TIBET WAS NEVER A PART OF CHINA

but

The Middle Way Approach Remains a Viable Solution

CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

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FOREWORD

For Tibetans, information is a precious commodity. Severe restrictions on expression accompanied by a relentless disinformation campaign engenders facts, knowledge and truth to become priceless. This has long been the case with Tibet.

At the time of the publication of this report, Tibet has been fully occupied by the People's Republic of China (PRC) for just five months shy of sixty years. As China has sought to develop Tibet in certain ways, largely economically and in Chinese regions, its obsessive restrictions on the flow of information have only grown more intense. Meanwhile, the PRC has ready answers to fill the gaps created by its information constraints, whether on medieval history or current growth trends. These government versions of the facts are backed ever more fiercely as the nation's economic and military power grows. For Tibetans, these developments endanger the truths of our nation—our history, our identity, our prosperity, and our rights. The PRC has its own manufactured renditions of each of these concepts. If left unchallenged, they risk supplanting the reality in the minds of the Chinese people, the international community, and even future generations of Tibetans.

This report seeks to provide a tool to strengthen the challenge against disinformation on Tibet. As the elected representative of the Tibetan people, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) must use its platform to set the record straight whenever and wherever possible. Resources such as this publication are a vital means for doing so. It relies on earlier works by the CTA and also sources from other governments, civil society organizations and scholars around the world who have not shied away from revealing present realities in Tibet. These sources invariably rely on Tibetans inside Tibet who risk their lives and livelihoods to reveal information to the outside world.

More than offering a plain statement of facts, this report seeks to erase any hint of abstraction about the subjects discussed here. For Tibetans in Tibet, the effects of the violation of rights and other hardships described here are direct and severe. This is evidenced most dramatically and most tragically by the growing number of Tibetans who have self-immolated. Each of the topics covered in the following chapters has been a motivating factor in at least one, and often many, self-immolations since 2009. We have included a discussion of these self-immolations not simply for matters of documentation but to illustrate that the transgressions of the PRC against the Tibetan people are ongoing and frighteningly consequential: over 152 Tibetans have been driven to this act of protest.

The report is organized into nine chapters that cover self-immolations, historical status of Tibet, human rights, cultural genocide, environment, economic development, urbanization, reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the Middle Way Policy. The chapters aim to be comprehensive but digestible. Given that each topic could be a book of its own—and in fact, there are many written on these subjects—the report serves as an overview of the most pressing issues in Tibet for those involved with or interested in the Tibetan cause.

The general claim put forth by this publication is not that a life lived in today's Tibet is one of guaranteed misery, or that every word spoken or released by the PRC is a lie. It is that whatever positive, or usually, at best, inoffensive elements of Tibetan wellbeing exist in modern Tibet, they cannot make up for the economic discrimination, disrespect for Tibetan language, culture, and religion, erasure of Tibetan history, and rampant human rights violations that pervade the region today. In aggregate, these injustices demonstrate that, due to their sheer scale and severity, the PRC is no closer to being the legitimate representative of Tibet in 2018 than it was in 1959.

But more than delineating the grievous state of Tibet under the PRC, it is also the CTA's role to actively pursue the resolution of these issues. Thirty years ago, in an address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France on 15 June 1988, His Holiness the Dalai Lama officially announced the Middle Way Policy that remains the CTA's approach to restoring freedom for Tibetans in Tibet. In the present climate, negotiation with the PRC for genuine autonomy in Tibet is the most viable option for the CTA to achieve a resolution. Unfortunately, this approach has itself been the target of disinformation by the Chinese government, so this report includes a chapter on the Middle Way Policy to again clarify what it calls for.

Regardless of how much the PRC attempts to cloud the world's view of Tibet, as long as Tibetans and their supporters continue to publish and promote information that reveal the truth of what goes on in the region, the push for the rights of Tibetans will continue. This report marks the CTA's current contribution to this effort.

Dr Lobsang Sangay
President
Central Tibetan Administration
October 2018

CHAPTER ONE

BURNING TIBET: SELF-IMMOLATION PROTESTS IN TIBET

On December 23, 2017, when much of the world was in a festive mood to ring in Christmas, elsewhere in the northeast corner of Tibetan plateau, Konpe, a former Buddhist monk in his 30s, set himself alight, calling for freedom inside Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. A day later, on the eve of Christmas, he succumbed to his injuries. Konpe then became the 151st Tibetan to self-immolate in protest against Chinese rule in Tibet. He became the 129th Tibetan to succumb to his burns.

