

CHAPTER 2

The Legacy of the Great Game

The Kashmir section of the northern boundary is the heart of India's boundary dispute with China. That is because Ladakh, of which the contentious Aksai Chin is a significant part, and Gilgit that stretched to the little and Taghdumbash Pamirs, are central to India's economic, political and military interests. Over these could run a distinctly possible autobahn or even a rail road to provide India her own commercial and political access to Central Asia. But then so are Tibet and Xinjiang, along the boundary, to which roads run from Ladakh and Gilgit, central to China's interests. Therefore the eyeball to eyeball confrontation on the boundary for 50 years.

H.N. Kaul, *India China Boundary in Kashmir*

'RING SYSTEM' OF DEFENCE

At the outset, it would be useful to put British imperial strategy in the geopolitical perspective of its time. Insofar as it pertained to the 'defence of the subcontinental barrack', British strategy

was based on the notion that India was 'the strategic centre of the defensive position of the empire'. While the defence of India proper was deemed critical to the defence of other British assets around the Indian Ocean periphery, the complexity of this first task soon transformed it into a problem worthy of concentrated attention in its own right. ¹

Externally, this implied that all geographic areas whose contiguity affected the barrack's security were to be neutralized. The traditional device consisted of a dual concentric 'ring fence', where the inner ring immediately adjacent to the Indian subcontinent and consisting of the north-western and north-eastern borderlands, the Himalayan states of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, the tribal areas around Assam, Baluchistan, the North-West Frontier tribes, Gilgit and Leh and contiguous Indian Oceanic waters, was actively controlled by a policy of dominating political absorption. In turn, the outer ring, consisting of states such as Afghanistan in the west, Xinjiang in the north, and Tibet in the north and north-east, was effectively neutered into a gigantic buffer zone by a system of extensive alliances through which the major external powers were prevented from intruding upon the security cynosure of the subcontinent. ² Since British naval superiority was unchallenged for most of the later colonial era, the seaward approaches to the 'ring fence' were deemed secure and both British Imperial and British Indian administrators focused largely on a continental stratagem, labelled the 'Great Game' ³

Although 'The Great Game' was immortalized in Rudyard Kipling's turn of the century adventure novel, *Kim*, it originated decades earlier. Its originator was Captain Arthur Conolly, one of the early players. The phrase refers to that period in Central Asian history, mainly in the nineteenth century, when Russia and Britain were engaged in a power struggle for the region. Russia, a rising power of that era, was ideally positioned to challenge British hegemony over South Asia. Hence, the British strategy of creating 'buffers' was capable of deflecting northern landward opponents. Both imperial powers sent forth a series of spies, explorers and political agents to map and research areas

considered of vital importance to both Russia and Britain, as well as to form political alliances with the attendant tribesmen and chieftains. From a seemingly safe distance of 2,000 miles between the two of them at the beginning, Russian outposts, in the end, were as close as 20 miles away from India. ⁴

British-India's foreign and defence policy of a 'united India' rested on the evolution of the buffer state. The buffer as a concept came into vogue in the 1880s in the aftermath of the Second Afghan War, when Alfred Lyall, the Foreign Secretary, did much to solidify the system of alliances that operated at the time. What evolved was a concept of peripheral defence, an arrangement whereby the British adopted a policy of interposing the border of a protected country between the actual possessions they administered, and the possessions of formidable neighbours, whom they desired to keep at arm's length. Curzon later called it a glacis, 'a smooth sloping bank' to the Indian fortress; and he maintained that while 'we do not want to occupy it, but we also cannot afford to see it occupied by our foes' ⁵

Two features of the buffer may be noted. First, the buffer is geographically interposed between the potential adversary and the region to be defended. Second, the area must be a protectorate. Thus, the security of India's outlying frontier provinces required keeping the foreign territory adjoining it free from intrusion by a powerful state. As alluded to earlier, the outer Indian frontiers, did in no case, coincide with the outer edge of administered territory. ⁶

As 'capitalist imperialists', the British were 'most concerned with the economics of imperial defence' and the buffer theory was the 'most economical means' of securing imperial security along the 2000 mile Himalayan boundary, as it avoided long term military commitments. ⁷ Since India's long northern frontiers were for the most part conterminous with Tibet, the British were to view Tibet as the ideal buffer that never constituted any serious menace to India. Until 1921, Afghanistan was rated as the classic example of the buffer state. ⁸ It followed that the buffer should exclude 'other extraneous influences',

while in the conduct of foreign relations it should be 'guided' by the British. But neither Afghanistan nor Tibet was a British satellite or protectorate.⁹

The above summarization of British imperial policy makes it evidently clear that a definition of India's territorial boundaries was 'by no means hemmed in by the geographical limits of the Himalayas to the north or the Indian Ocean to the south, for it extended far beyond.'¹⁰

WESTERN SECTOR: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Kashmir was a critical component of British strategy of securing the northern frontiers of India. British-India's security strategy of annexing Kashmir (by the Treaty of Amritsar) in 1846, and subsequently empowering it, served a twofold objective, to ensure a balance of power within, i.e. to check the influence of Punjab—and a balance of power without, i.e. to keep out, first the much feared Afghans, and later, the Russians. By bringing Kashmir into the empire, the British bequeathed independent India with a boundary problem with communist China.

The British first signed the Treaty of Lahore with the Sikh State on 9 March 1846, after the First Anglo-Sikh War, and acquired 'in perpetual sovereignty' *inter alia* the provinces of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. This was in part-payment of the equivalent of 'one crore of rupees' which the British demanded as 'indemnification for the war expenses'.¹¹

A week later, on 16 March 1846, the British ceded to Gulab Singh, the Sikh State's feudatory, as reward for his treachery to his masters in Lahore, the lands they had thus acquired—the territories of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh 'for the sum of seventy-five lakhs of rupees'. He in turn acknowledged the supremacy of the British government. Article 4 of the Treaty of Amritsar stated: 'The limits of the territories of Maharaja Gulab Singh shall not at any time be changed, without concurrence of the British government.'¹² Another vital provision in the *quid pro quo* between the British and Gulab Singh was that the latter would allow his newly acquired state's boundaries with the

Chinese Empire to be determined by a joint frontier commission.¹³

The British lost no time in approaching China to define the boundary. Charles U. Aitchison (1832-96) the distinguished British India administrator records that, 'In 1846 and 1847 two commissions were appointed to demarcate the eastern boundary. They were to arrange first, a boundary between British territory [now the districts of Lahaul and Spiti] in the south and the Kashmir territory of Ladakh in the north; and then a boundary between Ladakh in the west and Chinese Tibet in the east.' It is significant that Henry Lawrence's instructions to the surveyors, in 1846, charged with defining the territorial limits of Ladakh, in consultation with Tibet and its suzerain, the Manchus of China, underlined the proposition that the Raj was not interested 'in a strip more or less of barren or even productive' territory but 'a clear and well defined boundary'.¹⁴

Since the Treaty of Amritsar, up until the early twentieth century, there were almost a dozen attempts by the British, to define the boundary of Kashmir with China, 'in order that hereafter no questions or disputes may arise concerning their exact limits'. Since the 'Chinese were insecure and evasive', the effort went in vain.¹⁵

JOHNSON'S 'ADVANCED BOUNDARY LINE': A CRITICAL EVALUATION

W.H. Johnson's controversial 'advanced boundary line' of 1865, merits some attention, especially since thereafter, the Johnson boundary continued to be shown in one trans-frontier map after the other, and indeed independent India's claims to the Aksai Chin plateau rests squarely on Johnson's map. The boundary line first found concrete shape in the Survey of India's 1868 map and the Kashmir Atlas. It was based on the Kashmir Maharaja's outpost at Shahidulla. This made Johnson opt for the Kuen Lun watershed as the divide, and not as some later surveyors were to do, on the main of the Karakoram.

