



Economic Cooperation or Lasting Peace: Resolving the Paradox of Competitive Cooperation between China and India

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Abstract

This essay is a critical engagement with media coverage of China-India cooperative communication. I particularly focus on a popular Chinese magazine *The Beijing Review* and a major Indian newspaper *The Hindu* which have paid close attention to recent diplomatic activities between the 2 ex-colonial nations. Taking a postcolonial feminist critical stance, I argue that the media coverage champions current predominant emphasis on economic cooperation between the 2 countries, which is a major political priority, without adequate consideration for establishing positive peace. More specifically, I argue that China and India's competitive drive to become autonomous global capitalist powers can undercut the possibility for lasting peace resulting in a paradoxical "cooperating-while-competing." I draw from literature on Peace Studies to make the distinction between negative and positive peace and propose a notion of articulated cooperation as a more inclusive and sustainable form of cooperation.

Keywords: Paradox; Siege; Cooperation; Competition; Positive peace; Articulation; Meaning; Holistic interarticulations; Sustainable peace; Inclusive peace

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Introduction

In the summer of 2013, the current state of China-India relations received fanfare in a popular magazine in China called the *Beijing Review*. The coverage was triggered by then Prime Minister of India ManMohan Singh, making a state visit to China to meet with his counterpart, China's President Xi Jinping, following an earlier visit by Chinese Foreign Minister Li Keqiang to India in May 2013. Singh's visit was splashed across the *Beijing Review*, that touts being China's national weekly English only news magazine at a glance resembling *Time* and *Newsweek*, which hailed Singh's visit as the harbinger of new "cooperative relations" between the two most populous countries in the world. Such talk of peace is welcome, for the long China-India border has historically been a volatile and often shifting space of tension for these two ancient civilizations. To announce the new friendship between China and India, the *Beijing Review's* cover page announced "Hand In Hand: Indian PM's Visit seals enhanced cooperation." A similar leitmotif of emerging international collaboration over trade was featured in the iconic Indian newspaper *The Hindu*, which in a recent series articles announced that "India and China have set a target of \$100 billion in bilateral trade a year by 2015, which

the two ministers (Chinese Foreign Minister and Indian External Affairs Minister) spoke about in their meeting" [1].

Literature Review

Historically, the border conflict between the two nation-states can be traced to two contested territories: the Aksai Chin region and the state of Arunachal Pradesh. India and China claim both regions as their own [2]. These conflicts were exacerbated by the 1962 border war, when China defeated the under-equipped Indian army [3]. Under the sign of globalization, the border issue is being revisited with an eye to establishing cooperative economic relations, with both nations turning to their neighbor in part as a means of shoring up markets now threatened by the prospect of building and strengthening emergent regional capitalist economies catalyzed by President Obama's "Asian Pivot" discursive platform that purports to create a free trade zone across 11 Pacific Rim countries by jettisoning China and sans mention of India under the banner of the Trans-Pacific Trade Treaty. This was a hot-off-the-press headlining news story on Monday, October 5th, 2015 in news sites such as *The New York Times* and *Huffington Post* awaiting Congressional approval in an embattled communicative space that is sure to raise

contentious issues on outsourcing, biotech and pharmaceuticals patents, environmental and labor issues. The idea of a China-India partnership is immensely complicated, however, not only for the historical reasons noted above, but also because of the Chinese annexation of Tibet, which, as Stephen Hartnett argues can be interpreted both as a form of internal colonialism and as a military gesture meant to intimidate India, which sits astride the China-Tibet border. Noting that these long-standing tensions and emergent hopes between and in China and India, which are of the utmost relevance and significance to the study of conflict resolution and peace under globalization, can be studied from a variety of perspectives, I am particularly interested in approaching these 2 nation-states, and their relationships, from a postcolonial perspective, as China and India embody different post-colonial trajectories (the one communist, the other democratic) that may now be merging into some new form of neo-colonial, globalizing, super-capitalist formation with scant attention to pressing matters of border conflict resolution, the brewing environmental crisis, exacerbation of economic disparities, cross-cultural understandings, and human rights in both countries.

