningful change. Hence, secessionists in Quebec see violence as unacceptable, preferring to gain victories through legislation and the courts.

This paper argues that Miller's terminology of 'cold peace' fits in the description of the post-1988 Sino-Indian rapprochement, which characterized by, (i) China and India have ratified more than fifty formal agreements since 1988 in order to normalize its relations, (ii) The border conflicts were moderated by institutionalized negotiations but still far from being resolved, (iii) both states still feel threatened and concerned with relative gains by increasing military build-up along the border since the late 2000s, and (iv) the danger of use of force is unlikely in the near future, but it is possible to reverse if changes in the international or regional environment or domestic politics occur. The maintenance of Sino-Indian cold peace resulted from the presence of the hegemon, the Russia in the 1990s and the US after 2000 in the international level<sup>5</sup>.

However, why China and India could not reach warm peace? It is because China and India could not resolve border disputes, which derived from the problems of state-to-nation imbalance; in particular, the border disputes became more intense after 2006. Consequently, this paper will apply Benjamin Miller's factor – state-to-nation imbalance in the regional/domestic level in order to puzzle out this question, focusing on the unresolved border disputes in the last decade.

In order to apply Benjamin Miller's framework to shed light on the causal relations between state-to-nation imbalance and the unresolved disputes, summarizing his three propositions as follows:

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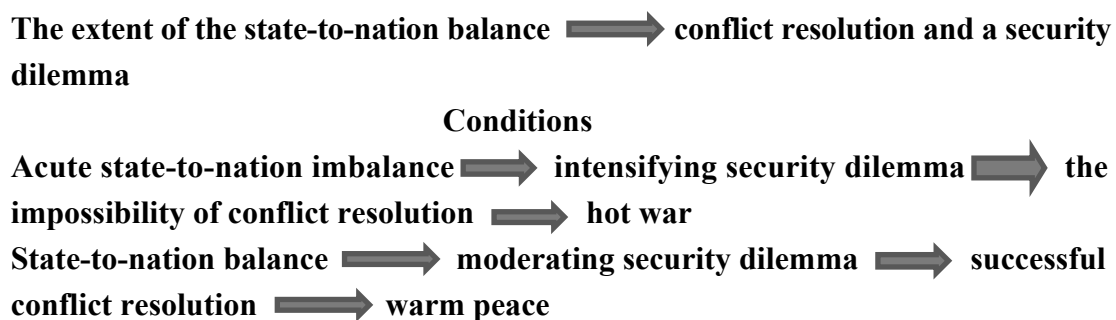
<sup>5</sup> Due to the limited space, the factor of international level is beyond the scope of this paper.

*Proposition 1:* internal incongruence can create strong pressure for secessionist movements and affects the motivations for domestic wars of secession, undermining state's legitimacy and producing opportunities for external interventions that may lead to regional wars (Miller, 2007:19). Moreover, it may pose difficulties for conflict resolution when territorial issues are involved with state-to-nation imbalances, thereby increasing the possibility of an escalation towards war (Miller, 2005:233) .

*Proposition 2:* strong states, with external state-to-nation incongruence, are incoherent that characterized by the dissatisfaction of the current regional order on nationalist grounds, such as territorial and boundary problems and refugees; hence, they are inclined to pursue revisionist agendas, thereby making conflict resolution less likely. Moreover, unresolved problems have a destabilizing effect (see figure 1), thus creating a security dilemma, which may lead, firstly, to revisionist challenges, and secondly, to hot war. Miller (2007:121) also argues that the security dilemma produced by a state-to-nation imbalance is caused by insecurity brought about by competing territorial and demographic claims.

*Proposition 3:* in the presence of a hegemon, some destabilizing effects on regional stability are moderated if state-to-nation imbalances are unresolved, thereby leading to either a cold peace or a cold war (Miller, 2007:191,197).

Figure 2: The effect of state-to-nation balance



## 2. The historical disagreements of Sino-Indian border

Before going to discuss the recent episodes, it is necessary to introduce the backgrounds and the historical disagreements of Sino-Indian border disputes.

The disputed Sino-Indian border has been traditionally divided into three sectors: the eastern, middle, and western sector. The middle sector exchanged



maps of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in 2000. Therefore, the border disputes mainly centre around two separate pieces of territory (Chen, 2009:170-171; Liu, 2011:148; Junwu Pan, 2009:191). The western sector– Aksai Chin, covering a total area of about 38,000 square km, has been administrated by China since 1962 Sino-Indian border war, which is mainly in its Hotan (和闐) County of Xinjiang (新疆) and part of Ari (阿里) District of Tibet (西藏). India claims that China has occupied 43,180 square kilometers of Jammu and Kashmir, including 5,180 sq. km illegally ceded to China by Pakistan in the 1963 Sino-Pakistan boundary agreement. The eastern sector – Arunachal Pradesh, conforming to the 1914 McMahon Line (麥克馬洪線), has been administrated by India, the state of Arunachal Pradesh, formerly the North-East Frontier Agency of Assam State. China claims that India has occupied about 90,000 sq. km of its South Tibet, comprising three districts of Momyul (墨脫), Loyul (隆子), and Lower Zayul (察隅). The LAC of both sectors has remained disputed to date.

The historical disagreements on Sino-Indian border derived from the difficulties of cartographic techniques and the disagreements of defining the borders before the establishment of independent states (Raghavan, 2006:3882). At the time of Indian independence in 1947 and the establishment of the PRC in 1949, both countries inherited 2,500 miles of borders which were undefined and undemarcated, either on the map or on the ground. The roots of Sino-Indian border disputes, therefore, originated from diverse interpretation of two historical agreements, (i) the delimitation of the McMahon Line agreed at the Simla (西姆拉) Conference in 1914 and (ii) ‘The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence’ (和平共存五原則) Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954. Both contentious agreements were associated with Tibet’s historical status.

### ***The 1914 Simla Agreement***

Great Britain<sup>6</sup>, who convened the Simla Conference in order to discuss Tibet’s

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<sup>6</sup> British India imperial involvement in Tibet can be traced back to the late nineteenth century when they were pushing for trade routes into Tibet. In 1903-4, a British Indian military expedition to Tibet had forced Tibet to sign a trading agreement in order to forestall Russian overtures. At the 1904 and 1906 British-Chinese Conventions, Britain confirmed Chinese suzerainty over Tibet in return for an indemnity of trade from the Chinese government.

status, involved the governments of the newly founded Republic of China, and of Tibet, the result being a tripartite delimitation boundary, which became known as the 'McMahon Line', named after Sir Henry McMahon, the British representative. At the conference, Tibet was divided into 'inner' and 'outer' regions, with Inner Tibet falling under Chinese sovereignty and Outer Tibet retaining autonomy under a nominal Chinese suzerainty (Lamb, 1966:530). The aims of the British had been, (i) to use Tibet as a buffer state between British India, Russia and China, (ii) to retain its right to trade with Tibet, and (iii) to station a small number of troops in Outer Tibet (外藏) (Gupta, 1971; Lamb, 1966; Maxwell, 1970:25). The Republic of China - and later the PRC- refused to accept the Convention and ordered the Chinese representative, Ivan Chen (陳貽範), to withdraw the agreement, claiming it to be illegitimate and that the border in the central and western sectors had not been properly defined (Liu, 1994:54). On the other hand, India claimed this agreement to be legal, as they saw it as a legitimate inheritance from British India, therefore, as such, it should serve as the official Sino-Indian border (Ministry of External Affairs, 1961:25).