It has been suggested that Johnson, a civil sub-assistant at the Survey of India, while at Leh on the eve of his historic journey to Khotan in 1865, colluded with the Kashmir Maharaja's Ladakh Wazir who provided him with a sizable retinue for safe conduct, apart from generous supplies of transport and food. ¹⁶ After a severe censure, his employers relented and Johnson was re-employed in 1869. In 1872, however, Johnson quit to join the Kashmir ruler's service as Wazir of Ladakh, in succession to Frederic Drew. It is also alleged that Johnson was on 'a major intelligence mission' in which the Survey of India, ('with the encouragement of the intelligence wing of the Quarter Master General's branch') was directly involved. It was unlikely 'that Johnson could have undertaken the mission on his own'. ¹⁷ And 'as a civil servant, rather than an officer of the regular cadre, there would have been no particular squeamishness about disowning Johnson, if he failed or botched his mission. . . . Indeed, this is precisely what happened.' ¹⁸

If both the above presumptions are true, Johnson emerges as a double dealer, who while on an intelligence mission for the British government, proceeded to 'show more than the usual zeal' in the cause of his future employer, the Maharaja of Kashmir.¹⁹ Then there was also the matter of the disappearance of a consignment of silver ingots, which the Kan of Khotan had sent as a gift to the Governor General with Johnson. As John Lall notes, 'the fact remains that the map prepared on his return showed the entire plateau area between the Karakoram and Kuen Lun in the Maharaja's province of Ladakh'. ²⁰ Johnson's alleged financial malfeasance and discrepancies in his account of what took place, heavily underscores that he indeed had 'lent support' to the Kashmir ruler's territorial claims. The survey itself is not without controversy. To have completed the journey to Khotan, which lay beyond the formidable Kuen Lun range, and to return to Leh in the time he did, would have required Johnson to cover 30 km. per day, without halting once. Even if that frenetic pace were possible, it is doubtful that any serious survey would have accompanied it. ²¹

While Johnson's survey was rated in the official report of the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India (1865-6), as being 'valuable and important', and for being the 'first to give any account' of these hitherto unknown regions, it should be noted that Johnson's 1865 survey did also invite heavy criticism at the time and 'had to be recast and reductions of astronomical observations . . . reduced'.²² Alastair Lamb notes that Johnson was 'in a very real sense . . . a political surveyor', whose survey 'north of the Panggong Lake and the Changchenmo Valley' was 'incredibly inaccurate' and 'patently absurd'.²³ In retrospect, given the incessant feature of the Great Game, Johnson was perhaps 'representing the situation in 1865' when Turkestan was in revolt and the Shahidulla outpost was occupied by the Maharaja of Kashmir's troops.²⁴

WESTERN SECTOR REMAINS 'UNDEFINED'

As for the western sector in Ladakh, Beijing had from the outset been unwilling to reveal its hand, despite repeated British efforts to 'ascertain these boundaries'. British anxiety was largely the result of the Russian advance in the late nineteenth century across Central Asia. In the event, the British were more than willing to surrender the Kashmir ruler's well-established claims to Shahidulla. This was in pursuance of its final aim of 'closing together the Afghan and Chinese boundaries' on the Pamirs to keep the Russians out. As the then Governor-General recorded, it was hard 'to overestimate' the importance of leading the Chinese to regard the British as having interests 'identical' with theirs in Central Asia.²⁵

Viceroy Lord Lansdowne minuted on 28 September 1889: 'The country between the Karakoram and Kuen Lun ranges, I understand, is of no value, very inaccessible and not likely to be coveted by Russia. We might, I should think, encourage the Chinese to take it, if they showed any inclination to do so. This would be better than leaving a no-man's land between our frontier and that of China. Moreover, the stronger we can make China at this point, and the more we can induce her to hold her

own over the whole Kashgar-Yarkand region, the more useful will she be to us as an obstacle to Russian advance along this line.²⁶

On the other hand, responding to Captain Francis Young-husband's report on his famous meeting with the Russian explorer, Colonel V.L. Grombchevsky, his counterpart in the Great Game, near Yarkand in 1889, Major General John Ardagh, Director of Military Intelligence at the War Office in London, recommended claiming the areas 'up to the crests of the Kuen Lun range'. However, in 1890, before Whitehall could make up its mind, the Chinese occupied Shahidulla.²⁷

Following the occupation, it is instructive to note the opinion of the Secretary of State for India in Whitehall: 'We are inclined to think that the wisest course would be to leave them in possession as it is evidently to our advantage that the tract of territory between the Karakoram and Kuen Lun mountains be held by a friendly power like China.'²⁸

By the last decade of the nineteenth century the Foreign Department in Calcutta, thanks to the explorations of a host of surveyors, had concluded that there were two Aksai Chins. The one in the west, north of the Lingzi Tang plains was part of Ladakh, while that to the east—whose configuration was a little hazy—merged with Tibet's Chang Thang and was part of China's domain.²⁹

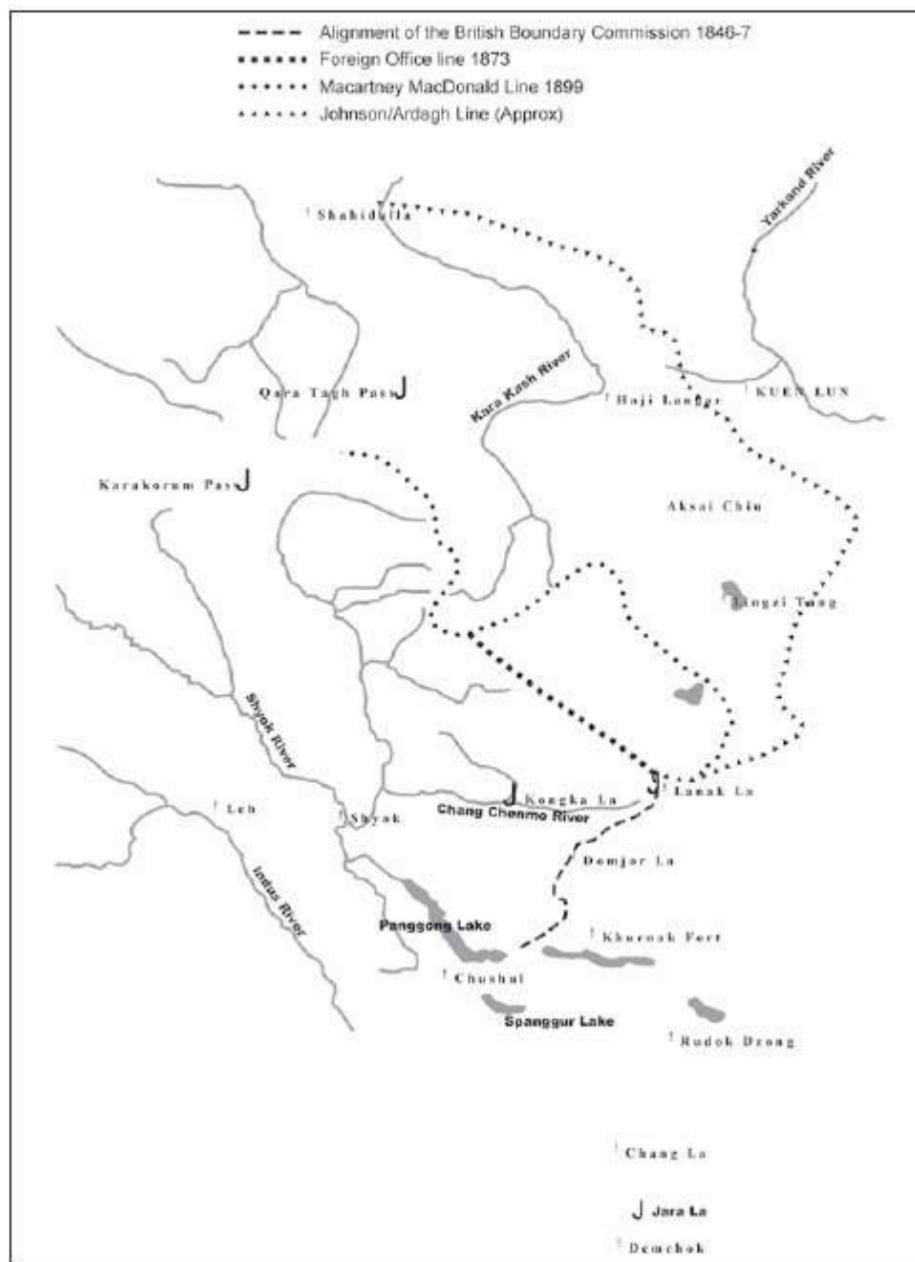
The March 1899 Macartney-MacDonald Line,³⁰ was the latest in a series of futile attempts by the British to resolve the western sector of India's frontiers. The Line was delimited in a note sent to the Tsungli Yamen³¹ in Beijing. The note stipulated inter alia that in return for the Chinese renouncing their 'shadowy' claim to suzerainty over Hunza, a little principality lying north of the Karakoram pass, the British would be willing to offer Beijing 'a large tract of country' hitherto 'outside' the Chinese domain, namely, western Aksai Chin, which, it was pointed out, even some Chinese maps had shown to be part of Ladakh. Aksai Chin, which lies in the cutting edge of the western sector, in Ladakh's north-east, is a vast, elevated, barren, uninhabited and uninhabitable waste land, where in Nehru's words, 'not even a blade