Undoubtedly the rhetoric of cooperation is a significant departure from the treatment of the relationship between China and India as being in a perpetual stage of siege since the 1962 war when, to reiterate, China defeated India. (This paper is part of a larger investigation of the rhetoric of cooperation between China and India as a corrective to the academic study of this relationship in reductionistic terms of conflict and in particular critical engagement with postcolonial criticism's "siege epistemic" where there is no room for reconciliation and peacebuilding). While acknowledging the significance of the movement toward cooperation between these 2 ancient civilizations whose bonds pre-dated and were violently disrupted by the forces of modernity, in this paper I critically examine the limitations of the media coverage of contemporary cooperation between the 2 countries in order to argue the need for a holistic approach to cooperation from a postcolonial feminist perspective in both media and political discourse. In particular, I argue that the need to resolve an anomalous form of cooperation that is paradoxically complicit in a system of competition is dire in light of 1) the context of siege in the globe understood both as a dynamic of global capitalism and as a driver and fall out of security-driven international communication and 2) the dangers of the emergence of a supraregime of neo.-colonial expansionism of both China and India in this region where neo-colonialism can be understood in both human and planetary senses. I posit articulated cooperation as an intellectual and political method to resolve this paradox.

Therefore in this paper, I review extant literature on the relationship between China and India as one of perpetual enemy through an epistemic of siege. I then analyze the *Beijing Review* and *The Hindu* coverage of the recent diplomatic activities between the top leaders to argue that cooperation, albeit an emergent one, is in process. Following this I critically examine the limitations of the current tenor of the China-India relationship of emergent cooperation as an overpowering masculinist and instrumental communication engendering a form of neo-colonialism. I conclude by proposing a corrective to the way in

which cooperation is currently conceived in this context so as to resolve the paradox of competitive cooperation that is the sum total of the present state of cooperative relations between the 2 countries. This is evident in their predominant emphasis on economic gain and regional security without concomitant attention to human rights and social and environmental justice. Therefore a critical engagement with the meanings of cooperation between China and India as it has received media coverage can shed light on how emergent cooperation can become a more mature and inclusive form of cooperation through the concept of "lasting peace" to consolidate the strengths of such international cooperation. This paper also suggests the need to theorize the undertheorized concept of cooperation in intercultural communication as a differentiation between pre-cooperation, emergent cooperation, and mature cooperation to offset the preponderance of research generated by the critical turn in intercultural communication studies with its emphasis on power relations and conflict. For, as Nakayama and Martin observe, "a cooperative atmosphere will promote perceived similarity, trust, and flexibility and lead to open communication".

Extant researches on China and India relations have investigated the conflict between the 2 countries without adequate attention to the forms, meanings and impact of cooperation. Huang warns that the view of the relations between the countries as one of complementarity is a myth. According to Huang [4]:

"It is now a part of conventional wisdom that both China and India are emerging economic, political and even military powers in the 21st century. Terms such as "BRIC" and "ChIndia," and phrases such as "not China or India, but China and India" have entered popular discourse and policy discussions. Such terms imply a synergistic relationship between China and India- an implication that belies the tension that has characterized Sino-Indian relations for centuries. My view is less sanguine than many others' about the prospects of their relations. Relations between the two countries will be fraught with difficulties and will likely remain fragile (p. 111)

In similar vein, Sikri echoes this sense of unease observing that "In recent years, China's military buildup and infrastructure development in Tibet, as well as reported plans to divert or dam rivers that rise in Tibet and flow into India, have raised India's anxieties. Conversely, China's insecurity about Tibet is an important driver of its approach toward India. India has been unable to assuage China's fears about its possible use of the presence of the Dalai Lama in India and its large Tibetan refugee population of about 120,000 to create trouble for China in Tibet... India-China relations are unlikely to be on an even keel until this tangled knot is unraveled [5]. Franke [6] is more ominous arguing that:

"Submerged tensions between India and China have pushed to the surface, revealing a deep and wide strategic rivalry over several security-related issues in the Asia-Pacific area. The U.S.-India nuclear deal and regular joint naval exercises informed Beijing's assessment that U.S.-India friendship was aimed at containing China's rise. China's more aggressive claims to the disputed northern border—a new challenge to India's sovereignty

over Kashmir—and the entry of Chinese troops and construction workers in the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan region escalated the conflict.