Paradoxically, the Simla Convention was primarily about the relationship between Tibet and China; however, it was brokered by the British, hence, it created two long-term disputes over, (i) Tibet's status, and (ii) the validity of the McMahon Line, which now constitute the main crux of the Sino-Indian territorial disputes.

*Tibet's status*: while campaigning for independence, the 'Free Tibet' activists often cite the Simla conference as proof of its sovereignty and independence. However, the Chinese believe that Tibet had always been under their sovereignty; hence it had no authority to sign an agreement in its own right (J. Wang & Gyaltzen, 1997:91). The debate centers on whether, if Tibet was sovereign at the time of the Simla Conference, the treaty was legal, and the McMahon Line should serve as the formal Sino-Indian border. However, if Tibet could be proved not to have been sovereign at that time, then the agreement would be illegal and the McMahon Line invalid, making India's position tenuous. As the Dalai Lama (達賴喇嘛) said in a press interview, 'if you deny the sovereign status to Tibet, you deny the validity of the Simla Convention and therefore deny the validity of the McMahon Line' (Times, 1959).

*The McMahon Line*: the dispute concerned two regions, (i) Tawang (達旺), and (ii) Aksai Chin, which became the main areas of Sino-Indian territorial disputes since then. Without recourse to cartographic techniques, a red line had been drawn on a

map delineating an area of 83,743 square kilometers, which, it was claimed, was British northeast Indian territory, where it was used for strategic advantages. This included Tawang, a Tibetan trade town, and the sixth Dalai Lama's birthplace, annexing by India in 1954 (Maxwell, 1999:908). Hence, an area, that had formerly been known as the North-East Frontier Agency, become the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh in 1986 (Liu, 2011:149; Sharma, 1965). However, this area, which was also claimed by China as South Tibet (藏南), had been traditionally governed by Tibetans. Aksai Chin is barely inhabited because it is largely a high altitude desert with no resources. Historically, this region has never been conclusively demarcated; hence both sides claimed it as their territory (John W. Garver, 2001:88-91). This disputed area became the battle field in the Sino-Indian border skirmishes and the war between 1959 and 1962, after which it was administrated by China.

### ***The 1954 Sino-Indian Agreement***

After signing the 'India-China Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India' on April 1954, India for the first time accepted Tibet as being a part of China (H.-f. Chang & Raghavan, 1954). The 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence'<sup>7</sup>, which was regarded as the foundation of Sino-Indian friendship, was written into the preamble of the agreement and pronounced in a joint-statement when Zhou Enlai (周恩來) visited India in June 1954. According to Nehru's memorandum, which was issued to the External Affairs, Defense and Home Ministries, this affirmed that he thought the Sino-Indian border dispute had been solved in the agreement and that the boundary was no longer an issue, given the Chinese had accepted the historical *status quo* (Maxwell, 1999:909). Hence, Nehru expected the friendship policy to reduce or neutralize the security threat from the PLA, stationed in Tibet, while at the same time it would enhance Asian solidarity (Norbu, 2001). However, Chinese position was made explicitly clear that the

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<sup>7</sup> This agreement stated the five principles as:

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
2. Mutual non-aggression.
3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.
4. Equality and cooperation for mutual benefit.
5. Peaceful co-existence.

boundary had never been delimited, and that there were still disputes which could only be settled by mutual consultation and a joint survey of the boundary (K. N. Singh, 1960:172; Zhou, 1973:14)

### ***The probability of resolving Sino-Indian territorial disputes***

Even though both China and India had divergent perceptions regarding the nature of border disputes and the approach to boundary settlement, between 1954 and 1959, both Zhou Enlai and Nehru tried to negotiate them diplomatically, such as by letters, memorandums and notes. Importantly, both sides always referred to the phrase, ‘in the spirit of Sino-Indian friendship’ in their efforts to settle the boundary line (Maxwell, 1970:91). This paper argues that the Sino-Indian border disputes could have been resolved, whereby China and India would have maintained the territorial *status quo* and converted the McMahon line into an internationally accepted boundary during the mid -1950s if there had been no ‘Tibet issue’. My argument is based on two premises regarding ‘Tibet issues’:

The first dimension is Tibet’s contentious status. The PRC signed border agreements with Burma and Nepal in 1960, Mongolia in 1962, and Pakistan in 1963, thereby settling its border disputes, apart from with India. In particular, China’s border agreement with Burma and Pakistan ran along the McMahon Line, hence, China accepted a part of the boundary as a basis for that agreement (Lamb, 1964:169). This raises the question of why China held a different attitude towards its border with India. Scholars, Dawa Norbu (2001:296) and Maxwell (2006), contend that China observed the McMahon Line as the *de facto* border with Burma. Given the Line was not marked on the ground and it had no physical existence, China’s objection to the case of the border with India was based not so much on the ‘physical details’ of the McMahon Line but on its ‘legal foundation’. The treaty signed by Tibet in 1914 demonstrated that it had ‘treaty making’ powers and, therefore, must have been, to a certain extent, independent before 1950. Inevitably, this contention shook the legal and moral foundations of the PRC takeover of Tibet, undermining its ruling legitimacy. As a consequence, China’s claim to the sovereignty of Tibet made China to make a concession out of the question on the boundary negotiation, being in accordance with the Miller’s Proposition 1.

The second dimension was the 1959 Tibet revolts. The border disputes could

have been settled because India had recognized Tibet was part of China in 1954 and China's intention was to maintain the boundary *status quo*. Indeed, the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai's speeches at the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, and on his visit to India in 1956, had reassured Nehru that it was necessary for China to adopt a realistic attitude towards the McMahon Line as its boundary with both Burma and India (Zhou, 1973:14-15). In January 1959, also, when both sides were preparing for the border negotiations, the Chinese declared their intention to preserve the territorial *status quo*.

Moreover, in April 1960, China would also have accepted the McMahon line and legitimized it as an international boundary if India had waived its claim to Aksai Chin in the west- a proposal that became known as the 'east-west swap' package deal (John W. Garver, 2001:100; Maxwell, 1999:56). Zhou had also appeared to prefer a conciliatory approach because of Chinese domestic turmoil regarding the Tibetan rebellion, the failure of the "Great Leap Forward" movement, and growing tension with Taiwan (台灣) (Liu, 1994:37). Therefore, had Nehru accepted this proposal, the Sino-Indian border disputes would have been settled (B. Singh, 1976:78). Unfortunately, though, in March 1959, the Tibetan uprisings in Lhasa and the Dalai Lama's escape to India drove the boundary negotiations into deadlock (Liu, 1994:22). As Norbu (2001:290) contends, if there had not been a revolt in 1959, it is possible that India would have made concessions regarding its claim over Tibet, and China would, in return, have respected the territorial *status quo* in terms of the McMahon line. In sum, from the late 1950s, Sino-Indian territorial negotiations were unsuccessful because of China's internal and external Tibetan problems. The growing Tibetan resistance movement was by now beyond either Zhou's or Nehru's control. Therefore, the border disputes had escalated from standoffs to a border war, as Proposition 1 suggests they might.