of grass grows'. (On hearing this in Parliament, the Congress MP, Mahavir Tyagi, riposted that the Prime Minister's head did not have a single hair but that didn't make it useless!)

Archival records reveal that British-India's major objective was to end China's suzerain rights over Hunza, which, it was feared would play havoc with Indian security if the Russians marched into Kashgaria, as was then widely feared. The British concern, was not the merit or otherwise of the surrender of Aksai Chin.³²

It may be pointed out that the 1899 Macartney-MacDonald Line, by and large, corresponds with the Chinese claim line, which in turn generally coincides with the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Interestingly, it has been argued that the 1899 Line, when plotted on a modern map rather than on one relying on survey knowledge, available at the turn of the nineteenth century, would leave the eastern portion of Aksai Chin, including the area covering the Xinjiang-Tibet road to China.³³ However, it should be noted that China's forward movements until November 1962, have meant that the LAC today is west of the original line. Given the common historical record (with Pakistan), it may be recalled that the legal rationale for Pakistan's provisional agreement³⁴ with China in March 1963 stemmed from the March 1899 Macartney-MacDonald Line.³⁵ Alastair Lamb has stated that 'it is probable that the intention of the 1963 Agreement was to coincide exactly with the 1899 Line as modified in 1905. In practice, in the interests of ease of survey, China may have given to Pakistan a small plot, certainly not much more than twenty miles in area, between the source of the Uprang Jilga stream and the Khunjerab Pass'³⁶ (see Map 1).

The Chinese did not, however, respond to the British proposals. Anyhow, by the late 1890s the situation on the ground was again changing, with a reactivation of the Russian threat and a forward line was again considered. John Ardagh, Director of Military Intelligence in 1896-7, produced a number of influential memoranda on the problem of the Kashmir boundary, and advocated a boundary alignment, which took in



Map 1: Historical development of western sector boundary

There were almost a dozen attempts by the British to arrive at exactly where the boundaries should lie. And they varied with the prevailing geopolitical objectives of British foreign policy, vis-à-vis the perceived threat of Russian expansion. For instance, when Russia threatened Xinjiang, some British strategists advocated an extreme northern Kashmiri border. At other moments, opinion tended to favour a relatively moderate border, with reliance being placed on Chinese control of Xinjiang as a buffer against Russia. The closest the British came to making a firm offer to the Chinese on the matter was in 1899 (i.e. Macartney-Macdonald Line).

SOURCE: Based on a map from Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1970, p. 41.

the crest of the Kuen Lun range and incorporated within British territory the upper reaches of the Yarkand River and its tributaries and the Karakash River. It was a strategic adaptation of Johnson's 1865 Line. Lord Curzon, who began his tenure in 1899 rejected the Macartney-MacDonald Line in favour of Ardagh's boundary, which became the accepted British doctrine. No further attempt was made to secure a Chinese definition of Kashmir's northern boundaries based on the 1899 MacDonald Note.³⁷

The British then made three more changes in its alignment, the first, to the west of Karakoram Pass (1905), the second and third with regard to Aksai Chin (1907, 1912). By 1912, with the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, they had placed Aksai Chin where it had initially belonged—in Ladakh. Beijing on its part continued to exercise its suzerain rights, such as these were, over the principality of Hunza, at the time perceived by the British as 'harmless' in Chinese hands, and an obstacle to a potential Russian advance.

The 'Great Game' insofar as it involved the northern frontiers of India, formally abated with the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, according to which, both powers decided to leave Tibet 'in that state of isolation from which, till recently, she has shown no intention to depart' and whereby the British agreed 'not to enter into negotiations with Tibet, except through the intermediary of the Chinese Government'.³⁸ Consequently, the British virtually threw away their century-old effort to buttress Lhasa's position as an independent autonomous entity. However, British-Russian geopolitical and geoeconomic competition for influence in China continued right up to the formation of the People's Republic of China in 1949 under Mao. Consequently, the northern frontiers and the security thereof remained a British concern.³⁹

As far as the western sector (Kashmir's boundaries) was concerned, the net result was summed up by Sir Arthur Hirtzel of the India Office to V. Wellesley of the Foreign Office on 10 January 1924: 'So far as we know there is no officially recognized boundary, though obviously the main Muztagh-Karakoram divide would constitute a natural frontier.'