For the last nine years, a fire has been raging on the roof of the world.

Why do Tibetans self-immolate?

Self-immolation is the act of setting oneself on fire and historically, has been used as a tool for political resistance in other countries such as Vietnam and the Arab world.

The self-immolations are carried out with a conscious effort and a specific goal and therefore the entire process of deciding to immolate, performing the act, and ensuring one's death do not happen in

vain. Further, expressing one's demands during or before the act are conscious efforts made by the self-immolators; their act of burning themselves alight frame their goals and make an explicit call for improved human rights and political reform in Tibet, symbolized by the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

The spate of self-immolations evinces the fact that the Chinese occupation of Tibet, a historically independent nation, is illegal. This relates to the historical status of Tibet as an independent nation. The deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet amounts to cultural genocide and suppression of rights under the guise of developmental policies such as urbanization, economic and environmental development, and the politicization of the sacred institution of the reincarnation of religious leaders. These exacerbated conditions in Tibet have created the terrain for Tibetans to commit such extreme measures of political protests. The self-immolators frame their goal by staging the self-immolations at public places and framing their message through the two consistent slogans: We want freedom and We want the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. In turn, these two slogans can be analyzed through two different frames. The call for freedom is a call for improved human rights conditions. The call for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet is also a political call given that the successive reincarnations of the Dalai Lama (from 5th to the 14th) have headed the Tibetan political establishment for 376 years, making the Dalai Lama a symbolic representation of political reform in Tibet.

The act of self-immolation

The sweeping wave of self-immolation began in 2009 in the aftermath of the 2008 nationwide uprisings against China. Since then, Tibet has witnessed at least 152 self-immolations. Of these self-immolators,[1] 126 were men and 26 women. The burning flame has

1 - Additionally, about 10 self-immolations have occurred outside Tibet, largely in India and Nepal

consumed 130 lives. Nearly a third of the Tibetans who resorted to self-immolation protest were monks and nuns.[2] The rest were lay-people from different regions and from all walks of life: students, farmers, teachers, young parents, grandparents and mothers of several children.

When staging self-immolation protests, the self-immolators pour kerosene/petrol on their bodies and set themselves alight, often in public places. Images and video recordings of self-immolations from Tibet show self-immolators standing stoically with folded hands or carrying the banned Tibetan national flag. In none of these recorded instances have the protestors caused harm to other people or property.

To ensure that they will not survive, and to avoid landing in the hands of Chinese authorities, many self-immolators drink kerosene and wrap barbed wire around their body.[3] The anticipated outcome, should they survive the immolation protest, are as dreadful as putting one's own body on fire; imprisonment, torture and other inhumane treatment. As the 2017 Freedom House special report documents that the "Chinese security forces in Tibetan areas are quick to employ coercive measures... including the use of live ammunition against unarmed civilians."[4]

Immediately after an immolation protest, police surround the protest site and the region comes under an intense security clampdown, with internet services blocked to prevent the spread of information.

2 - Central Tibetan Administration, "Fact Sheet on Tibetan Self-Immolation Protests in Tibet Since February 2009", http://tibet.net/important-issues/factsheet-immolation-2011-2018/.

3 - International Campaign for Tibet, "Tibetan Survivors of Self-Immolation: Repression and Disappearance", March 19, 2015, http://www.savetibet.org/newsroom/tibetan-survivors-of-self-immolation-repression-and-disappearance/..

4 - Sarah Cook, "The Battle for China's Spirit: Religious Revival, Repression, and Resistance under Xi Jinping", Freedom House, 2017, https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_ChinasSprit2016_FULL_FINAL_140pages_compressed.pdf.