A related approach to relations between the countries as lurking in the morass of a geopolitical and nationalist rhetoric of contention is evident in other research on this topic. Even though Raghavan [3] primarily attempts to defend civilian involvement in military affairs in India as a corrective to an erroneous reading of the “China crisis,” the rhetoric of rivalry between the countries overshadows his defense of an internal struggle in India [3]. Singh [7] offers a trenchant critique of U.S. media (mis) representations of India’s neutrality during the Cold War that took the form of a gesture of friendship toward China [7]. Nevertheless this nuanced reading of affinity is undercut by a focus on the hawkish tendencies of American Cold War policy and communication that relegates the friendship to the shadow of siege by suggesting that such a friendship is doomed to be hijacked by superpower interests. In encapsulating extant research I observe that at historical and political levels, inquiry into China-India relations expresses a sober even somber tone and attitude. While such skepticism may be well-founded, what I am saying about the need to revisit these relations in longitudinal terms is interestingly a response to a provocative argument made by Swaran Singh rather than some naïve romanticization of complementarity. According to Singh [7], “Their relationship continues to be examined in simplistic dichotomies of competition or cooperation, rivals or partners, friends or foes, etc., ignoring the complex nature of their evolution and interactions”. This essay is then a modest endeavor to undertake the daunting task of complicating their relationship in ways that would further our understanding of the nature of cooperation between the 2 countries. The complexity that is the focus of this essay is the paradox of competitive cooperation.

The Promise of China-India Regional Cooperation under Globalization

The *Beijing Review* web archives contain numerous articles and commentaries on China-India relations. Hence I choose textual exemplars that cover the rhetoric of cooperation to the point of using this phrase innumerable times. These can be direct and tangential accounts. Direct accounts can be found in a 2-part editorial in the print version and in the archives of the *Beijing Review*.¹ Tangential accounts relate to references to cooperation in the context of BRICS and the reopening of the Silk Road for globalization-spurred regional trade in a global approach to regional economic and political as well as cultural relations and vice versa engendering globalization as a form of emergent powers sphere of neo-regionalism. I limit my analysis to coverage between 2012 and 2014 because I followed this rhetoric since relocating to China from the U.S. which gave me a vantage point as a postcolonial feminist critic who seeks to both critically examine and argue against the grain of conventional postcolonial criticism that focuses on U.K-India relations and American neo-

¹I reviewed articles between 2012 and 2014. However this topic gathered real momentum in 2013 and 2014 due to multiple state visits between the countries

colonialism in the aftermath and China as a neo-colonizer which is a thread across Hartnett’s otherwise illuminating research by studying how countries can cooperate to achieve lasting peace. I buttress this critical analysis with attention to a recent series of articles on this relationship in the major Indian newspaper *The Hindu*.

To these ends, I combine McGee’s ideographic analysis with an open coding grounded theory method administered by Corbin and Strauss. McGee [8] explains that the ideograph is a “God” or “Ultimate” term, a term that is part of a “vocabulary of concepts that function as guides, warrants, reasons, or excuses for behavior and belief” from which emanate a number of metaphoric and metonymic connections. Using Corbin and Strauss [9], I treat the ideograph as a master-category and break it down into macro-categories and micro-categories. I do this so that I can follow the ways in which the ideographic palimpsest of cooperation can be unpacked and connected to larger debates that have occurred in postcolonial intellectual discourse, particularly feminism, that complicate this move to cooperation by forewarning us that it could be patriarchal political grandstanding and gesturing in ways that mask the virulent and violent forms of annexation, occupation, displacement, and dispossession that have been witnessed both in China and India in global times.²

In the present moment, such forms of oppression leading to dispossession include the spread of, to reiterate Hartnett’s analysis, Chinese authoritarian rule in Tibet, globalization-spurred displacements of indigenous tribe, and violence against citizens such as women in India who have been subject to a rash of brutal sexual assaults. Speaking of globalized displacements, Roy argues that “The Narmada Valley Development Project will displace approximately 1.5 million people from their land in three states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh). The environmental costs of such a project, which involves the construction of more than 3,000 large and small dams, are immense”. In New Delhi, the gang rape of a Westernized-Americanized young woman demonstrated that women bear the cruel brunt of national change as they stand in for the nation and in violating them, patriarchal men seek to reassert their control over traditional notions of nationhood and women’s identities. As importantly, such a methodological move can shed light on how to transform the meaning and outcome of such cooperation.