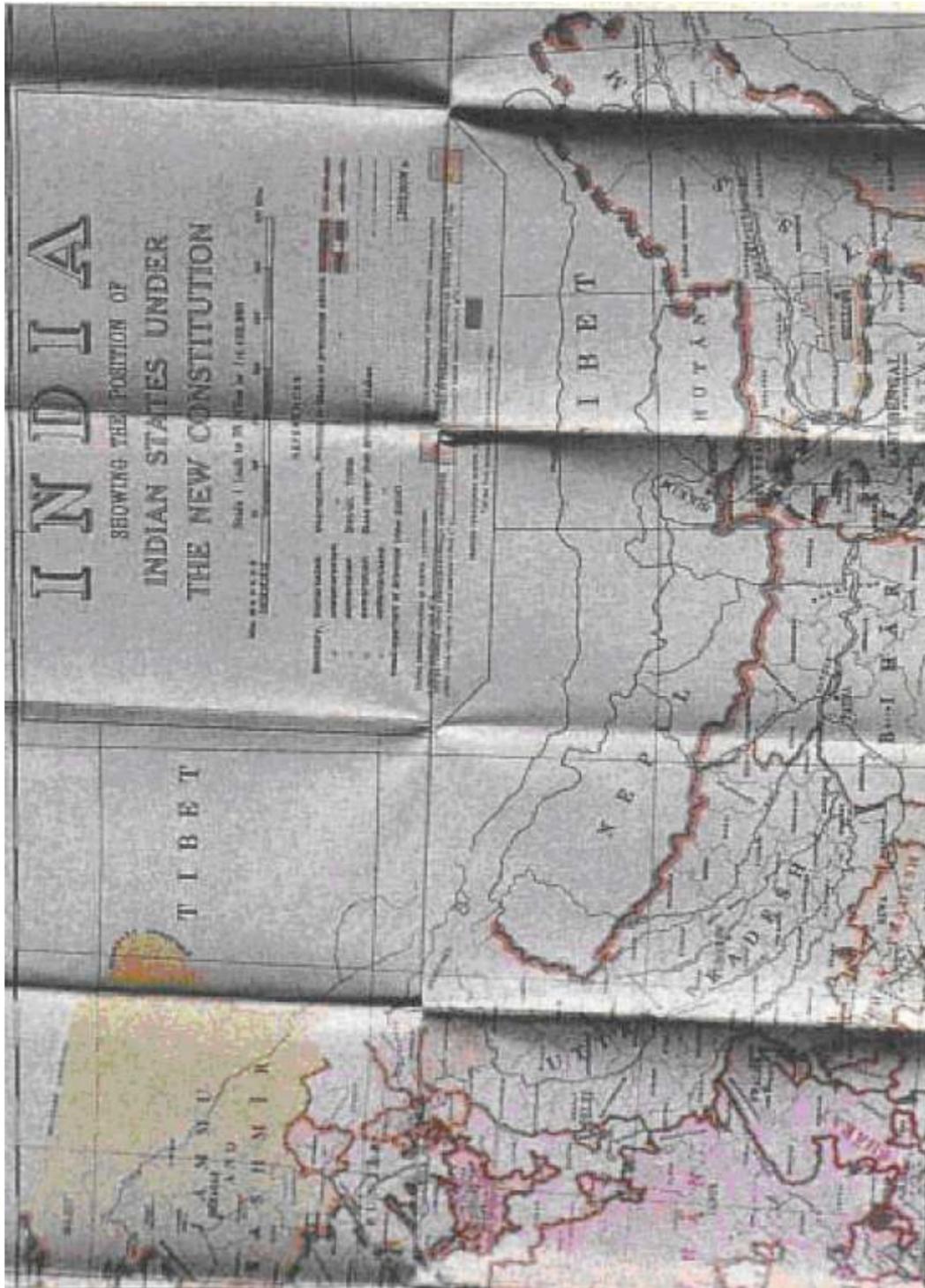
The Aitchison records in the 1929 edition⁴⁰ state: 'The northern as well as the eastern boundary of the Kashmir State is still undefined. On the north-west also, from Hunza southwards along the frontier of Yasin, Darel, Tangir, and Chilas to Kaghan, no boundary has been officially laid down.'⁴¹

In 1940-1, things began to change yet again. British intelligence learnt that Russian experts were conducting a survey of Aksai Chin for the pro-Soviet Xinjiang government of the Chinese warlord Sheng Shih-tsai who ruled from 1933-44. A brief background may suffice to illustrate Russian influence in western China. China at the time, nominally a republic since 1911, had little control over the distant province of Xinjiang, which was ruled by warlords. Soviet interests were in no small measure motivated by the need of creating a buffer in western China, to counterbalance British influence and to check the rise of pan-Islamic sentiments from spreading into Soviet Central Asia. They envisaged achieving this by buttressing the power of Xinjiang by supporting Sheng Shih-tsai. With Soviet help Sheng repressed the Kumul uprising, that included a number of *White Russian* troops who had taken refuge in Xinjiang after the *Russian Civil War*.

Soviet economic influence in the province which grew after 1931, reached a stranglehold by the mid 1930s, when a Soviet-Sinkiang Trading Company, 'Sovsintorg', was established. At that time, trade with the Soviet Union amounted to 80 per cent of the provincial total, while *China* and *British India* only made up 15 and 5 per cent, respectively.

At Stalin's request, Sheng joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1939. Xinjiang, under Sheng's rule, was thus a part of China in name only, with every major decision of Sheng's regime cleared through the Soviet Consulate in Tihwa.⁴²

Once again, the British went back to the Johnson/Ardagh alignment. But this decision did not find expression on official Indian maps and nothing else was done to clearly demarcate the border. No posts were established in Aksai Chin, and nor were any expeditions sent to show the flag. For all practical purposes, the Raj ceased at the Karakoram Range.⁴³



Map 2: India's northern frontier in 1950

The McMahon Line is clearly shown as India's boundary in the east. But for the entire western sector, right from the Sino-Indo-Afghan trijunction to the Sino-Indo-Nepalese trijunction, the legend reads: 'Boundary Undefined'.

SOURCE: A.G. Noorani, 'Negotiating with China', *Frontline*, Vol. 15. No. 17, 15 August 1998.

Nothing happened thereafter, until Independence, to alter the fact, which even independent India's maps also recorded until 1954. There was no defined boundary right from the Sino-Afghan-India trijunction in the west to the Sino-Nepal-India trijunction in the east. Only the McMahon Line was defined in 1914. Thus, in Kashmir both the boundary to the west as well as to the east of the Karakoram Pass was expressed as 'still undefined' on official maps (see Map 2).⁴⁴

WHITEHALL VERSUS GOVERNMENT OF INDIA: 'BUREAUCRATIC CHICANERY'

Before concluding the historical survey of the western sector, it would be worthwhile to underline the dichotomy between Whitehall's and British India's views, often contrary policy, on this sector in particular and frontier policies in general. Generally, while London preferred a cautious line vis-à-vis the frontiers of Ladakh, Delhi leaned toward more northern points on that frontier. Such competing policy directions can be attributed to the institutionalized relationship that existed between the British Indian government in New Delhi (or prior to that in Calcutta) and the British administrative apparatus in Whitehall, London. The two bureaucratic institutions most involved in determining that relationship at the London end were, the India Office (Secretary of State for India) and the Foreign Office (the British foreign ministry).⁴⁵

Where frontier questions were concerned, the India Office and the Foreign Office were mindful of larger geopolitical considerations than simply the merits of a specific move on India's frontiers. They were concerned with the political and strategic implications for the empire of any boundary agreements, concluded with other powers bordering India, specifically, Russia and China. Relations with them were seen from London as set by matters such as Anglo-Russian dealings in Europe and the Middle East and British commercial interests on the mainland of China. Thus, London was inevitably reluctant to pursue forward claim lines.⁴⁶ This is epitomized by

the India Office's instructions to the Indian government in December 1904 that, 'questions of Indian frontier policy could no longer be regarded from an exclusively Indian point of view'⁴⁷

By contrast, the Government of India was naturally concerned primarily with actual and potential threats to India, which particularly preoccupied the Army and Foreign Departments. Influencing Delhi's perception of such threats was a mentality, consistent with ruling a colonial empire, rather than an internally secure nation-state. Further, the coming of an independent sovereign power toward India's frontiers, especially an Asian power, was seen as potentially disruptive of internal stability.⁴⁸

Such 'bureaucratic chicanery' and Whitehall's inevitable obligations to global British interests, inevitably led to Delhi officials via various stratagems of pushing for frontier policies that would secure India in its own right, but only to be restrained by their cautious political managers in London. ⁴⁹Thus, despite a series of cartographic surveys since the 1840s, the British were unable or unwilling to persuade the Chinese to delimit any of those alignments to Kashmir's northern and eastern boundaries.

The net result was an ambiguous and undefined border in the western sector that was ultimately bequeathed to independent India in 1947.