### **3. Why China and India could not resolve their border disputes?**

Since the 1980s, China and India have tried to settle territorial disputes by diplomatic negotiations, which have become institutionalized; it may be categorized in the three stages of negotiations shown in Table 1 (Liu, 2011; Parameswaran, 2012; Z. D. Singh, 2011, 2014).

Table 1: The Three Stages of Sino-Indian Border Negotiations

Stage/ Period	Achievements
Border talks: 1981- 1988	Eight rounds of border talks, achieving (i) a reduction of tensions during a period of cold war confrontation, (ii) a period of Sino-Indian détente. China gave up its 'package deal' and accepted an Indian proposition for a sector by sector review of the boundary.
JWG: 1988-2003	Fourteen rounds of Joint Working Group (JWG) meetings, resulting from Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China that lay the groundwork for two important confidence-building agreements in 1993 and 1996, contributing to the stabilization of the <i>status quo</i> . India and China for the first time exchanged maps of the middle sector of the LAC and agreed to respect and observe it.
SR: 2003-2015	Eighteen rounds of Special Representatives were held, following Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to China. The latest achievement was reached in the second stage of a three step process involving agreements on the drafting of a framework and the eventual consensus on a boundary line.

Source: the author made this list from media

However, those negotiations did not settle Sino-Indian border disputes. Some convincing arguments were made regarding why Sino-Indian border issues could not be settled, these including historical legacy, the effect of nationalism, security concerns and Sino-Indian rivalry (Dutta, 1999:1822; Fang, 2014:88; Hongyi, 2009; Jacob, 2011b). It may be generally divided into two aspects by explaining why border disputes cannot be resolved.

*Blame for India:* India missed four chances to accept China's swap proposal to resolve the territorial disputes when Zhou En-lai and Deng proposed this swap deal in the 1960s and in the early 1980s, either in recognition of China's weakness, or to adopt a reconciliatory approach in order to prioritize economic development (John W. Garver, 2001:243; Mansingh, 2007:124; Maxwell, 2011; R. Ramachandran, 2007; B. Singh, 1976:78). However, India took an uncompromising position that both sectors were Indian territory, and that it was unwilling to legitimize China's gains of Aksai Chin, taken by force in the 1962 border war (Ganguly, 1989:1127; Z. D. Singh, 2011:88). Hence, Maxwell (2011:79) attributes the unresolved border disputes to the 'Nehruvian legacy of non-negotiation', which during the numerous rounds of fruitless border negotiations, left India permanently at its 1960 position of insisting that China should surrender Aksai Chin and accept the McMahon Line as the legitimate border.

*Blame for China*: because China took the dilatory strategy that it would resolve the Tibet issue before it settled the border disputes with India. As Tibetan scholar, Norbu (2001:296), argues, China is patiently waiting the death of the Dalai Lama to prevent India using Tibet as a bargaining chip. Coming from a different angle, Indian scholar, Malik Mohan (2011:157), contends that the 2008 Tibet unrest had weakened China's negotiating leverage with India over Tawang due to its fragile control of Tibet. Therefore, China preferred an undefined border as a bargaining leverage until Tibet has been totally pacified and Sinicized, as Inner Mongolia had been, because China suspected India's involvement in the Tibetan separatists and independent movements. Whatever the reasons, China and India cannot reach a border agreement until China resolves the Tibet issue, which accords with Miller's theory that a strong state- such as China's state strength proved by their actions in Tibet-with internal imbalance- such as Tibet's unrest- as an incoherent state, is unlikely to resolve outstanding disputes.

However, in the wake of the 1990s, both countries had strong incentives to resolve peacefully their boundary disputes because both preferred a peaceful border so they could focus on domestic reforms and economic developments. Nevertheless, the successful resolution of border conflicts requires diplomatic negotiations and reciprocal compromises. It is important to analyze why China and India could not make concessions and reach a satisfactory agreement instead of simply blaming each other. According to Taylor Fravel's research (2008), states will only make territorial concessions when they face internal or external threats. For instance, China's offer of territorial concessions with thirteen neighboring countries, which even included abandonment of their historical legacy of 'unequal treaties' that had been ceded to foreign countries, was a result of its 'regime insecurity' due to ethnic insurgencies and crises of legitimacy. Unlike during the Cold War, though, China and India did not face external threats from the Soviet Union or the US. Regarding internal threats, Fravel (2005:50) contends that China was fully capable of controlling of Tibet, whereby decreasing its willingness to make concessions. John Garver (1996:343) concurred, stating that Zhou Enlai's 1960 proposal to relinquish China's possession of the eastern sector was made at a time when the PRC was weak and isolated, which, later, was no longer the case.

Also, as Wiegand (2011:65) notes, states may be unwilling to make concessions in order to reach a settlement so that a territorial disputes could be used as leverage

over other disputed issues. This shows that China used its claim over Arunachal Pradesh as a bargaining chip to compel India's concession to other disputed areas, such as either Aksai Chin or Tawang (S. Ramachandran, 2008). Unlike China's maintenance of the territorial *status-quo* during the 1980s and the early 1990s (Carlson, 2003), this paper argues that its revisionist claims over Arunachal Pradesh, in particular Tawang, due to the insecurity of the situation in Tibet, made the dispute more salient, which, in turn, made concessions more impossible.

In addition to the perceived threats and bargaining chips, domestic constraints, such as nationalism limited the ability of states to make concession. It seems that, due to domestic nationalism, neither country was willing to make concessions for fear of being criticized for losing territory (Fang, 2014:123; Fravel, 2005:82; Shirk, 2008:62). For China, its authoritarian leadership faced increasing vocal nationalist groups, which left it with limited space for offering territorial concessions. Chinese professor, Wang Yiwei (王義桅), concurs by noting that India lost an opportunity to settle the boundary question when Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong (毛澤東) were alive. President Hu Jintao (胡錦濤) is not Deng or Mao. He is strong but he cannot be compared with them; he cannot make decisions without caring domestic nationalism (R. Ramachandran, 2007). From an Indian perspective, its sensationalist media has harbored strong anti-China sentiments, therefore it is likewise hard to offer concession owing to public perceptions; also the passage referring to territory revisions in its national constitution requires a two-thirds majority, which is always difficult to obtain (J. M. Smith, 2013:62).

In 2008, China resolved a fifty-year old territorial dispute with Russia by a *quid-pro-quo* agreement. However, from a Chinese perspective, China offered concession on the Heixiazi Island (黑瞎子島) in the Ussuri river (烏蘇里江) segment, which had been territory conceded to the Tsarist Empire by the Qing dynasty and considered as an imperial intervention; thus, this triggered some nationalist grievances. However, this proves that territorial disputes can be finally resolved, even in the face of nationalist oppositions (Carlson, 2003:688; Wiegand, 2011:231). Another argument that longstanding rivalry is an obstacle to settling territorial disputes was also dispelled in 2008, when China offered substantial territorial concessions to Russia and Vietnam, even though it had experienced longstanding hostility, and even border wars, with both countries (J. M. Smith, 2013). The question, therefore, must be posed as to why the same process could not be applied to India?