My overall argument about media coverage of recent China-India cooperation is that the masterterm of cooperation or big “C” consists of little “c”s. The most prevalent ways in which cooperation is signified as economic cooperation and cooperation for security reasons. A third is cooperation as lasting peace which is less prevalent or altogether absent from the coverage of cooperation and therefore the focus of my subsequent critique of the limitations of such cooperation. For example, an article in

²I am referring to the postcolonial feminist suspicion of discourses of cooperation between nations when in fact the third world woman in particular is relegated to a discursive site of native and foreign patriarchal control.

the *Beijing Review* states “The “Chinese Dragon” and the “Indian Elephant” are stepping up trade and investment engagement to forge a closer development partnership despite their border disputes left over by history” (“China, India step up economic engagement despite border disputes.”). Another writer observes:

“During his visit to India in April 2005, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said that energy cooperation is an indispensable part of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The joint declaration issued by the Indian prime minister and China’s premier said that both sides agreed to cooperate in energy security and conservation, including encouraging relevant sectors to team up in exploring and developing oil and gas resources in third countries” [10].

Yu, a Beijing Review writer observes, “Jiang held that as China and India are respectively a global manufacturer and a major service provider, the mutual complementarity of the two economies provides great potential for them to jointly boost cooperation in trade, investment, financial services and new and high technologies” [11]. According to another writer “He (Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister) stressed that there are strong fundamentals that provide a base for the bilateral relationship, which include complementarities between the two economies and imperatives for the two countries to work together in handling global and regional issues of common interests” [12]. This is evident in the following excerpt in the magazine that dovetails the larger issues within which this magazine has been coded: “As two of the most populated and largest developing countries in the world, China and India have begun to share more common interests. The scope of their cooperation has also expanded from bilateral to regional as well as global issues, covering politics, the economy, security, and marine rights. They are faced with shared tasks such as reforming the international economic order, safeguarding regional stability, combating terrorism and guaranteeing marine security”.

The Hindu mediates between these two meanings with the micro-category of “trade talk” or economic cooperation [1]. According to a headlining article in *The Hindu*, “Trade and investment drove the first India-China talks under the new government as the meeting between visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj stretched past three hours” [1].

The current rhetoric of cooperation as covered by the media perpetuates an instrumental masculinist politics and practice. The macro category of cooperation in this context predominantly signifies economically-driven and security-related communication with a more communitarian-spiritual communication about lasting peace taking a backseat, an evident Derridean supplement. Thus, seen in terms of economic and political security, cooperation is narrated as necessary for regional security and generation of profits and in turn as pre-conditions for lasting peace. The limitation of such approaches to Cooperation is that they are entangled with siege states currently existing in the world. Mapping an ecologically-informed postcolonial feminist politics to this communication, I hold that such a form of cooperation is unstable because cooperation conceived as the establishment of

a global or regional security state and/or for the realization of the profit motive or superegime of secure capitalism may themselves be driven by and drive siege states in contemporary geopolitical and gaipolitical space respectively. So even though the word cooperation is invoked, it is pinned to economic cooperation and concerns over instability and violence in the region, peace as its obverse negative pea byce countering violence rather than peaceful concerns *sui generis* or positive peace.

Economic cooperation as a predominant agenda tends to undercut itself by buying wholesale into a competitive economic system, namely global capitalism, which makes cooperation a contradictory communicative discourse and practice that does not as much commit to resolving conflict as keep it in suspension. Based on a report in *The Hindu*, I observe that even the recently elected prime minister of India Narendra Modi appears to vacillate between a let us “emulate” China for “skills, scale, and speed.” and “lets' compete” [1]. So the rhetoric of cooperation predominantly conceived as economic cooperation through establishing security in the region appears as a mask for a masculinist instrumental desire for secure profit generation by both countries, understood as the paradox of cooperate-while-competing, which can itself be implicated in a siege mentality.

Cooperation to achieve economic prosperity in its overemphasis on exploitation of resources for job generation and consumption, that needs to be contextualized by the iterative rhetoric of becoming global superpowers, continue to engender inequalities and environmental devastation of this region. The conceptualization of space as places for economic activity and their destructive impact on the environment has been the subject of an incisive collection of essays [13]. Speaking of this body of work, Goggin [13] says that, “In focusing on regional environmental issues, this collection offers a corrective to what appears an increasingly hegemonic discourse of globalization that conceives of the world as flattened”. One of the essays makes a signal contribution by equating environmental destruction with colonialism [13]. I extend this conceptualization in the direction of economic cooperation between China and India to argue that cooperation conceived in such terms runs the risk of a neo-colonialist usurpation of this regional space by both countries.