EASTERN SECTOR: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The 'Great Game' was also being played on the eastern sector, but a little differently. The Raj called it the 'forgotten frontier', in sharp contrast to India's north and west which constituted the empire's real frontier. A brief historical backdrop may be useful in discerning British-India's interests in the eastern frontiers. In 1769, the traditional Newar rulers of Nepal were overthrown by the Gurkhas, which led to the establishment of a Hindu kingdom in Nepal. Racial and religious bonds between Nepal and Tibet were broken, and the traditional trade routes through the Nepalese passes between India and Tibet were largely closed. In addition, the Gurkhas did not look kindly to

the British, who had rendered military assistance to the Newars. As a result, the East India Company began to look for alternative routes through Bhutan or Assam, which could open Tibet to trade and which did not pass through Nepal. ⁵⁰

The continued forays by the Gurkhas into areas of British interest and protection ultimately lead to the Anglo Nepalese War of 1814-16. The British were victorious, and by the Treaty of Segauli of March 1816, were given possession of the territory to the west of Nepal in Kumaon and Garwhal, thus giving British India a common frontier with Tibet for the first time. In order to preclude further Gurkha expansion into the British sphere of influence, in February 1817, the Treaty of Titalia was negotiated with Sikkim, which had been under Gurkha attack since 1775. Sikkim's potential as a transit route from Bengal to Lhasa and its utility to keep pressure on Nepal's eastern flank persuaded the British to provide assistance to the Sikkimese, whereby in lieu of British protection the Sikkimese agreed to place their foreign relations under British control. ⁵¹ The Treaty of Titalia of 1817 was buttressed by a new treaty in 1861 establishing British influence in that area. After 1861, Sikkim was to become the main channel through which the British Indian government would attempt to carry out a Tibetan policy ⁵²

In the 1820s, following the Burmese conquest of Manipur and parts of Assam, the British came further east. This area had become unstable in the later part of the eighteenth century following the weakening of the Ahom kingdom that extended into Assam. This instability prompted the Burmese to move westward to secure their flanks. The Anglo-Burmese War of 1824-6 ended with the British emerging victorious. By the peace treaty signed at Yandabo on 24 February 1826, the British acquired the whole of lower Assam and parts of upper Assam (now in Arunachal Pradesh).

These developments opened up the possibility of alternative routes to Lhasa and south-west China. The fact that Assam was a resource rich region, made it economically valuable in its own right. The hills of the Brahmaputra Valley were first penetrated

in 1886, when an expedition went up the Lohit Valley at the far end of what is now Arunachal Pradesh. These tribal areas were a 'no-man's land, a region where no Indian or British official and no Tibetan tax gatherer had ever penetrated' and 'the British were in most places the first . . . ever to come in contact with the tribesmen'.⁵³ Thus, the boundaries of Assam gradually expanded to include most of the areas, which today constitute the north-east. The introduction of tea and the discovery of petroleum and coal were accompanied by the growth of the railway network and the development of new communication routes.

But since China was in a largely moribund state for most of the nineteenth century, all that the British had to do was to meet a purely local situation. This was largely achieved by maintaining good relations with the frontier tribes through a 'pacific policy' of non-interference, first announced in 1865. Though occasionally, the British did consolidate their hold over the region by carrying out successful expeditions against the Khasis, Garos, Nagas, Monpas, Mishmis and the Manipuris, to suppress all signs of revolt.

THE AFTERMATH OF YOUNGHUSBAND EXPEDITION (1904)

At the turn of the century, however, the scenario underwent a sea-change. Lord Curzon's letter to Hamilton at the India Office in June 1901 sums up his conviction of the potential threat if Russia were to establish a protectorate at Lhasa: 'It would be madness for us to cross the Himalayas and occupy it. But it is important that no one else should seize it; and that it should be turned into a sort of buffer between the Indian and Russian Empires. . . . What I mean is that Tibet and not Nepal must be the buffer state that we endeavour to create.'⁵⁴

Thus, the 'fiction' of Chinese power in Tibet as Curzon called it was now no longer a sustainable basis for British Tibetan policy, and by 1903, Curzon had concluded that Tibet had become a possible launching pad for a Russian thrust and therefore required preemptive measures. The perceived threat

was amplified by China's loss of influence over Tibet. While the Chinese Ambans⁵⁵ at Lhasa were the official representatives of the Manchu court, by 1900 their ability to function efficiently was undermined by the collapsing Qing Dynasty and by the Boxer Protocol of 1901, which had divided China up amongst the western powers and Japan. By 1902, the Tibetans were openly flouting the 1893 Trade Agreement between their Chinese 'suzerains' and Britain. When the Chinese proved unable to control Tibetan incursions into Sikkim, it led to the beginning of a re-evaluation of Tibet's status vis-à-vis China. The British concluded that China could not be relied upon to protect Tibet from Russian intrusions.⁵⁶

Thus, came about the celebrated, albeit controversial Younghusband expedition of 1903-4, after which Britain became directly involved in Tibetan affairs. Curzon's forward policy in Tibet was essentially directed towards the establishment of some kind of British protectorate over Tibet. Lack of enthusiasm on part of Whitehall for such extreme methods for countering Russian influence in Lhasa, made it impossible for Curzon and Younghusband to be completely forthright about their intentions. Nonetheless, Whitehall's subsequent modification of the treaty that Younghusband obtained in September 1904, toward a policy of 'non-interference' where British interest in Tibet was only 'to exclude that of any other (European) power' still provided greater opportunities for British influence in Tibet than had existed before 1904; it also established a precedent for direct Anglo Tibetan relations. Yet, equally importantly, the power vacuum that arose in Tibet after Whitehall repudiated Curzon's initiative, left the way open for the Chinese to reassert their power in Tibet, which hitherto had not been possible since the 1880s.⁵⁷

According to the Anglo Russian Convention of 1907, both powers decided to leave Tibet 'in that state of isolation from which, till recently, she has shown no intention to depart' and whereby Britain and Russia agreed 'not to enter into negotiations with Tibet, except through the intermediary of the Chinese Government'.⁵⁸ As Alastair Lamb notes, 'If the Russian and British influences were to be kept out of Lhasa, and if, as

then seemed fairly certain, the Tibetans could not stand on their own, then a Chinese-dominated Tibet . . . was the logical end-product of the policy of non-interference.’⁵⁹

Indeed, by mid 1910s, the reassertion of Chinese power in Tibet revived the need for a Tibetan buffer between China and precious British investments in Assam. The final years of the Manchu Empire were marked by a sudden, though temporary, resurgence in China’s military strength and activity in frontier regions. Between 1905 and 1911, the Chinese dominated central and eastern Tibet and even established a strong presence along the Tibetan side of the Assam Himalayas.⁶⁰ In 1910, the Dalai Lama fled to India to escape a Chinese advance on Lhasa.

British concerns at the time have been summed up by Alastair Lamb: ‘Would the Chinese challenge the influence of the British in Nepal and Bhutan? Would they try to undermine the security of a long Indo-Tibetan border, which for most of its length had not been defined and for a considerable stretch followed an alignment, which was far from ideal from a military point of view? Between 1910 and 1912 Chinese actions seemed to provide an affirmative answer to both these questions.’⁶¹

The Chinese forward presence invited British counter-measures, accompanied by a programme of exploration and surveying. Thus, in the years 1911-13, there were a number of exploratory missions, which transformed British knowledge of the region’s topography and population patterns. (Of these, the two that stand out are the Miri, and the Mishmi missions.) The Assam Lieutenant Governor, the Army General Staff, and senior officials in the administration were in essence, probing for the contours of a boundary line from which the Tibetans and Chinese could be kept out.

However, just when Chinese power in Central Tibet was threatening to pose political and military dangers to India’s northern frontiers, especially in the Assam Himalayas, it abruptly collapsed with the outbreak of the October 1911 Chinese revolution, which toppled the tentative Chinese superstructure in Lhasa. Chinese troops were decimated by the Tibetans and survivors driven across the Nathu La by 1913. The British transported the fleeing Chinese to Calcutta and then

on to Shanghai. The political vacuum thus created was filled up by the exiled Dalai Lama returning to his seat of power in Lhasa. Subsequently, the British, unable to pursue Curzonian solutions given their increasing commitments in Europe, and unwilling to depart from the self-denial clauses of the 1907 Convention with Russia, persuaded the weak Republican regime in Beijing to help sort out the Tibetan entanglement. The Chinese regime, fearing its complete political eclipse in Lhasa, chose to regain some modicum of authority in Lhasa, albeit with British acquiescence.⁶²

As far as British-India was concerned, the tripartite Simla Conference of 1914 delimited the north-eastern frontiers along the Himalayan watershed, which after the British plenipotentiary, who presided, came to be known as the McMahon Line.