The core facts of Tibetan self-immolations

The wave of self-immolations reached its peak in 2012 when 85 Tibetans from diverse locations self-immolated. The Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) observed an increase in the "frequency, geographic spread, and diversity" of Tibetan self-immolation protests in that year, and also noted that as "self-immolation increased and spread geographically, laypersons have taken on a great role." The continuation of self-immolations by Tibetans indicate the epidemic of the grievances and resentment Tibetans across the plateau hold against discriminative Chinese policies for Tibetans. The self-immolation protest swept into 2018 when Tsekho Tugchak, aged 44, from Ngaba, committed self-immolation, becoming the first Tibetan inside Tibet to self-immolate this year and 152th in total at the time of writing this report.[5]

Year	No. of Self-Immolations	Known Deaths	Current Condition Unknown	Others (CLU= Current Location Unknown)
2009	1	0	0	survived with serere burn injuries but CLU
2011	12	8	0	2 amputation, 1 sentenced to 5 years in prison (both CLU)
2012	85	74	9	1 amputation, 1 sentenced to 5 years in prison (both CLU)
2013	26	25	1	
2014	11	9	1	1 critically injured and hospitalized (CLU)
2015	7	7	0	
2016	3	3	0	
2017	6	3	3	
2018	1	1		

Figure 1 shows the number of self-immolations in Tibet by year, according to CTA's data.[6]

5 - Central Tibetan Administration, "Fact Sheet on Tibetan Self-Immolation Protests in Tibet Since February 2009.".

6 - Ibid.

The age of the self-immolators range from 15 to 64 years old. The oldest of the self-immolators, Tamding Thar, was a 64-year-old from Amdo Chentsa County, while the youngest, Dorjee, was a 15-year-old from Ngaba Tsodrug village in Gomang Township. Both Tamding Thar and Dorjee died following their protests on June 15 and November 7, 2012, respectively.

The majority of the Tibetan self-immolators were in their early twenties at the time of staging the protest, and their average age was around 27. These facts provide a telling insight into the failure of China's policies and occupation of Tibet for over six decades. The 1959 Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa led His Holiness the Dalai Lama and thousands of Tibetans to flee their country and seek refuge in neighbouring India. Since then, His Holiness, along with many members of the exiled Tibetan community has resided in Dharmshala, Northern India. Generations of Tibetans in Tibet born after 1959 have never seen His Holiness in person and yet hold a life-long wish to get a glimpse of him. Their reverence stands undeterred by the Chinese government's draconian policies aimed to disparage His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Such reverence is clearly demonstrated by the self-immolators' call for his return to Tibet.

The origins of Tibetan self-immolations

The first Tibetan self-immolation occurred in India in 1998, when pawo (martyr in Tibetan) Thupten Ngodup, a protestor, set himself on fire in New Delhi on April 27, after the Indian police forcefully disrupted the 'Hunger Strike Unto Death' campaign. This hunger strike/demonstration was organized by the Tibetan Youth Congress to protest the visit of a high-level Chinese officials to New Delhi. Thupten Ngodup was one of the volunteers at the hunger strike protest. He died two days after his self-immolation protest.

The first self-immolation in Tibet began on 27 February, 2009, when Tapey[7], a monk in his 20s from Kirti Monastery in Amdo Ngaba, set himself on fire after local authorities cancelled a prayer ceremony at his monastery. Describing his act, the well-known Tibetan writer Tsering Woeser wrote:

> February 27, 2009, was the third day of Losar, the Tibetan New Year. It was also the day that self-immolation came to Tibet. The authorities had just cancelled a Great Prayer Festival (Monlam) that was supposed to commemorate the victims of the government crackdown in 2008. A monk by the name of Tapey stepped out of the Kirti Monastery and set his body alight on the streets of Ngawa, in the region known in Tibetan as Amdo, a place of great religious reverence and as part of China's Sichuan Province.

Following Tapey's protest, a wave of self-immolations took place in different regions of Tibet, as well as in the neighbouring countries of India and Nepal, where exile Tibetans live. At least 130 Tibetans are known to have died from their immolation protests. Only a handful of surviving self-immolators' conditions and locations in the aftermath of their protests are known. Lobsang Kelsang, Lobsang Kunchok and Sonam Rabyang underwent amputation, while Kesang Wangchuk became permanently paralyzed after a spinal cord injury. Dawa Tsering was last said to be recovering from his burn injuries at his house and Kunchok was hospitalized for critical injuries. The current status and whereabouts of over a dozen self-immolators remain unknown.

It is vital to note again that a majority of the self-immolators are young Tibetans who were born after the Chinese invasion of Tibet. They belonged to generations that have never seen His Holiness the Dalai Lama, yet their final messages have prayed for his return to Tibet. In fact, a third of the protestors were in their teens. In a 2012

7 - Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, "Self-Immolation Man Asked to Amputate His Legs", March 13, 2009, http://tchrd.org/self-immolated-man-asked-to-amputate-his-legs/..

report issued by the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, concerns were raised about the "rising frequency, wider spread, and greater diversity" of self-immolation protests in Tibet. It further noted that "several factors and trends that developed or worsened following Tibetan political protests that began in March 2008 may have contributed to the environment that influences the decision to self-immolate."[8] Having no other avenue to express their demands, Tibetans have been resorting to self-immolations while calling for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet, for freedom in Tibet, and the right to language and cultural preservation.