In a parallel vein, I argue that fortification of regional security, as laudable as it is, intersects with the siege state of counterterrorist discourses and operations with its downward spiral of targeting perpetrators and retaliatory acts both of which entail acts of violence, albeit for different ends, perpetuating a binary between the Western and non-Western world punctuated by shifting strategic and contingent alliances between the 2 worlds. In other words, cooperation to counter terrorism and strengthen security is a different thing-in-itself to draw from Heidegger, significantly different in its materiality from communicating to achieve positive peace--lasting peace. My differentiation between these meanings of cooperation is based on the differentiation between “negative and positive peace” made in Peace Studies research and activism [14]. Negative peace is absence of physical violence while positive peace is inclusive and lasting which signifies an ethos of inclusive and participatory forms of communication

and community formation sensitive to and pro-active about the repertoire of social justice issues in this region such as glaring economic disenfranchisement, exploitation of labor, women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, human rights writ large, and environmental sustainability.

In other words, if cooperation is conceived predominantly in these terms as security and economically-driven cooperation, as it is now, it remains entangled with a competitive system of profit accumulation as China and India vie for global superpower status, the siege politics of terrorism and the counter-terrorism apparatus, as well as material incursions into the environment which shows siege in this sense as being real, the planet under utilitarian and violent siege. The masculinist dimensions of this discourse of cooperation are only too obvious when we understand not only the agents of such communication as predominantly male leaders but the constitution of citizens in these countries as others in need of protection and upliftment by male leaders and a masculinist establishment. In short, emergent economic cooperation underwrites cooperation which still borders on the siege paradigm because global economic issues are fraught with anxiety and baleful competitiveness that have the potential to overwhelm an ethos of inclusion, supplanting it with the sum total of economic "rationality," self-interest, and gain without concomitant attention to peaceful resolution of the simmering border conflict along the MacMahon with far-reaching implications for long lasting peace.

I now turn to ways to resolve the paradox of competitive cooperation and move beyond negative peace as absence of conflict. I turn to 2 different forms of communication that need to occur between the 2 countries to achieve these outcomes—conversation and meaning circulation. The first form of communication that has to occur is an interrelated conversation over excess from past, present, and future perspectives - the excess of colonialism and its contemporary reach, the excess of competition, and the excess of environmental destruction as a cataclysm. Historically both countries were colonized even though the character of colonial occupation has been significantly different. India was colonized by a Western power namely the U.K. and was felt in the register of race. External colonialism of this kind reduced a formerly wealthy civilization to poverty while bankruptcy was also felt in a psychological sense with colonial victims being deprived of their rights and dignity. China faced internal colonialism as in from an Asian neighbor, namely Japan, whose violent occupation and massacre of Chinese people has left a seeming never ending rift between these 2 Asian giants. The fact that 2 ex-colonial countries, China and India, are cooperating if not mending their border conflict, itself a result of British rule in India which pushed India's border or the MacMahon line outward into China through an illegal accord with the then local Tibetan government, shows the gravity of paying attention to their emergent cooperation as both countries can speak volubly to the excesses of external and internal colonialism while academic experts can shape the outcome of such cooperation by urging restraint against neo-colonial expansion into other regions determining the fate of the planet's sustainability. In other

words, both countries need to realize the competitive nature of economic cooperation and the strategic nature of security-related cooperation that participate in an expansionist ideology of global powers and the practice of establishing a global surveillance system as at best keeping conflict at bay, negative peace. At its most dangerous, it repeats colonialism as a neo-colonial project in a perverse doubling where colonized becomes colonizer that does not resonate or may even negate the possibility of a humanitarian and spiritual form of peace or positive peace.