#### **4. China's twice revisions of territorial claims on the Sino-Indian border**

This thesis would argue that the answer to the question is the problem of state-to-nation imbalance. Given more than twenty years border negotiations, China appeared to have pursued revisionist territorial agenda twice from 1981 to date, (i) after 1985, when it revised its 'swap proposal' by adding the return of Tawang, and (ii) after 2006, when it renewed its territorial claim on Arunachal Pradesh, seemingly as a consequence of its problem with Tibet. China and India cannot reach a border agreement until China resolves the Tibet issue, which challenges Fravel's perspective that China made concession due to its insecurity (2008:172). In contrast, this paper argues that the problems of state-to-nation imbalance led to China's concession unlikely, and its revisionist claims on Arunachal Pradesh and Tawang, incurring the distrust of India, which in turn, led to the deadlock of conflict resolution.

##### ***China's problems of state-to-nation imbalance***

As mentioned in section one, state-to-nation is comprised of two factors: state-building – state strength and nation-building – state-to-nation congruence.

##### ***China's Tibet: a fast growing state strength***

In order to consolidate its state strength in Tibet, China provides substantial financial subsidies for infrastructures, such as airports and railways, medical care, public housing and financial and bureaucratic support. For instance, Yao and Ren (2014) reported that between 2001 and 2006, \$5 billion dollars had been invested in Tibet's infrastructure including \$1.9 billion in the Qinghai-Tibet Railway (青康藏鐵路). Due to its poor local government tax revenues, Tibet is highly dependent on central government subsidies (Blondeau & Buffetrille, 2008:253). For instance, between 2001 and 2010, the TAR government (西藏自治政府) received \$41 billion dollars, of which 92% came from central government (Xinhua, 2011). Pan Jiuyan (潘久豔) (2012), a Chinese scholar, describes this approach of economic development as a mode of 'blood transfusion'.

Another factor which indicates China's state strength is the consolidation of its institutional foothold in Tibet. Andrew Fischer calculated that, by 2000, the ratio of

military personnel to civilians was about one to twenty, compared with one to four and a half thousand nationally<sup>8</sup> (Blondeau & Buffetrille, 2008:150), which reflects the PRC's security concerns about the potential Tibet riots and border-land disputes with India.

This suggests that China's 'Go West' initiative and its Tibet policy, whose purpose appears to be to press for economic development, has two over-riding themes. Firstly, economic development and stability- China's injection of money to finance heavy infrastructure construction demonstrates its intention to strengthen military logistic capabilities and exploit TAR's natural resources, such as mining, oil and water resources. Secondly, its other goal is to construct state-building process, thereby, (i) consolidating its ruling legitimacy, (ii) reinforcing national unity, (iii) neutralizing the rise of separatism, and (iv) further accelerating the integration of ethnic minorities into its mainstream society (Carlson, 2004; Mathou, 2005).

### ***China's nation-building on Tibet: a failure***

According to Miller's theory (2005:244; 2007:72), successful nation-building includes the provision of non-material symbolic functions to the population through a national educational system, the media, and mythmaking. It also includes the promotion of a national language and the creation of identities, and if it is successful, it leads to identification of ethnic groups with the state and its territorial identity. China showed its effective state strength in respect to Tibet. However, through the lens of nation-building, the 1989 and 2008 Tibet revolts manifested China's failure of nation-building, which can be explained under three sub-headings:

1. *The failure of Patriotic Education Campaign*: since 1996, this campaign has been instilled across China as part of the CCP's (中國共產黨) attempt to arouse a sense of Chinese patriotism after the Tiananmen Protests, which it would equate with support for the state. In Tibet, the campaign, which was intended to reduce the Dalai Lama's influence and transform the Tibetan national identity into a Chinese identity, was initially based in monasteries and nunneries and later extended to secular schools. More specifically, Tibetan citizens were: (i) given the Chinese version of Tibetan history, (ii) told about

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<sup>8</sup> The equivalent measure in nation level would be one soldier for every 4,500 civilians.

the evils of independence, (iii) informed about the wrongdoing of the Dalai Lama, (iv) told that his pictures were not allowed to be displayed in public places, temples and monasteries, (v) told that quotas were to be imposed on the numbers of monks, (vi) told that a new minimum age would be set for monks, (vii) told that the group of CPP's cadres would run the monasteries, (viii) told that religious practice would be regulated, and (ix) informed that religious beliefs among CPP members, students, government employees and their families would be forbidden (Barnett & Shakya, 2014; Blondeau & Buffetrille, 2008:165; Smith Jr, 2008:170)

However, the 2008 revolts revealed China's failure at nation-building, in that it was unable to transform Tibetan national identity and loyalty to the Dalai Lama into Chinese national identity and loyalty to China (Barnett, 2009; Smith Jr, 2008:170) . The PRC neglected to take into account that the Dalai Lama is also a pan-Tibetan symbol, representing its cultural value and national aspiration, and comprehend that hostility towards the Dalai Lama is equivalent to hostility towards the entire Tibetan religious system and the Tibetan nation as a whole. As Chinese dissenter, Wang Lixiong (王力雄) (2008:29) says, 'the PRC has spent 87.6 billion RMB (\$ 14 billion dollar) of financial expenditure on Tibet for the past four decades, however, the Tibetans have increasingly leaned towards the Dalai Lama who has not given them a penny'. Even a Chinese scholar in the Central Party School in Beijing, Jin Wei (靳薇) (2011; 2015), reminded the CCP that 'by demonising the Dalai Lama, and viewing any expression of Tibetan culture as potentially subversive, the party has turned a contradiction between the central government and the Dalai Lama separatist clique into an ethnic conflict between Han Chinese and Tibetans'. The CCP, however, finds it hard to realise that it needs a new approach to Tibet in order to fit in with its national interests (Economist, 2013b).

2. *The resentment of the Han immigration policy*: after the Second Tibet Work Meeting in 1984, in order to fulfil the large construction projects and the program of economic development, large numbers of Han people, both skilled and unskilled, flocked into Tibet in order to achieve China's ultimate nation-building goal that integrated Tibetans into the big family of the Han Chinese nation. According to the latest Chinese White Paper, released in 2011 (Xinhua, 2011), the sixth national census in 2010 revealed that the total population of

Tibet had increased from one million before 1950 to more than three million, of whom 2.7 million, or 90.48 %, were Tibetans, a finding that was refuted by the Tibetan Government-in- Exile (TGIE) (西藏流亡政府), which accused the Chinese of a ‘demographic invasion’. The White Paper concluded, however, that all ethnic groups in Tibet enjoyed equality, unity, mutual help and common prosperity.