Why is Tibet burning?

China's failure to solve the fundamental problem facing its occupation and subsequent rule in Tibet was foreseen in the early days of Chinese rule in Tibet by eminent Tibetan leaders working within the Chinese communist establishment. As early as in 1960s, Tibetan leaders decried the Chinese communist rule. In an act of unprecedented courage and boldness, the late 10th Panchen Lama presented a 70,000-character petition addressed to the top Chinese leaders, which, though diplomatically worded, amounted to an accusation of China committing cultural genocide in Tibet. This blistering critique of the nature of Chinese rule in Tibet cost the Panchen Lama dearly. Mao Zedong called the Tibetan leader "our class enemy" and denounced his 70,000-character petition as a "poisoned arrow." He was "struggled," sometimes violently, and subjected to imprisonment and solitary confinement for many years. When he was released from confinement in the aftermath of the death of Mao Zedong, the Panchen Lama in 1989 stated that Tibet had lost more than it gained under Chinese communist rule. He made these comments only a few days before his mysterious and untimely death.

8 - The US Congress, The Congressional Executive Commission on China, "Special Report: Tibetan Self-Immolation - Rising Frequency, Wider Spread, Greater Diversity", August 22, 2012, https://www.cecc.gov/publications/issue-papers/special-report-tibetan-self-immolation-rising-frequency-wider-spread.

Many Tibetan intellectuals and cadres who work in the communist establishment in Tibet make their judgment of Chinese communist rule in these terms: "In the first 10 years (1950-60) we lost our land (i.e. communist China invaded Tibet). In the second 10 years (1960-70) we lost political power (the government of old Tibet was replaced by the communist establishment). In the third 10 years (1970-80) we lost our culture (the Cultural Revolution destroyed Tibet's traditional beliefs). In the fourth 10 years (1980-90) we lost our economy (Chinese settlers took over the job market in Tibet)."[9]

This stark assessment of Chinese rule in Tibet describes what drives so many young Tibetans in Tibet to self-immolation. Daily, they see and experience China's constant assault on Tibetan Buddhist civilization, Tibetan language and their very identity. They strongly resent the Chinese communist party's active interference in their spiritual life, including the attempt to appoint Tibetan spiritual leaders. They resent to the core, China's demonization of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the policy of forcing monks and nuns to denounce him.

Tibetans look on with alarm and fear as Chinese settlers stream into Tibet, taking away Tibetan jobs, land and their very future—and in the process, transforming Tibetan towns and cities into Chinatowns. They resent the forced removal of nomads from the grasslands, away from their animal herds and their source of livelihood, and resettling them in permanent housing structures, which bring no income, and reduce formerly self-sufficient families to impoverishment. At the same time, the Tibetan people see massive development activities undertaken on their land that bring little or no benefit to them and aim, instead, to cart away Tibetan natural resources to a resource-hungry China. Sinicization of Tibet over the years has rendered Tibetans secondary citizens in their own homeland.

9 - Tibet Policy Institute, *Why Tibet is Burning*..., (Dharamshala: TPI Publications, 2013), http://tibet.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Why-Tibet-is-Burning...pdf.

The constant assault on Tibetan people by China, and abandonment by an indifferent world, is expressed by scholars David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson in their book *A Cultural History of Tibet*.[10] Explaining why they co-authored the book, they wrote,

> We have taken upon ourselves to write this book at this time because the civilization of the Tibetan people is disappearing before our very eyes, and apart from a few gentle protests here and there the rest of the world lets it go without comment and without regret. Many civilizations have declined and disintegrated in the past, but it is rare that one has the opportunity of being an informed witness of such events.

Slogans, last words and testaments

At the time of setting one's body alight, the self-immolators have raised the slogans: "We want freedom inside Tibet" and "We want the return of Dalai Lama to Tibet." Almost all of the self-immolators raised slogans and some left written notes and recorded messages indicating that their suicides are acts of protest against the Chinese government's "repressive policies" that threaten Tibetan identity, religion and language, and that it is a call for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

They have also indicated that their intention is to not cause harm to bystanders during their protests, as seen in video clips and pictures that escaped the Chinese censorship and reached the outside world.