THE SIMLA CONFERENCE AND THE MCMAHON LINE (1914)

The year 1914 was a seminal moment in the history of the frontiers between India and China.

The British sponsored a tripartite conference at Simla in October 1913. The Chinese attended reluctantly, but the Tibetans arrived quite eagerly as they were now engaged in conflict with their Chinese suzerains. Henry McMahon, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, led the British Indian delegation. McMahon was believed to be an expert at drawing boundary lines, having spent two years demarcating the Durand Line as the north-west frontier.⁶³ The boundary that followed in July 1914, the now famous McMahon Line, extended the territory of British India up to the edge of the Tibetan plateau. It has been suggested that it was not really a cartographer's delight, as it violated several rules of boundary demarcation. But in essence, McMahon was guided by a variety of considerations, apart from the purely physical and strategic—ethnic, political and religious—were taken fully into account. And for the most part, ethnic and geographical divides coincided.⁶⁴

The oft-repeated perception that in Tawang, as well as in Lohit, the boundary was in total disregard of ethnic principles, needs to be corrected. The Monpas of Tawang are admittedly non-Tibetan in origin: the three small villages, south of the Lohit were settled with Tibetan immigrants by the Mishmis in their territory. The only violation of ethnic principle lay in the area beyond Pemako and along the south bank of the Tsang Po River (Brahmaputra)—mostly inhabited by the Monpas, which was left north of the Line, but logically should have been south of it. The consideration here was mainly political. Similarly on the upper waters of the Subansiri, a deviation was made for religious reasons.⁶⁵

The map accompanying the draft convention showed the proposed division of Tibet into two zones, Inner and Outer Tibet—marking the frontier of Tibet in red and the proposed boundary between the two Tibetan zones in blue. But the red line, which for the greater part of its length showed a boundary between Tibet and China, curved round in its southern extension to show what would have been the boundary between Tibet and India—and in that sector it followed the alignment, which McMahan had agreed upon with the Tibetans. ⁶⁶

It may be noted that the McMahan Line was constructed on a map on the scale of 8 miles to the inch with a thick nib dipped in red ink. The contemporary implication is that it is hard to transpose on the ground. But scholars on the McMahan Line have noted that the boundary was drawn up by experts in the Army General Staff. And since the thickness of the line represents a width of about six miles on the ground, differences over its actual demarcation would have been confined within a very narrow limit and would have been 'easily reconcilable'. ⁶⁷

British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey summed up the result well, when he stated that the McMahan Line followed 'the main geographical features approximating to the traditional border between Tibet and India and the semi-independent tribes under the control of the Government of India, and as far as possible, it divides exactly the territory occupied by people of

Tibetan origin from that inhabited by the Miris, Abors, Daphlas, within the British sphere of influence'.⁶⁸

In the aftermath of the Simla Conference, the Chinese soon forcefully repudiated the Convention and the map with it, making 'themselves scarce when the time came to agree or sign formal documents'.⁶⁹ For one, the Chinese did not ratify the Simla Convention because they did not agree with the demarcation line separating Inner from Outer Tibet. In the latter the Chinese were to exercise no control; in the former power was to be shared between China and the Lhasa authorities.⁷⁰ But 'initialing' of the document by the Chinese on 27 April 1914 connoted an informal acceptance of all that it held.

Another explanation for Chinese silence over the boundary lay in their indifference to the tribal country north of Assam after their expulsion from Tibet. The Chinese claim to this territory had no historical validity; they were never physically present on this frontier except briefly in 1910-11, when they probed it on a few occasions.

But the crux of the Chinese dilemma lies in the status Tibet obtained at the time. The historical truth is that at Simla, the credentials of the Tibetan plenipotentiary, Lonchen Shatra were accepted, and, as an equal of his Chinese counterpart. It was with him that Ivan Chen, the chief delegate of the Chinese government discussed the Tibet-China boundary for several weeks. In sum, Tibet's status in 1913-14, which was tantamount to an independent foreign policy, was an important factor in Chinese intransigence then and perhaps now.⁷¹ Further, the validity of the India-Tibet boundary does not depend on 'whether or not Ivan Chen participated in the negotiations' leading to it.⁷² Contrary to Chinese claims, they were 'not forced' to attend the Simla Conference nor did Chen's performance suggest in any way that he was negotiating 'under duress'.⁷³

To be sure, all through this period, the British never challenged Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. But three Chinese initiatives—in 1915, 1916, and 1919—tried to revive the Tripartite Conference of July 1914. The reason was simple. Lu Hsing-chi, the unofficial yet powerful Chinese negotiator, was acutely

conscious of the fact that China's sovereign claims over Tibet had not been accepted. One limiting factor had been that under the Manchus, the title of the Imperial Resident in Tibet, literally 'Resident in Tibet, Administering Great Minister', had been translated by the British as 'Resident' ignoring the word 'Administering'. Lu therefore urged Beijing to correct the translation, which would, 'in effect restore our sovereign rights'.⁷⁴

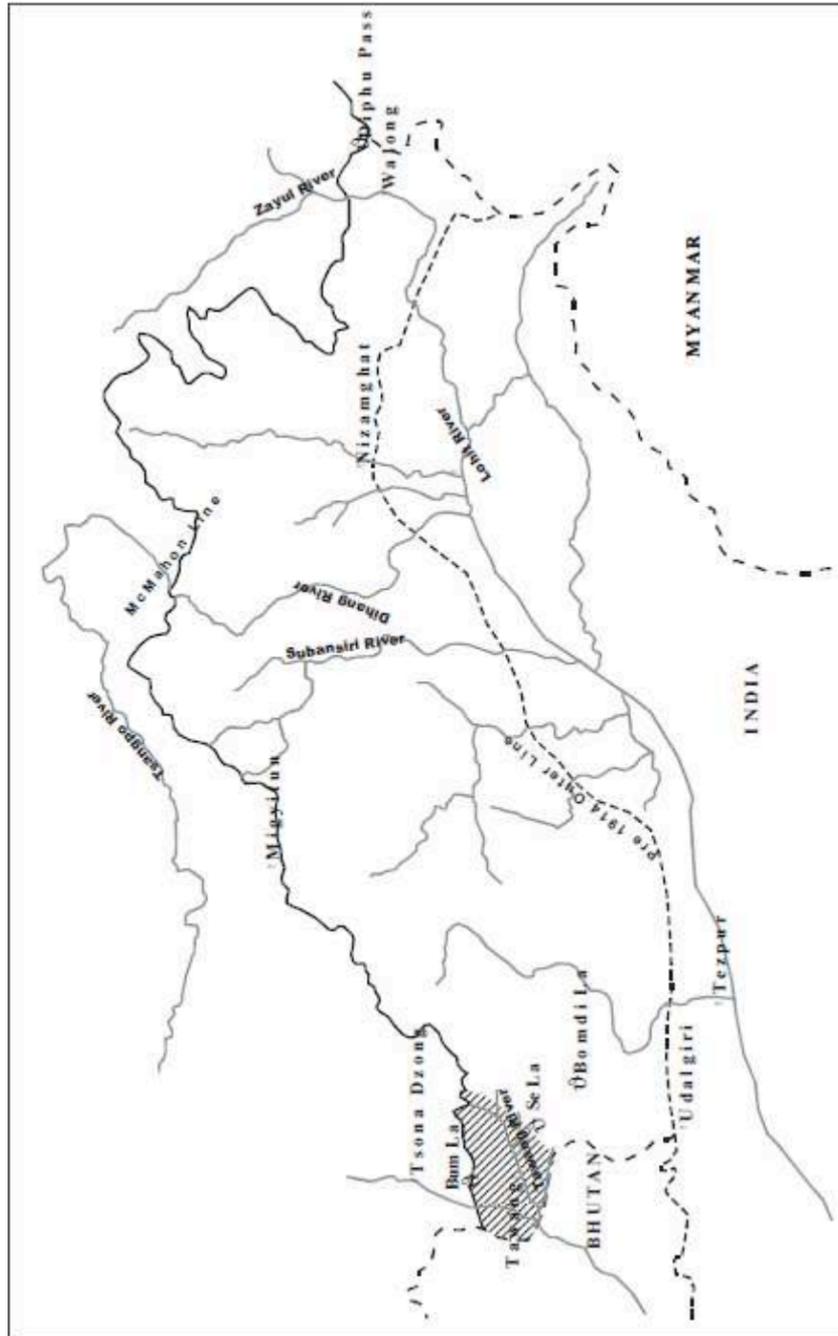
In Delhi and in Whitehall, the McMahon Line was 'all but forgotten' in the following two decades after 1914. There were several reasons. First, the British viewed mainland China's comeback more as a 'source of constant irritation', rather than 'an actual military danger'. But with the emergence of the hostile Kuomintang regime, the British sought to keep the Convention agreements under wrap. Second, the rivalry with Russia, and the self-denying clauses of the 1907 Convention vis-à-vis Tibet, persuaded the British to keep the Simla Conference proceedings under wrap. Thus, the dubious risk of attracting Russian and later Chinese attention continued to be the principal reason for non-publication of the full texts of the Convention and its adjuncts.⁷⁵