However, the demographic figures from the TGIE polarized the situation. The TGIE accused the PRC of turning Tibetans into an ethnic minority, and it used the term, ‘annihilation of Tibetans’ in its accusation that more than 1 million Tibetans had died between 1959 and 1979 as a result of China’s Tibet policy (TGIE, 1992). Also, regarding the Han population in TAR, in 1987, there was a twenty-four times disparity between China’s official figure of about 78,800 and the TGIE’s figure of about 1,900,000 in the TAR (L. Wang, 2009:4). The TGIE’s (2014) report states that, following the completion of Qinghai-Tibet Railway of 2006, about 7.5 million Han migrants outnumbered the 6 million Tibetans in the larger Tibetan regions. Both sets of figures are hard to evaluate and their credibility is questioned by the PRC and the TGIE (Blondeau & Buffetrille, 2008:146; B. Chang, 2014:220; Guo, 1996; Sautman, 2006:247; L. Wang, 1999). Several reasons are given for the confusion resulting from the PRC national census, since it did not include (i) migrant Han workers, who were not required to register, (ii) military personnel<sup>9</sup>, or (iii) tourists – the Han presence is swollen by tourism between May and September by approximately 1.7 million. Hence, the Han population in the census was greatly underestimated.

Moreover, the Han migrants appear to have instilled in Tibetans a strong sense of marginalization intensified by the better economic performance of the Han, which has created a huge urban/ rural income inequality gap, since the Han are generally more literate and skilled. Also, according to various statistics (Barnett & Shakya, 2014; Hillman, 2008:11), (i) urban incomes in Tibet are five times higher than rural incomes, (ii) 80.8 % of Tibetans lived in rural areas while more than 75% of the Han and Hui<sup>10</sup> lived in the towns and cities.

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<sup>9</sup> The military are not included in any of the provincial population data.

<sup>10</sup> The Hui people are China’s third largest ethnic group living throughout the country, though some of

Therefore, the CCP's migrant policy, which was intended to promote economic growth, has resulted in unequal development that has had the adverse effect of fostering Tibetan discontent and heightening ethnic tensions, all of which have become the cause of internal state-to-nation incongruence.

3. *The myth of political mythology*: the PRC has constructed a political mythology that all ethnic groups should eventually be united in a single Han-family in order to legitimize its own history and propaganda. However, the official Chinese view of Tibetans was that they were backward and lived as serfs under the Dalai Lama's rule (Blondeau & Buffetrille, 2008:96,192). From the various White Papers<sup>11</sup>, the official Tibet website<sup>12</sup> and the overseas official publications, the PRC, together with the majority of Chinese, were convinced by the ideological position and the political propaganda that there is 'no Tibet problem', because the PRC has brought Tibetans wealth and modernization. Consequently, the authorities have been unwilling to compromise their Tibet policy because of the need to 'unify the country' and in order to emphasize 'the union of Tibetans and Han'.

Consequently, the 2008 revolts and the continuing Tibetan discontents, exemplified, since 2009, by the number of self-immolations<sup>13</sup> revealed that China's inability to eradicate the opposition in Tibet has been caused by its failure both to settle the problem of internal state-to-nation incongruence (Economist, 2013a; Hillman, 2008; Nyima, 2008:271; Topgyal, 2011). In summary, the Tibetan discontents have been shown the failure of the Chinese Tibet policy: (i) economic marginalization, (ii) the continuing influx of ethnic Han migrants, (iii) the Han's better economic performance, (iv) environmental damage caused to Tibetans' 'sacred

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the population is concentrated in north-western China, such as Qinghai and Gansu where Tibetans call Amdo. Hui people are ethnically and linguistically similar to Han Chinese with the exception that they practice Islam. When Hui started migrating into Lhasa in the 1990s, ethnic tensions arose due to their difference on religion and politics.

<sup>11</sup> Between 1991 and 2013, China published seven State Council White Papers on Tibet, together with some official documents on the subject of minority human rights. China also published two papers on its National Regional Autonomy system for minorities, which also included Tibet.

<sup>12</sup> China's official website on Tibet is China's Tibet Information Centre: <http://eng.tibet.cn/>.

<sup>13</sup> According to BBC reports on 2 December 2013 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-25195006>), more than 120 Tibetans are thought to have set themselves on fire between 2009 and 2013 in protest at Chinese rule.

mountains' by mining and construction, (v) attempt to replace Tibetan culture and language with Mandarin in school and college curricula<sup>14</sup> and (vi) the perception by Tibetans of Chinese efforts to bring about ethnic assimilation as "cultural imperialism" (Wong, 2009a). According to Miller (2005:245), state-to-nation imbalance problems are aggravated by the exclusionary policies of ethnic discrimination, together with the economic exploitation by the dominant Han ethnic groups, suggesting the difficulties involved in state-building and nation-building.

### ***China's problems of external state-to-nation incongruence***

When the 1959 Tibet revolts were raging in Lhasa, the Indian government offered shelter to the fleeing Dalai Lama where it allowed him to establish a Tibetan Government-in-Exile (TGIE) and set up a haven for Tibetan refugees. The establishment of the TGIE created an external state-to-nation imbalance, because it undermined China's territorial integrity,

The Tibetan *diaspora*<sup>15</sup> in India, according to the 2009 census, amounted to 94,203 and refugees have become a fact of life<sup>16</sup>. National identity with the refugees still being strong after experiencing fifty-years under different regimes, or living in different countries, there nevertheless is a cultural and social gap between them and those Tibetans inside China (Martini, 2011; Shakya, 2008). Not only would it be difficult for a refugee to return to Tibet and submit to a Chinese nation-state, but China's internal incongruence would hardly attract him or her to return. Therefore, if Tibet really did accord with the Chinese statement that the country was 'one big happy family, with all Tibetans living in harmony and working together', many would

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<sup>14</sup> After 1987 the secondary schools and colleges in the TAR could use Tibetan as the teaching language, this failed because politically and economically, Mandarin dominated all aspect of public life; hence, the language became marginalized. See Blondeau, A.-M. and K. Buffettrille, *Authenticating Tibet: answers to China's 100 questions* 2008: University of California Press, p200.

<sup>15</sup> There were 13,514 Tibetan refugees in Nepal; 1,298 in Bhutan. See TGIE, Latest Report on "Second Tibetan Demographic Survey" Released, <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/exile/1289-latest-report-on-qsecond-tibetan-demographic-surveyq-released>, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> India allows Tibetans to live in the country against an annually renewable Registration Certificate (RC), which everyone over must obtain; however, RCs have not been issued to new arrivals since 1987. The government also issues "Yellow Books" after a year's residence, which allows Tibetans with an RC to travel abroad.

surely have surrendered their alienated identities and returned home. However, since 1985, each year, thousands of Tibetans, risking death, have crossed the Himalayas via Nepal to India to seek asylum (Blondeau & Buffetrille, 2008:98). It is unlikely that China, in the near or medium future, will ever grant greater religious freedom or genuine autonomy to Tibet, whereas it would be impossible for China to dilute the linkage between the Tibetans inside Tibet and Tibetan refugees in India.

Since the late 1980s, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile (TGIE) has accepted the 'one China policy' and has pressed for genuine autonomy rather than full independence. However, the existence of Tibetan refugees is a form of external incongruence that has become an unresolvable Sino-Indian problem. Firstly, China accused the 'Dalai clique' of orchestrating its domestic separatist movements, and, secondly, China sees India's support of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan refugees as being tantamount to supporting 'separatists' against it.