Phuntsok, the 21-year-old monk from Kirti monastery who self-immolated on March 16, 2011, told fellow monks while he was dying: "My last message for the six million Tibetans is to unite, like malas [prayer beads] on a string, linking every Tibetan. Tibetan people should work together for the cause as much as they can."[11]

10 - David L. Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet,* (Colorado: Shambhala. 1980).

11 - "Storm in the Grasslands: Self-immolations in Tibet and Chinese Policy", International Campaign for Tibet, December, 2012, https://www.savetibet.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/storminthegrassland-FINAL-HR.pdf..

Ngawang Norphel, 22, who self-immolated together with Tenzin Khedup on June 20, 2012 in Tridu (Ch: Chenduo) County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai, speaks about Tibetan language and freedom in a video filmed after his self-immolation. He is heard saying:

> My people have no freedom of language. Everybody is mixing Tibetan and Chinese. Be that as it may, take my wealth. I don't need them. What has happened to my Land of Snow? What has happened to my Land of Snow? [This is] for the sake of Tibet. We are in the Land of Snow. If we don't have our freedom, cultural traditions and language, it would be extremely embarrassing for us. We must therefore learn them. Every nationality needs freedom, language and tradition. Without language, what would be our nationality? [Should we then] call ourselves Chinese or Tibetan?[12]

Significance of self-immolation protest sites

The location and proximity of the self-immolation protest sites add to the significance of the protests. Some Tibetans chose to stage their protests in front of Chinese government buildings, at mining sites, police stations and military camps, while others self-immolated at public areas and in prominent streets.

At least two self-immolations took place near mining sites. On November 20, 2012, 34-year-old Tsering Dhondup died after setting himself on fire at the entrance of a mining field in Amchok, Sangchu County, Kanlho in north-eastern Tibet.[13] The same mining site witnessed a second self-immolation protest just a week later with the self-immolation protest of 18-year-old Kunchok Tsering on November 26, 2012.[14]

12 - Ibid.

13 - "Tibetan Man Self-Immolates in Amchok, Amdo", *Voice of America,* November 20, 2012, https://www.voatibetanenglish.com/a/1549512.html.

14 - Central Tibetan Administration, "3 More Tibetans Die of Self-Immolations, Toll Reaches 85", November 27, 2012, http://tibet.net/2012/11/two-more-tibetans-die-of-self-immolations-toll-reaches-84/.

On October 26, 2012, Lhamo Tseten, a 24 year-old farmer burned himself to death in front of the military base and a government office in the town of Amchok, Sangchu County, Kanlho.[15]

March 4, 2012 saw Rinchen, a Tibetan mother from Ngaba self-immolate near a police station in Amdo Ngaba. Rinchen passed away at the protest site. On June 15, 64-year-old Tamding Thar from Amdo Chentsa also set himself ablaze in protest in front of the local police station of Chentsa, Malho. Dorjee Rinchen, 57, staged a similar protest - burning himself to death right in front of the local police station at Sangchu County, Kanlho. Namlha Tsering, 49, died after he self-immolated in front of the military police station of Sangchu county, Kanlho on February 17, 2013. Kunchok, 42, from Tsang Khor town, Gade county in Golog self-immolated in front of the local police station in Tsang Khor town on September 16, 2014 and was last known to have been hospitalized after he was critically injured. Similarly, Sangye Khar, 33, set himself on fire in front of a police station in Amchok town, Sangchu County in Kanlho on December 16, 2014 but didn't survive. A few days later, on December 23, 2014, a monk from Tawu Nyitso monastery Kelsang Yeshi committed self-immolation in front of a police station near his monastery in Tawu county, Kardze. Kelsang Yeshi passed away on the same day.

Chinese government's response to the self-immolations

The Chinese government's "constant assault on Tibetan Buddhist civilization, Tibetan language and their very identity," and CCP's active interference in their spiritual life, including attempts to appoint Tibetan spiritual leaders, are "the reasons that have driven many young Tibetans in Tibet to self-immolation."[16] Instead of addressing

15 - "Tibetan Farmer Sets Himself on Fire in Protest Against Chinese Rule", *The Guardian,* October 26, 2012, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/oct/26/tibet-farmer-fire-protest.