A conversational approach toward mutual realization that the current form of an exorbitant economic and security-related cooperation produces a supregime of neo-colonialism, understood in both human and ecological senses, is achievable if the 2 countries engage in an empathy-inflected sequential practice of understanding the precipitating factors for their border conflicts before engaging in ways to ameliorate these. Both governments ought to fold a nuanced and phasic postcolonial sensibility as they navigate their conflict through an emergent form of cooperation because their agency as leaders of emergent cooperation and global powers evacuates the complex history of colonialism in this region, that has fuelled the border conflict, from their narration of it as having started in 1962. Simply put, both governments need to come to terms with colonialism in a "difficult" dialogue with Western and non-Western colonialism of these countries.³ This can serve the twin goals of revisiting and reviving memory of their pre-colonial past of amicable relations while keeping their arrogating tendencies in check even as they need to be kept in check, a task that is more likely achievable in India than China given the former country's approximation of a democratic way of life. Only through such a conversation about colonialism can the governments reexamine their complicity in taking a utilitarian and instrumental approach to political governance in the name of cooperation.

In terms of the present, both countries need to engage in a self-reflexive conversation about the dangers of competition by drawing upon cultural reserves of ethos such as the Hindu concept of interconnectedness or atman and the Chinese concept of harmony of HeXie. A spiritual sensibility folded into a self-reflexive appraisal of the current predominant emphasis on economic cooperation while concurrently wanting to occupy the world stage as global capitalist superpowers albeit in different ways—with India being more in line with free market capitalism and China with a dirigiste capitalism, could open the door to a national self-realization that competitive cooperation does not consider how to establish irreversible and sustainable peace. Proceeding to globalize at the rates they have done and are doing without adequate attention to a form of cooperation that is more than just economically-driven will in the long-run pit them against one another as both countries seek to recover from world shaming in a faceproving gesture as being able to stand their ground in the world economy and politics. The paradox of China and India moving toward a cooperative stance despite

³Gregory Jay at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee used "difficult dialogue" as a portmanteau for conversations about past oppression in the present between inheritors of such tragic legacies.

active participation in an economic system of neo-liberalism or global capitalism that is underwritten by competitive dynamics is troubling as such cooperation can revert to a Competitive pursuit of global growth and manifest as a winner-take-all self-serving survivalist approach to the global economy.

Lastly, a futuristic conversation over cataclysm is in due order. I frame this urgent conversation as one needing to occur for both future generations and the longevity of the planet. Jeremy Rifkin in a hortatory monumental treatise *The Empathic Civilization: The Race toward Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis* which is an intellectual history of empathy states that states of empathic consciousness have seen surges when there have been energy and communications regime changes [3]. Declaring the new millennium as the Age of Empathy, Rifkin sees empathy as a sensibility that is and ought to gain ascendancy over other sensibilities in light of the entropic bill that is heightening human empathic distress with the fate of the planet. The future of cooperative relations between India and China can benefit from such an e-consciousness if it manifests as increasing empathy over the brewing environmental crisis that is reaching cataclysmic proportions in this region. Such an empathic sensibility could change their current partnership, characterized by mutual identification as economic partners without adequate attention to the fall out of capitalism toward becoming cooperative agents of environmentally-friendly governments whose environmental stewardship and policies will likely decide the cosmic fate of the region and the world as such.

Short of such a check and reexamination, their “partnership” will be cosmetic as the desire to arrogate territory and amass wealth at the expense of equality and ecological longevity turning cooperation into yet another concurrently empty and loaded signifier. The uneasy juxtaposition of economic and security-related cooperation and lasting peace is discernible in this ominous excerpt:

Sino-Indian economic ties and border conflicts have grown simultaneously in recent years, prompting both sides to make managing tensions a priority. During Chinese Premier Li Keqiang’s visit to India in May last year, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh very directly stated, ‘The basis for continued growth and expansion of our ties [with China] is peace and tranquility on our borders’ [15].⁴

This passage demonstrates that the movements toward cooperation between India and China hailed in a florid style in the *Beijing Review* and in excited tones in *The Hindu* is in no way linear and secure, evident in the realistic admission of their relationship as one of “managing” rather than “resolving” border tensions. I note that such a disturbance reveals a rhetorical weakness, which is communicating without establishing, to draw

⁴Kenneth Burke’s work on consubstantiation and transubstantiation is of enormous importance here. I abbreviate these concepts using Zulick who says “Here obviously is a strategic moment, an alchemic moment, wherein momentous miracles of transformation can take place. For here the intrinsic and extrinsic can change places. To tell what a thing is, you place it in terms of something else. (GOM 24). Zulick, “Kenneth Burke: A Roadmap,” <http://users.wfu.edu/zulick/454/roadmap.html>.

from Burke, common ground as postcolonial subjects morphing into neo-colonial entities.