Fortunately for independent India, in 1936, Olaf Caroe, the Deputy Secretary in the Indian Foreign Department urged Whitehall to publish the texts of the 1914 Convention. Thus in 1937, the Survey of India for the first time showed the McMahon Line as the official boundary.⁷⁶

Finally, it may be noted that while there could be a difference between the region delimited by the red line in the Simla Map and final demarcation on the ground, it would probably involve no territorial exchanges but rather minor cartographic adjustments (see Map 3).

THE INDIAN CASE FOR TAWANG

This may be an apt moment to step back and correct the historical narrative of the Indo-China discourse over the boundary issue. Beijing has often repeated the charge 'that New



Map 3: Tawang tract in the eastern sector

SOURCE: Based on a map from Dorothy Woodman, *Himalayan Frontiers*, London: The Cresset Press, 1969, p. 153.

Delhi had inherited the legacy of the British Empire, whose policy of continuous and unabashed aggression on China's frontiers was no secret'.⁷⁷ However, historical records are more nuanced. Both in the north-east, in the case of the McMahon Line and in the western sector, Whitehall bent over backwards to be 'unusually generous. And for the most part, at India's expense'⁷⁸

A case in point is the aforementioned Tawang tract, which extends from the Tibetan plateau south to the foothills. Tawang, which India had acquired in the 1914 Simla Conference, was not made effective on the ground until 1951, when Major Ralengnao 'Bob' Khating of the Indian Frontier Administrative Service, an eclectic service that comprised military officers, administrators and functional specialists, established Indian control replacing that of the Lhasa appointed head Lama. This was the first expedition to negotiate extremely inhospitable terrain in sub zero temperatures. Khating quickly and effectively established his authority over Tawang and the Indian flag was hoisted here on 9 February 1951, when he also announced that the Tawang area, south of the McMahon Line, formed under the Simla Treaty of 1914, was now under the charge of the Indian government. By August 1951, the Indian Administration was finally in effective control of the Tawang area.⁷⁹ Not surprisingly, China's occupation of Tibet in 1951 coincided with Indian moves to reassert administrative control over Tawang.

Previously, under British India, in 1936, when the McMahon Line was rediscovered, Assam's then Governor, Sir Henry Twynam, developed cold feet on the question of making good on Tawang. Occupying the Tawang tract in the extreme west of what is now Arunachal Pradesh, he argued, would be tant amount to the pursuit of a 'forward' policy which he felt would inevitably alienate Lhasa 'without any particular advantage' to New Delhi. ⁸⁰ Thus, as late as 1943, there was general agreement at the highest levels of government that 'it might be useful' to draw the boundary in the eastern sector, south of the Tawang area. Despite these warnings from some 'that China should gain control of Tibet', 'the Tawang country

is particularly adapted for a secret and easy entrance into India'.⁸¹

For independent India, however, with Chinese control extended upon the Tibetan plateau, Tawang *was and is* a strategic asset. Further, the ethnic differences between Tibet and Tawang, which as alluded to earlier were embodied in the 1914 Simla Map, underscore the Indian case, namely that the Monpas of Tawang are distinct from Tibetans. It may also be noted, that the head Lama of Tawang, prior to 1951, was appointed by the Tibetan theocracy and the government in Tawang consisted of being little more than a token presence, unlike the modern administrative apparatus that the Government of India would henceforth provide.

This episode then exemplifies the obvious that Delhi was always meant to subserve British imperial strategy, the legacies of which were not always in the interests of the Indian state after 1947. Nonetheless, the fact remains that while the British did not formally extend their control up to Tawang, it lies south of the McMahon alignment.

It may also be pertinent to mention here that in 1947, the present Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, wrote to the newly independent government in New Delhi formally claiming Tawang and its immediate areas as a part of Tibet. It is only quite recently that the Dalai Lama led Tibetan government-in-exile has formally abandoned this claim. In the recent months many Chinese officials have been suggesting that the renewed Chinese interest in Tawang is due to pressure from the present Tibetan leadership in Lhasa. Whether this is just a ruse to exert pressure on India or whether there is a genuine demand cannot be ascertained in the present situation. Whatever be the reason for it, it amounts to a reversal of Chinese positions implied in offers to the Rajiv Gandhi and Narasimha Rao governments to settle the dispute on the basis of an as is where is basis. That is the McMahon Line in the east and the LAC in the west.

Today, after over five decades since Major Khating raised the tricolour over Tawang, the Government of India would do well to further institutionalize its presence in Tawang. For instance, perhaps establishing a full cantonment as a family station,

providing easy access to tourists and other activities could serve to economically integrate local polity with state interests and spur further flow of commerce. In recent days, there has been talk of building an airport near Tawang, but this needs to go well beyond that. Arunachal Pradesh, which has immense tourism possibilities, is still an Inner Line area that requires official permits for even Indian citizens desirous of visiting the area.

NOTES

1. Ashley J. Tellis, 'Securing the Barrack: The Logic, Structure, and Objectives of India's Naval Expansion', *Naval War College Review* Summer 1990, pp. 79-83.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game*, London: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 5.
5. Parshotam Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History: India, China, and the Disputed Border*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 88-92.
6. Ibid. A distinction may be made between the terms 'frontiers' and 'boundary'. A boundary is a clear line between sovereignties that can be marked as a line on a map. A frontier is a tract of territory, a zone, separating two sovereign states. In the case of India and China, their frontiers have been defined for the most part by nature itself—the Himalayan range. The dispute between India and China is one of where their boundary line should run through this Himalayan frontier zone. And yet, because this frontier zone consists of over 50,000 square miles of territory, a boundary dispute has become a dispute over territory as well.
7. Ibid., p. 253.
8. The 1893 Durand Line formally separated British India from Afghanistan.
9. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, p. 91.
10. Ibid., p. 7.
11. A.G. Noorani, 'Facing the Truth', Part 1, *Frontline*, Vol 23, Issue 19, 6 October 2006.
12. Ibid.
13. Alastair Lamb, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia: The Road to Lhasa, 1767 to 1905*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960, p. 73.
14. John Lall, in Surjit Mansingh (ed.), *Indian and Chinese Foreign Policies in Comparative Perspective*, New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1998, p. 445.