16 - "Storm in the Grasslands"*, International Campaign for Tibet* (2012).

the grievances of the protestors, the Chinese government have responded to Tibetan self-immolations with severe clampdowns in the area where a self-immolation took place. New regulations criminalizing self-immolators were introduced and implemented. Collective punishments were imposed on family members, relatives, and monasteries and villages associated with the self-immolators.

The Chinese government made attempts to discredit and defame the immolations by labelling them as "domestic problems,"[17] and calling the self-immolators "outcasts, criminals and mentally ill people manipulated by the exiled Dalai Lama."[18] Chinese officials and media also described self-immolators or their death "in pejorative terms including terrorist…and copy-cat". They also accused some of stealing and have hinted that the "stress" and mental health issues of teenagers is what led to the "suicides," saying, "they are impulsive and lack self-control."[19]

"Officials of the PRC have staunchly criticized the self-immolations as violent."[20]

Violent crackdown and criminalization of self-immolation protests

The self-immolation protest is also an amplification of the voices of the Tibetan people urging the Chinese government to treat them humanely and with dignity. The self-immolators employ an extreme

17 - Tania Branigan, "China Police Accuse Tibetan of Killing Wife Amid Latest 'Self-Immolation Protest'", *The Guardian*, March 19, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/19/china-accuses-tibetan-self-immolation.

18 - "Tibetan Self-Immolators are Outcasts, Criminals and Mentally Ill, Claims China", *The Guardian*, March 7, 2012, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/07/tibetan-immolators-outcasts-criminals-china.

19 - CECC, "Special Report: Tibetan Self-Immolation", (2012).

20 - John Soboslai, "Violently Peaceful: Tibetan Self-immolation and the Problem of the Non/Violence Binary", *Open Theology* 1, no. 1(2015): 146–159, https://www.degruyter.com/downloadpdf/j/opth.2014.1.issue-1/opth-2015-0004/opth-2015-0004.pdf.

form of suffering while setting their body alight and yet each self-immolation is met with unimaginable cruelty. In the aftermath of every self-immolation protest, the Chinese authorities responded with violent crackdown and intensification of the already repressive environment in Tibetan areas by "punishing those allegedly 'associated' with self-immolators, including friends, families and even entire communities,"[21] and through different tactics, some of the self-immolators themselves who survived after their protests.

In the case of first self-immolator Tapey, he was shot by a People's Armed Police personnel stationed nearby while his body was already on fire.[22] Eyewitnesses recounted that Tapey, who had been holding a home-made Tibetan flag with a picture of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the center, then fell to the ground and was taken away by police personnel to an undisclosed location.

In another instance, security personnel opened fire on unarmed Tibetans who tried to prevent the officials from taking away the body of monk Kalsang Yeshe after his self-immolation protest. Two Tibetans were shot and several others injured after Chinese police opened fire on a group of Tibetans trying to reclaim the body of Kalsang Yeshe. Police fired a warning shot at the crowd that had gathered to protect Kalsang Yeshe from authorities as the monk was engulfed in flames.

Media reports quoted source from the region saying: "Two family members of the deceased were kept at gunpoint and forced to throw the remains into a river at gunpoint. And those injured are not willing to go to hospital for fear of being arrested."[23]

21 - "Acts of Significant Evil: The Criminalization of Tibetan Self-Immolations", *International Campaign for Tibet*, 2014, https://savetibet.de/fileadmin/user_upload/content/berichte/Acts-of-significant-evil-073114.pdf.

22 - "Monk in Tibet Sets Himself on Fire; Shot by Police During Protest", *International Campaign for Tibet*, February 27, 2009, https://www.savetibet.org/monk-in-tibet-sets-himself-on-fire-shot-by-police-during-protest/.

23 - Central Tibetan Administration, "Tibetans Shot Trying to Reclaim Self-Immolator's Body", December 26, 2014, http://tibet.net/2014/12/tibetans-shot-trying-to-reclaim-self-immolators-body/.