Fixing the brokenness of economic cooperation: Postcolonial feminism as remedy for the paradox of competitive cooperation

The second form of communication that needs to occur is circulation of the trope and meaning system of lasting peace more often and with more emphasis in the media and political discourse. Revisiting the rhetoric of cooperation, I argue that unpacking its meaning from a critical standpoint leads to a reading of cooperation or the big “C” as containing an oppositional dualism in the form of the tropes of “economic and security-related cooperation” and “cooperation as lasting peace.” This dualism renders emergent cooperation into an uneasy, tenuous, unstable, insecure, and fraught discursive practice. In a related manner, in the majority of texts that I analyzed, cooperation to ensure border security leading to economic cooperation and lasting peace are treated as a cause-effect phenomenon to the extent that economic cooperation is the predominant meaning of cooperation.

Therefore, it is imperative that cooperation between the 2 countries become more multifaceted and multilayered through negotiation with the meaning of cooperation as lasting peace. Further Toohey [14] argues that positive peace is distinct, in an ontological sense, from appropriations of peace to engage in structural practices that could perpetuate violence and inequality such as the “corporatization of peace and militarization of peace.” To extend this toward theorizing economic cooperation in a global milieu, economic cooperation without concomitant attention to cooperation in other realms is tantamount to a form of negative peace as in corporatization of peace that can itself perpetuate inequality. Therefore, I point to some ways to bolster and buttress the rhetoric and practice of cooperation by China and India from a postcolonial feminist standpoint so as to not give into the intellectual malaise of throwing the baby out with the bathwater by insisting on the need for dissemination of the meaning system of lasting peace.

In a few select excerpts of China-India cooperative relations in the media texts under scrutiny, I noticed that an incipient “lasting peace” leitmotif is present with a nod to notions of trust, mutuality, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs and interest in peace in the region and this ought to serve as a cue for resolving the paradox of competitive cooperation that overwhelms the form and meaning of current cooperation. As I said the cooperative rhetoric played out in economic terms is still caught up in a competitive dynamic while, the lasting peace trope calls up and conjures a universe of symbolisms that “border” on the possibilities of pacifism on the other side of the Pacific Ocean and on the Eastern side of the Indian Ocean. The editorial in the *Beijing Review*, which I alluded to earlier, celebrates the steps taken by the Chinese and Indian governments toward establishing peaceful relations in the place of sworn enmity. The editorial titled “Partners, Not Foes” opines that:

“Sino-Indian relations have undergone twists and turns. Owing to similar past experience and a shared goal of national rejuvenation,

the two countries remained friendly neighbors during the 1950s. Back then, *Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai*, which literally means 'India and China are brothers,' proved a popular slogan. After the 1962 border war, however, bilateral ties reached their lowest point; with hostilities and distrust lingering for decades... Times have changed. While vigorously pursuing development at home, China and India have formed a strategic partnership. Now both nations not only live in peace, but also have benefited enormously from their bond... As the world's most important emerging economies, they now share identical or similar stands on a wide range of global and regional issues. Closer ties between China and India will surely help fulfill the common goal of rejuvenating the two ancient Asian neighbors [16].

The editorial concludes with an exhortation to move away from volatile confrontations towards a more progressive discourse about partnership building that is of "best interest(s)" to the countries and the world. Such a refreshing emphasis on revitalizing erstwhile peaceful relations as neighbors ought not to fall on deaf ears despite the Utopian and hyperbolic praise for the two countries and deafening silence about the "currency" of social justice issues. This shows the maneuvering of "face proving", to critically extend Ting-Toomey and Guydkunst's [17] groundbreaking research on face saving, by India and China as they seek to overcome mutual suspicion and Western shaming by adopting a posture of mutual trust so as to reciprocally demonstrate their commitment to and belief that India-China cooperation can be in the best interests of regional and global peace.