As a consequence, China continues to suspect India's intention toward Tibet, in spite of India accepting China's sovereignty over Tibet and restricting the flows of Tibetans since 2003 (Tibet Justice Centre, 2011:17). Neither country is able to change the reality of Tibetan refugees unless China resolves the problem from within Tibet. Even though the irredentist forces have been subdued as a result of the Dalai Lama's recognition of the 'One China policy' and Indian respect of China's sovereignty over Tibet, the external state-to-nation incongruence means that Tibet casts a long shadow over China's internal instability and Sino-Indian strategic rivalry. As for India, it has been unable to assuage China's fear about Tibet's instability, so it will find its domestic politics impossible to meet China's expectations on the Tibet question (Sikri, 2011). All of which proves that state-to-nation imbalance – regarding Tibetan issues will continue to play an important part in Sino-Indian relations.

### ***The Tawang issue***

Tawang, which is located on the western extremity of Arunachal Pradesh, is home to the Monpa people, who practice Tibetan Buddhism and once paid tribute to rulers in Lhasa; hence, the town is an enclave of Tibetan religion and culture. However, Tawang, which was drawn into British Indian territory by the 1913-14 Simla Agreement, was annexed by India in 1951 (Raghavan, 2006:3883). During the 1962 war, though, China occupied Tawang but then withdrew to the northern section

of the McMahon line and returned the town to India after the unilateral ceasefire. Even though China consistently rejected the 1914 Simla Agreement, it claimed Arunachal Pradesh as its territory; however, it did not press its claim until the mid-1980s.

Both in the 1960s and in the early 1980s, the Chinese leadership of Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping (邓小平) respectively proposed a 'swap package', which was dependent on China's security concerns and its political considerations regarding control of Tibet. In the 1960s, the main purpose of China's offer had been the recognition of the British Indian McMahon Line in exchange for Aksai Chin in order to consolidate its control of Tibet. In the early 1980s, however, Deng Xiaoping took a conciliatory approach in order to establish a peaceful border so that he could fully focus on economic development. Ironically, China's 'swap deal' was proposed by way of 'authoritative leadership' verbally rather than written on paper, which led to ambiguity in the subsequent border negotiations, allowing China, in the mid-1980s, to revise its 'swap proposal' by adding Tawang to the swap list.

Three reasons might explain for this addition. Firstly, bargaining leverage: China sought to harden its position in the eastern sector to add a bargaining chip, ensuring Beijing that bargained on an equal footing<sup>17</sup> (John W. Garver, 2001:106). Secondly, there was a structural factor: the waning of the external threat. The Soviet Union's neutral position on the 1986 Sino-Indian border skirmish and the following Soviet normalization with China reduced China's incentives to make concessions vis-à-vis India (Z. D. Singh, 2011:88). Thirdly, the state-to-nation imbalance: the Sino-Tibetan dialogue had reached a stalemate and the Dalai Lama's internationalization of Tibet case was giving Beijing great cause for concern, thereby pushing it into a hard-line position, which resulted in its claim on Tawang. As Jeff Smith argues (2013:60), in the mid-1980s, China revised its demand for a package deal in which India should transfer to it the strategic town of Tawang, which implied its intention to legitimize its control of Tibet.

The 2008 Tibet revolts intensified China's insecurity regarding its control of Tibet and cast a shadow on its legitimate claim to the country (see Table 2); however,

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<sup>17</sup> During the first stage of border talks (1981-1988), there existed a critical disagreement, inasmuch as India noted the eastern sector was least disputed and only the western sector (controlled by China) needed to be negotiated. In return, China stated its claim on eastern sector (controlled by India) in order to add its bargaining chips.



in the same year, India refused the Dalai Lama to visit Tawang, a decision that was reversed in 2009, although foreign media coverage was prohibited due to Chinese sensitivities. It was on this visit that the Dalai Lama deeply infuriated China when he announced, for the first time, that Tawang was part of India (India Times, 2009; Wong, 2009b). To compound Chinese irritation, in November 2011, India allowed the Dalai Lama to give a lecture at an international Buddhism conference in New Delhi, in response to which, China cancelled the fifteenth Special Representatives level talks, although they were rescheduled for January 2012 (Burke, 2011). China’s reaction was of a similar nature to its response in 1998 to India’s nuclear tests, which India had blamed China for provoking.

Table 2: The Irritants over the Dalai Lama

2008 March	China accused the Dalai Lama orchestrated the Tibet revolts.
2009 November	The Dalai Lama visited Tawang and for the first time he declared Tawang to be Indian territory. China’s newspaper, Global Times, wrote that India seemed to have forgotten the lesson of the 1962 war.
2011 November	India allowed the Dalai Lama to give a lecture to the Buddhism Conference in New Delhi. China protested by cancelling the fifteenth Special Representatives border talks.

Source: the author

From a Chinese perspective, the cornerstone of its Tibet policy was the defense of its sovereignty and the legitimacy of its rule, which it considered to be at the core of its national interests (Carlson, 2004). Therefore, it has maintained its claim to Tawang in the border negotiations and seen the acquisition of Tawang as legitimizing its control over the power of the Dalai Lama- hence Tibet as a whole (S. Ramachandran, 2008; Sikri, 2009:97; J. M. Smith, 2013). In addition, Tawang was where the sixth Dalai Lama was born in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; also the current 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama hinted that his successor might be born on Indian soil with a view to ‘finishing his unfinished business’<sup>18</sup>. Since he appeared to be hinting that this might happen in

<sup>18</sup> The 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama has raised several possibilities of what might happen after he dies in different interviews with media, for example, he will choose his successor during his lifetime, contrary to the usual tradition of identifying the new Dalai Lama only after the death of the old one. Or maybe his soul will transfer to a person outside of Tibet. Or perhaps, the line of Dalai Lamas will end with him, if that is the wish of the Tibetan people. See BBC. (2014, 17 December). Dalai Lama Concedes He

Tawang, this drove China into a state of ‘nervous panic’ since it might be construed that it had taken over Tawang to control the next Dalai Lama in order to protect its domestic legitimacy and national interests (Economist, 2012; Gardner, 2009; Raman, 2007; Twining, 2009).

However, Tawang is of its strategic and military importance to India for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the defense of its north-eastern region, since the southern Himalayan slopes offered tactical offensive advantages to the Chinese. Therefore, Indian control would increase the cost of Chinese military adventurism; hence, their reluctance to give up Tawang led to the resultant border talks stalemate (John W. Garver, 2010:127; Hoffmann, 2006; Pardesi, 2011; J. Smith, 2014) .

The Tibet revolts of 2008, which led to China exacerbating its state-to-nation imbalance, posed further difficulties of resolving the Tibetan refugees and the territorial disputes, as Miller’s Proposition 2 suggests. China’s renewed claim on Tawang, therefore, supported Miller’s theory that a revisionist state poses challenges to regional instability and also prevents relations from transcending conflict to a state of high-level warm peace.