Deliberate attempts were made by the government to diminish the prominence of the self-immolations by labelling the protest as an "act of terrorism" and going as far as criminalising partners, friends and relatives of the self-immolators as a "preventative" measure. The Chinese government claimed "external forces" instigated the self-immolations. The well-known Tibetan writer Tsering Woeser uncovered China's bid to "tarnish the reputation of self-immolators through its mouthpieces, the Xinhua News Agency, Xinhua.net, and China Central Television (CCTV)." In her book *Tibet on Fire: Self-Immolations Against Chinese Rule,* she wrote:

> Among the bizarre accusations floated by these media outlets are claims that self-immolators suffered epilepsy, had 'mental problems,' were thieves, or indulged in alcoholic abuse, fighting, and gambling. Others, they charged, regularly visited prostitutes, had sexually transmitted diseases, [...] had disagreements with their significant others, faced setbacks in their love lives, or had seen a sudden drop in their school grades, which somehow led them to commit self-immolation.

To "prove" these, CCTV "produced five propaganda specials" providing "evidences" for its accusations.[24] The CCTV videos "showed images of seven self-immolators" whose family and friends have no information on their whereabouts, even to this day.[25]

Tibet is a Buddhist nation with great regard for traditional Buddhist rituals for the dead. Local authorities have employed unethical practices, including not handing over the body of self-immolators who have succumbed to their injuries, depriving bereaved families of performing the last rituals for the deceased, and prohibiting monks from performing funerary rites for the self-immolators. Monks who were found holding prayer services were detained. At times, the re-

24 - Tsering Woeser, *Tibet on Fire: Self-Immolations Against Chinese Rule*, (London: Verso Books, 2016), 47.

25 - Ibid., 51.

mains were returned to the families after the authorities had performed secret cremations.

Authorities at prefecture-level such as Kanlho and Malho, issued emergency directives with stringent orders prohibiting self-immolation, and announcing harsh penalties for "anyone who commemorates self-immolators, expresses sympathy for their actions, or offer donation to their families."[26] Malho Supreme People's Court and Ministry of Public Security listed seven forbidden activities, known as the "seven no's":[27]

1. No displaying images of the Dalai Lama in one's home.
2. No spreading the words and viewpoints of the Dalai Lama clique.
3. No spreading complaints or rumors about the party and the government.
4. No organizing, planning, inciting, coercing, tempting, or instigating self-immolations, and no helping others to self-immolate.
5. No watching self-immolations, performing funerary rites, or making donations to those involved.
6. No participation in illegal marches or other gatherings.
7. No gatherings that endanger social order, cause disturbances in public places, or disrupt traffic.

26 - Ibid., 80
27 - Ibid., 82

The failure of such measures to abate the self-immolations is apparent; even after directives forbidding self-immolations were issued, the self-immolations continued. In fact, the number of self-immolation protests notably escalated after such directives. For instance, on October 21, 2012, the Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture officials issued a notice promising rewards of ¥ 50,000 - 200,000 for information on the "black hands" behind self-immolations while numerous additional surveillance cameras were installed in the area.[28] Woeser discloses that in "the six months prior to this document's release, six Tibetans had self-immolated in Kanlho. But in the one brief month following the implementation of these measures, Kanlho saw a total of fourteen self-immolations."[29]

Collective punishment

Arrest, detention, torture and sentencing of self-immolators' family members began apace with the wave of self-immolation protests.

On December 24, 2017, one more Tibetan succumbed to burn injuries after his self-immolation protest. Konpe set himself alight in Ngaba County in protest against the Chinese government policies on December 23, 2017. He was around 30 years old and had married just over a year earlier. Immediately after his protest, police arrived at the site and took him away. According to sources in India with contacts in the region, within 12 hours of the self-immolation protest, Konpe died at a hospital. Konpe's father, Gyakyab, was detained following his son's self-immolation, and Gyakyab's current location and condition remains unknown.

Criminalizing the act of self-immolation and enforcing collective punishment are common abhorrent methods implemented by the Chinese government. Villages and monasteries of self-immolators

28 - Ibid.

29 - Ibid.

are punished, and officials in charge of the area where such protests occur are also punished.[30]

The Chinese authorities have responded to self-immolation protests by terming them an act of terrorism incited by the "Dalai Clique" (the Dalai Lama and Central Tibetan Administration). Authorities have issued guidelines targeting the family members and relatives of those who self-immolate. These guidelines bar family members and relatives of Tibetan self-immolators from travelling abroad or to "Tibet Autonomous Region" for three years. They also restrict family members of the self-immolators from applying for employment with the Chinese government or the military, and automatically reject applications for loans or business licenses in the three years following the incident. The guidelines also imply that the farmland used by the self-immolators' family would be forcibly returned to the government, and that cash rewards were to be offered for information about possible self-immolation protest(s).