Thus in its nuances and tonality, the rhetoric of cooperation that is effectively produced through the signifier of lasting peace could certainly be in the service of a Gandhian ethos of peace as practice and affect [18]. While resisting the totalizing impulse to debunk and reject the equation of prosperity and peace, I assert that the ideographic resonance of cooperation as lasting peace can and ought to be progressively distanced from its conflation with economic prosperity as its necessary pre-condition by also embracing other figures of a spiritual way of life from this region such as the Dalai Lama and Lao Tzu whose anti-materialist and non-action spiritual doctrines respectively speak to a more sustainable peace both internally and environmentally-speaking.⁵ Retracing my reading of Cooperation as lasting peace, its import is best summed up in the following excerpt:

Conclusion

"India was one of the earliest countries to start friendly communications with China. Back in the Eastern Han Dynasty some 2,000 years ago, Indian merchants arrived in the capital of Luoyang to do business. Buddhist thought, brought from India by Chinese monk and traveler Xuan Zang who went there seeking Buddhist scriptures during the Tang Dynasty (618-907), has had a profound influence upon the Chinese. The classic novel Journey to the West draws on Xuan Zang's experiences, and has given a positive impression of India to the Chinese people... As such, China and India have similar histories. Both countries fostered

ancient civilizations, now thousands of years old; both have suffered the invasions of colonial countries, and went down long paths seeking national independence and strength; and finally, both countries are now embarking on a journey of national renewal. As a result, people in both countries have a deeper understanding of and higher aspirations for peace. Thus, their processes of renewal are preconditioned on peace and progress" [19].

These excerpts show that a notion of lasting peace that reaches back into the past can be retrieved in the present and reworked for the future. The only caveat to attendant meanings of lasting peace is the condition of non-interference in each other's internal affairs, which seeks to preserve some sort of nation-state autonomy in governing issues and constituencies, an autonomy that can run the risk of doubling as perpetuation of social injustices. The idea of global or cosmopolitan citizenship complicates such a posture of non-interference by opening up a space for environmentalists and feminists among other groups of activists in this region to form tactical alliances across each other's borders in order to avert the brewing environmental cataclysm in this region as well as ensure gender equality and human rights writ large in a global economy [20]. According to Stevenson [20], "problems such as HIV, ecological questions and poverty are increasingly globally shared problems." Such alliances can only be formed by tapping into trans-local communal energies and social movements especially in an era of social media articulated to social justice.

Therefore, what I propose is a method and practice of "articulated cooperation" that does not reduce China-India cooperation to economic and security terms but imagines it in a holistic way in academic study, media, politics, and activism. The practice of articulation theorized in Cultural Studies is a discursive practice of connecting different elements that are not determined or absolute or essentialist (Slack). Articulation can be an intellectual and political practice of connecting, for instance, meanings to effects. In one sense, economic cooperation can itself be said to be the result of articulating the economic practice of competition to cooperation. So what I am really proposing is re-articulation in the sense of connecting the practice of cooperation to the outcome of lasting peace or positive peace as in method of communication to outcome of communication so as to change the meaning of cooperation in two significant ways. One change is to articulate economic cooperation to competition. The other is harnessing the meaning and practice of cooperation to establishing lasting peace. Through a practice of (re) articulated cooperation, economic cooperation can be concurrently linked to cooperation in other realms rather than be treated as the sole preoccupation and objective of cooperation. China-India cooperation has to be strengthened by prioritization of achievement of lasting peace as much as if not over economic cooperation and a subject of future inquiry is if cooperation for lasting peace will and can in fact change the very meaning of economics. In a Deleuzian sense, the materiality of cooperation can be construed as a becoming rather than a being state where conflict and confrontation because of competition, along a spectrum of moderate to severe in its gravity, ought not to taint

⁵The teachings of such spiritual figures have been inculcated in me.

the peacekeeping process [21]. To sum up, to define peace as the absence of conflict and violence or the appropriation of peace to secure a system that has historically and contextually generated conflict or negative peace turns into a destructive deconstructive spiral in both semantic and material senses where peace can only be construed in opposition to conflict as in absence of conflict which seems antithetical to being peaceful! The idea of positive peace or lasting peace suggests a deeper and sustainable,

broadly conceived, form of peace that appreciates it in and for itself rather than for a more instrumental end [22-49].

To sum up, I have argued the need for both engagement and critical engagement with the meaning of economic and security-driven cooperation between China and India as it has been covered in the media. While being skeptical about its limitations as negative peace it is important to stay positive about the possibility of achieving positive peace.

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