### ***Arunachal Pradesh***

After the onset of cold peace in 1988, China’s claim on Arunachal Pradesh continued to be limited, until 2006, when the Chinese ambassador, Sun Yuxi, revived its claim. China’s claim over Arunachal Pradesh resurfaced in the media and official domains, causing a series of tit-for-tat and contentious events that affected Sino-Indian relations (see Table 3). For example, in 2007, China denied visas to officials from Arunachal Pradesh on the ground that it belonged to China, hence no visas were required. India countered by allowing the Taiwanese presidential candidate, Ma Ying-Juou (馬英九), to visit New Delhi and hold talks with senior Indian officials (Taipei Times, 2007). In 2008, China extended the denial of visas to Indian officers from the “disputed” territories, such as Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir; instead, it issued them with staple visas<sup>19</sup> since it declared them to be Chinese citizens<sup>20</sup> (P. K. Singh, 2010). In

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May be the Last, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-30510018>, BBC; and Smith, N. (2015, 17 May). I may come back as a blonde — or not at all, says Dalai Lama, Sunday Times.

<sup>19</sup> Staple visas were loose sheets of paper rather than passport stamps, which were the norm for other Indian citizens.

2009, in response to Indian Prime Minister Singh's first prime official visit to Arunachal Pradesh in more than ten years, China tried to block an Asian Development Bank (ADB) \$ 2.9 billion loan to India's four-year Country Partnership Proposal (CPP), including \$60 million for irrigation and flood control in Arunachal Pradesh (Indiatoday, 2010). This is the first time the Chinese had made their territorial claim to Arunachal Pradesh in an international forum. The loan was only delayed; nevertheless, it irritated India, causing some belligerent media rhetoric and diplomatic exchanges.

Table 3: The tit-for-tat Irritants over Arunachal Pradesh (AP)

1962	Border war
1986 and 1987	Border skirmishes
2006 December	The Chinese ambassador, Sun Yuxi, revived China's claim over AP
2007 May	China denied visa to Ganesh Koyu, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from AP from visiting Beijing, claiming he was a Chinese citizen.
2007 June	India allowed Taiwanese presidential candidate, Ma Ying-Juou, to visit India and held talks with senior officials.
2008 January	Indian Prime Minister Singh made his first official visit to AP in more than ten years.
2008 May	The Chinese foreign minister claimed that Sikkim was a disputed area.
2009 March	China tried to block a \$60 million loan from Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the AP irrigation and flood control project.
2009 December and 2010 January	Prime Minister Singh visited AP in an election campaign. After AP's state elections, China protested.
2010 August	China rejected Indian Northern Commander Lt. Gen B.S. Jaswal's visit to China because he was responsible for sensitive border areas, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. In return, India suspended defenses exchanges, and refused to hold the third round of joint military exercises.
2012 January	China denied a visa to an Indian officer from AP as he was a member of ADD-related (Annual Defense Dialogue) visiting military delegation. In response, India called off the entire trip.
2012 April	China "quietly" stopped issuing staple visas after the BRICs summits.

Source: the author

Why did China renew its territorial claim over Arunachal Pradesh in 2006? Three reasons are offered, (i) China's sensitivity to India's enthusiasm for an 'India-US' strategic partnership, which included defense and nuclear cooperation, and the

<sup>20</sup> From an Indian perspective, Sikkim has ceased to be an issue since the Vajpayee's visit to China in 2003 when, in a Joint Declaration, China described Sikkim as an Indian state.

implication of ‘encircling’ China, thus threatening China (Curtis, 2008:5; Dutta, 2008; John W Garver & Wang, 2010:244); however, India’s ‘thaw’ with the US began as far back as the early 2000s<sup>21</sup>, which does not explain the exact timing . Moreover, the US did not played any role on Sino-Indian border disputes, (ii) China used this assertive territorial claim as diplomatic leverage over border negotiations (Economist, 2010:784; Goswami, 2011), and (iii) China’s internal insecurity in Tibet led to a modification of its foreign policy (Goswami, 2010:4).

Although these factors may offer incentives that could affect China’s revisionist behavior, an underlying cause for the change in policy was that Sun Yuxi’s comment, which was clearly a revision, appeared to be a response to India’s interpretation of the “2005 Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the Boundary Question” that was arrived at during Prime Minister Wen Jiabao’s (溫家寶) visit to India in April 2005. Article 7 of the Agreement had stipulated that ‘the two sides shall safeguard due interests of their settled populations in the border area’. India’s interpretation was that the more than one million Indian citizens settled in Arunachal Pradesh, together with 39,000 people in the Tawang district, would be included, which was in accordance with India’s longstanding territorial claim (John W Garver & Wang, 2010:246). This interpretation was challenged by China on the grounds that it undermined its sovereign identity, which it regarded as a core national interest. Therefore, when Prime Minister Singh and the Dalai Lama visited Arunachal Pradesh in 2009, China’s official newspapers, People’s Daily (Xinhua, 2009b) and the Global Times (Xinhua, 2009a), in their editorials categorically asserted that Arunachal Pradesh was part of China as southern Tibet. As Miller’s theory indicates (2007:97), a state-to-nation imbalance generates revisionist challenges against the legitimacy of the state. Accordingly, China’s revisionist territorial claim over Arunachal Pradesh stemmed from the threat to its legitimacy, in that the overlapping territorial claims made by both India and China.

### ***5. The intensification of security dilemma***

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<sup>21</sup> The US and India have conducted joint military exercises since 2002; they signed a 10-year defence framework agreement in 2005; in particular, the Indo-US nuclear Deal began in July 2005, subsequently the related domestic negotiations finished in 2008.

The irritants over the disputes on Arunachal Pradesh and Tawang caused the cancellations of some official exchanges and the postponement of border negotiations. On the positive side, however, they were superseded by high-level leadership exchanges, which guaranteed the peaceful settlements of disputes through negotiations. Their more negative consequences, though, gave rise to the intensification of the security dilemma between the countries and a deadlock to border resolutions.

In the mid-1990s, arms reductions were facilitated by mutual CBMs and Sino-Indian border agreements in 1993 and 1996. However, according to several sources, China and India have respectively strengthened their defensive infrastructures by deploying more troops and building new posts and roads, along their borders since 2006 (Rajagopalan & Prasad., 2010; Sahgal, 2011; Sakhuja, 2009) ; hence, a militarized Sino-Indian border has re-emerged.

India's concerns were triggered by a series of Chinese actions: (i) its massive border infrastructures development in Tibet, enhancing the PLA's forward presence and logistic capabilities (Rajagopalan & Prakash, 2013:11); (ii) its large-scale military exercises in 2009 to test the PLA's long range power projection capability on to counter sudden events in Tibet and Xinjiang(新疆); and (iii) its deployment- reported by the US in 2010- of intermediate-range missiles and intercontinental missiles at Delingha (德令哈), north of Tibet, which could be capable of targeting north Indian territory (Sperling, 2010:69; The US Defense Department, 2010:5).