15. A.G. Noorani, 'Facing the Truth', Part 1, *Frontline*, Vol. 23, Issue 19, 6 October 2006.
16. John Lall, *Aksai Chin and Sino-Indian Conflict* New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1989. Lall records, '... fifty porters, six horses, a State sepoy and his interpreter Juman Khan'. pp. 141-7.
17. Ibid. See also Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 288-93.
18. Lall, *Aksai Chin and Sino-Indian Conflict*, p. 147.
19. Ibid., p. 142. John Lall highlights an additional motive when he notes, 'Johnson's problems arose principally from his belonging to a social group ostracized by the official British hierarchy. He was a domiciled European and the son of a sub-contractor. Whatever his merits, Johnson was fated to remain a civil servant, playing second fiddle to King's Commission officers, however inexperienced and junior in service. A golden opportunity to prove his mettle came his way in 1865.'
20. Ibid., p. 143.
21. Ibid., p. 146.
22. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 288-93.
23. Alastair Lamb, *The China-India Border: The Origins of the Disputed Boundaries* London: Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 43, 83-4.
24. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 292.
25. A.G. Noorani, 'Facing the Truth', Part 1, *Frontline*, Vol. 23, Issue 19, 6 October 2006.
26. A.G. Noorani, 'Facts of History', *Frontline*, Vol. 20, Issue 18, 30 August 2003.
27. See Mohan Guruswamy, *Emerging Trends in India-China Relations*, Gurgaon: Hope India Publications, 2006, p. 216.
28. Ibid.
29. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 288-93.
30. Named after George Macartney, a British representative at Kashgar in the 1890s. Claude MacDonald was the British Minister to China, who communicated Macartney's alignment to the Chinese in Peking.
31. Tsungli Yamen is the name of the Foreign Office created by the Chinese Empire in 1861 following the Convention of Beijing.
32. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 288-93.
33. Alastair Lamb, *The Sino-Indian Border in Ladakh*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973, pp. 15-16.
34. Article 6 deals with the provisional character of the agreement: 'The two parties have agreed that after the settlement of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India, the sovereign authority concerned will reopen negotiations with the Government of the People's Republic of China on the boundary, as described in Article Two of the present agreement, so as to sign a formal boundary treaty to replace the present agreement, provided that in the event of that sovereign authority being

- Pakistan, the provisions of the present agreement and of the aforesaid protocol shall be maintained in the formal boundary treaty to be signed between the People's Republic of China and Pakistan.'
35. A.G. Noorani, 'Facing the Truth', Part 1.
 36. Alastair Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy, 1846-1990*, Hertingfordbury: Roxford Books, 1991, p. 51, n 52. Also see Dorothy Woodman, *Himalayan Frontiers: A Political Review of British, Chinese, Indian and Russian Rivalries*, London: The Cresset Press, 1969, pp. 299.
 37. Alastair Lamb, *The China-India Border*, pp. 105-7. In fact, in a note to Whitehall in April 1917, it was emphasized that, the 1899 Line was drawn 'not as the result of any treaty or engagement with China, nor as finally and definitely marking the bounds of our spheres of influence, nor altogether as forming a scientific or strategic border'. Moreover, it could 'not in any sense' be regarded 'as a fixed or final international boundary' nor could India regard itself 'as absolutely bound' by a border which it had itself laid down, 'without the concurrence of any other party concerned'. See Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 288-93.
 38. Alastair Lamb, *The McMahon Line: A Study in the Relations between India, China and Tibet, 1904 to 1914*, Vol. I, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966 pp. 251-7.
 39. The 1907 Convention was formally cancelled in Article II of the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 7 August 1924.
 40. A collection of treaties relating to India.
 41. A.G. Noorani, 'Facing the Truth', Part 1.
 42. Mark Dickens, 'The Soviets in Xinjiang: 1911-1949', <http://www.oxuscom.com/sovinxj.htm#sheng>, 1990.
 43. Guruswamy, *Emerging Trends in India-China Relations*, p. 217.
 44. A.G. Noorani, 'Facing the Truth', Part 1.
 45. See Steven A. Hoffmann, *India and the China Crisis*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, Chp. 2, pp. 13-14.
 46. Ibid.
 47. Alastair Lamb, *The McMahon Line*, Vol. I, p. 14. The aftermath of Francis Younghusband's 1904 military expedition to Lhasa perhaps best exemplified the dichotomy between Whitehall and India, when Younghusband was caught in political cross-fire and in the end not only failed to accomplish his mission as he conceived it, but was publicly censured.
 48. Hoffmann, *India and the China Crisis*, p. 14.
 49. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
 50. Derek Waller, *The Pundits: British Exploration of Tibet and Central Asia*, Kentucky, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990.
 51. Alastair Lamb, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia*, pp. 42, 49, 52-3.
 52. Ibid., pp. 87.

53. Alastair Lamb, *The China-India Border*, p. 130.
54. Alastair Lamb, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia*, p. 260.
55. The Ambans acted as agents of the Manchu Court influencing various policies of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. The office of the Amban was first introduced by Beijing in 1728, by which time Manchu armies had stabilized Tibet following Mongol intrusion. From an initial garrison of 2,000 men, it was later agreed that 100 Chinese soldiers would remain stationed at Lhasa. The Amban was essentially an ambassador appointed to look after Manchu interests, and to protect the Dalai Lama on behalf of the emperor. The Amban mission lasted until 1912.
56. Wendy Palase, *The British Empire and Tibet, 1900-1922* London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 2-3.
57. Alastair Lamb, *The McMahon Line*, Vol. I, pp. 12-13, 226-7.
58. Ibid., pp. 255.
59. Ibid., pp. 228.
60. See Steven A. Hoffmann, *India and the China Crisis* Chp. 2, p. 18.
61. Alastair Lamb, *Tibet, China, and India, 1914-1950*, pp. 9-10.
62. Alastair Lamb, *The McMahon Line*, pp. 231-2.
63. Mohan Guruswamy, *Emerging Trends in India-China Relations*, p. 219.
64. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 284-7.
65. Ibid.
66. Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1970, p. 52.
67. See John Lall, *Aksai Chin and Sino-Indian Conflict*, New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1989, p. 217.
68. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 284-7.
69. See John Lall, in Surjit Mansingh (ed.), *Indian and Chinese Foreign Policies* p. 449.
70. See Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, p. 163, n 5.
71. It can be argued that a new treaty with China that reaffirms the 1914 alignment can avoid the potential legal implications for China's ownership over Tibet, which is embodied in the original treaty.
72. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, pp. 284-7.
73. John Rowland, *A History of Sino-Indian Relations: Hostile Coexistence*, London: Van Nostrand, 1971.
74. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, p. 75, n 9.
75. Ibid., p. 236.
76. Guruswamy, *Emerging Trends in India-China Relations*, p. 219.
77. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, p. 33.
78. Ibid., p. 34. The reason for this, as alluded to earlier, stemmed largely from a wider British geopolitical stratagem in its Asian policy, in which India, albeit important, was only a small part. In the case of Tawang, which clearly lay south of the McMahon Line, the British policy of supporting Tibetan autonomy and its own weakening position during

World War II, coupled with strong Tibetan reluctance to relinquish their rights in Tawang, meant the British largely acquiesced on the issue of Tawang.

79. Anil Bhat, 'Major Bob Khating: The Brave Tangkhul', www.manipuronline.com, November 2002.

80. Mehra, *Essays in Frontier History*, p. 35.

81. Ibid.