India's anxiety was reflected in a 2008-2009 Ministry of Defense Report (IMD, 2009) and India's 2009 National Security annual review (Kumar, 2009:234) which stated that 'India will take all necessary measures to protect its national security, territorial integrity, and sovereignty due to the trust deficit because of the longstanding territorial disputes and other issues'. In response to China's military upgrade in the border regions, India increased its infrastructure network and troop deployments. For instance, in 2009, it (i) dispatched an additional two divisions of armed forces comprising 25,000 to 30,000 personnel along the border to Arunachal Pradesh, and (ii) announced its intention to deploy two squadrons of Su-30 fighter jets in Arunachal Pradesh (Sakhuja, 2009). In 2011, it (i) announced a \$13 billion military modernization plan to recruit 10,000 soldiers over the following five years, for deployment alongside the Sino-Indian border, and (ii) built air strips, helipads and deployed supersonic cruise missiles in Arunachal Pradesh in order to reduce what it

mentioned was a military gap. In 2013, it raised a mountain strike corps to deploy 40,000 additional troops along the Sino-Indian border (The Times of India, 2013). These moves represented India's biggest troop increase and infrastructure increases since the 1962 Sino-Indian border war (Parameswaran, 2012).

India's response to China's infrastructure and deployment forces in Arunachal Pradesh is consistent with Miller's Proposition 2- that the state-to-nation imbalance is a key factor in accounting for the intensity of the security dilemma. There are three underlying arguments for such a conclusion:

1. China's original Tibet policy was economic development in order to address dual strategic and security concerns; that is, economic growth and social stability (Mathou, 2005). However, that was to become the driving force behind its massive deployment of forces and infrastructure construction in Tibet, implying that its control over Tibet, as a result of the recurrent riots, had become insecure, thereby leading to a state-to-nation imbalance. This was particularly true that the 2006 opening of the Qinghai-Tibet railway not only aimed at communicating with the Inner land of China for the economic reason but also being able to amass an extra 100,000 armed forces from outside TAR in a six week period for the security concern in order to suppress the domestic riots (Rajagopalan & Prakash, 2013:11). In addition to the reported deployment of nuclear weapons<sup>22</sup>, the improved mobilization of logistics forces, as an effort to consolidate state strength over Tibet, which ultimately led to its militarization, gave India great cause for concern. Therefore, China's internal security build-up inadvertently has become an external threat to India since there were signs that they were becoming involved in races against infrastructure and troop deployments (S. Ramachandran, 2008; Sperling, 2010:69). As the Proposition 2 argues, a state-to-nation imbalance with respect to Tibet creates insecurity, in that each state has to prepare to meet potential threats, which results in destabilization and, eventually, a security dilemma.
2. If the Sino-Indian border disputes had been settled and an agreement reached, a joint assurance of infrastructure construction could have presented an opportunity for improvement of trade and communications (Jacob, 2007;

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<sup>22</sup> The military nuclear base was reportedly located at Delingha in Qinghai province, with a stock of ballistic missiles.

Mishra & Upadhyay, 2004). Arguably, the border disagreement on Arunachal Pradesh came about from the intractable border disputes becoming a destabilizing factor. Hence, China's revisionist claim on Arunachal Pradesh exposed the fact that neither country could resolve the enduring territorial disputes and that these led to a state of persistent insecurity in the region.

Consequently, this assessment accords with John Herz's definition of security dilemma (1950) : that China's augmentation of infrastructure along the border due to its insecurity in Tibet and the unresolved border disputes were perceived by India as a threat of future potential military confrontation and a gap of its weakness of defense, thereby leading to India's growing insecurity and its taking self-help measures by increasing forces and border infrastructures. It also bears out Miller's arguments that, under the conditions of state-to-nation imbalance, realist factors are highly influential. Both countries were concerned about relative gains, which is consistent with Miller's definition of cold peace (2007:45). Military factors, such as national security outweighing mutual trade, dictate the direction of a mutual relationship. So, it appeared that, despite the reopening of border trade at Nathu La on the Tibet-Sikkim border in 2006, India imposed regulations on trade goods and was also unwilling to open some traditional Arunachal Pradesh trade routes because of security consideration (Jacob, 2011b:44).

3. After 2007, India's media accused China of increasingly encroaching across the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which was perceived by India as perfidy rather than partnership (Medcalf, 2014). Indian military personnel contended that China's road-building and aerial patrolling demonstrated an aggressive violation of the terms of the 1996 Agreement on Building Confidence Building Measure along the LAC and the 2005 Protocol on Confidence Building Measure (Jacob, 2011a:135). However, the Indian media reports were repeatedly denied by China and they were also downplayed by India's Ministry of External Affairs trying to reduce the quarrel, because the LAC was never clearly delimited on the ground and there was disagreement from both sides about its interpretation.

The incursions accused by each other was rather interpreted as "military patrols in the disputed territory", since the intention of each side was to reinforce its claim over the LAC and certain parts of the disputed frontier, such

as Chinese patrols on Tawang and parts of Ladakh and Indian patrols on Aksai Chin, by creating the evidence of their presence, such as piles of stone, cigarettes and cans (Holslag, 2010:124). Indian strategists (Panda, 2014; Rajagopalan & Prakash, 2013:2) agree that the LAC is a matter of perception, which reflects both complexities and flexibility. The complexities implied that potential confrontations could happen due to the un-delimited border; whereas the flexibility implied the conflicts could be managed through diplomacy. On one hand, the so called 'incursions' no doubt have intensified the security dilemma, but moderated by taking restraint of both sides on the other (Holslag, 2010:124). As an Indian media (Pubby, 2008) described, when both sides came face to face with each other at disputed areas, both sides exercised restraint and adopted a standard practice of raising flags and shouting "*hindi chini bhai bhai*" (Indians and Chinese are brothers), and then disengaged. It seems that the unresolved boundaries were the main destabilizing factor exacerbating uncertainty and accounting for the intensification of the security dilemma, thereby supporting Miller's Proposition 2.

## 6. Conclusion

However, this kind of security dilemma during the cold peace was less severe than the cold war with heavy militarization and the pre-1962 war with several military skirmishes for two reasons. Firstly, the primary aims of the increasing military deployments were to manage domestic turmoil, for China this being in Tibet, for India the insurgencies in Kashmir and rebellions in the north-east. In particular, both countries do not view each other as short-term threats, but rather as long-term potential threats (N. Singh, 2012:154). Secondly, the posture of force deployments and military patrols along the borders appeared to be defensive rather than offensive (Anand, 2012), thereby moderating the security dilemma (Jervis, 1978). Given the establishment of CBMs over the last two decades, institutionalized military exchange meetings and cultural activities, such as mountain expeditions and sports, could help moderate border tensions. Moreover, the military strategies of forces deployment were more focused on defensive mobilization rather than offensive attack. Also, the strategies of nuclear deterrence taken by both sides tend to aim at a minimal deterrence rather than cold-war-like mutual assured destruction (Saalman, 2011:111).



As Holslag (2010) contends that Sino-Indian border military deployment is far from an arms race, nor is either looking for military supremacy at the border; rather both are seeking rather to develop the capabilities to react flexibly to a wide range of challenges.

In summary, Chinese and Indian state strength shown in the form of infrastructure construction and force build-up, alongside the state-to-nation incongruence, including China's revision of territorial claims on Arunachal Pradesh, the subsequent irritants originating from the unresolved territorial disputes, and races of infrastructure and troop deployment, exacerbated the security dilemma, thereby preventing the Sino-Indian cold peace from moving forward to warm peace and making the cold peace reversible.

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Lan-Shu Tseng

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