In April 2013, officials in Dzoege, Ngaba Autonomous Prefecture, issued new rules extending criminal penalties to family members, fellow villagers, and monasteries of self-immolators. The document issued consists of 16 Articles: blacklisting family members of self-immolators (Art. 16), deprivation of political rights (Art. 2), deprivation of government employment (Art. 1), exclusion from all welfare benefits for 3 years (Art. 4), denial of ownerships of lands and houses (Art. 10), preventing from starting business (Art. 10), travel embargo to Lhasa and foreign countries (Art. 11), deprivation of financial assistance (Art. 5), and "legal education" campaign (Art. 13).[31] for villagers, monks and nuns.

30 - "Annual Report 2014: Human Rights Situation in Tibet", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, 2015, 7, http://tchrd.org/annual-report-2014-human-rights-situation-in-tibet/.

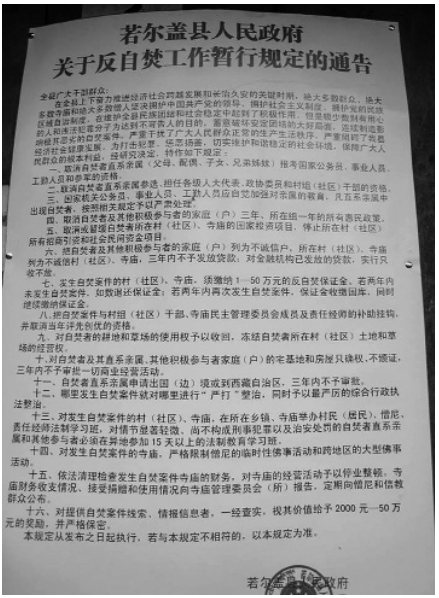
31 - "China Announces Unprecedented Harsh Measures to Deter Self-Immolations in Tibet's Dzoege County", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, February 14, 2014, http://tchrd.org/china-announces-unprecedented-harsh-measures-to-deter-self-immolations-in-tibets-dzoege-county/.

Furthermore, the rules also require villages and monasteries to pay ¥16,000 - 500,000 as deposit to ensure that no self-immolations occur; in case self-immolation occurs, the deposit is forfeited and a new deposit is required (Art. 7).[32]

The new guidelines also state that the community concerned would face suspension and disqualification from national investment projects and any other policies benefiting the community for one year.

Guideline issued by Dzoege County

On December 5, 2012, the people's court of Dzoege County issued a guideline announcing that anyone who supported or encouraged Tibetans to set themselves alight will be charged with "intentional homicide."[33]



若尔盖县人民政府
关于反自焚工作暂行规定的通告

全县广大干部群众：

在全县上下努力推进经济社会跨越发展和长治久安的关键时刻，绝大多数群众，绝大多数寺庙和绝大多数僧人坚决拥护中国共产党的领导，拥护社会主义制度，拥护党的民族区域自治制度，在维护全县民族团结和社会稳定中起到了积极作用。但是极少数别有用心的人和境外犯罪分子为达到不可告人的目的，蓄意破坏安定团结的大好局面，连续制造多起极其恶劣的自焚案件，严重干扰了广大人民群众正常的生产生活秩序，严重阻碍了我县经济社会健康发展，为打击犯罪、惩恶扬善，切实维护和谐稳定的社会环境，保障广大人民群众的根本利益，经研究决定，特作如下规定：

一、取消自焚者直系亲属（父母、配偶、子女、兄弟姊妹）报考国家公务员、事业人员、工勤人员和参军的资格。

二、取消自焚者直系亲属参选、担任各级人大代表、政协委员和村组（社区）干部的资格。

三、国家机关公务员、事业人员、工勤人员应自觉加强对亲属的教育，凡直系亲属中出现自焚者，按照相关规定予以严肃处理。

四、取消自焚者及其他积极参与者的家庭（户）三年，所在组一年的所有惠民政策。

五、取消或暂缓自焚者所在村（社区）、寺庙的国家相资项目，停止所在村（社区）所有招商引资和社会民间资金项目。

六、把自焚者及其他积极参与者的家庭（户）列为不诚信户，所在村（社区）、寺庙列为不诚信村（社区）、寺庙，三年内不予发放贷款，对金融机构已发放的贷款，实行只收不放。

七、发生自焚案件的村（社区）、寺庙，须缴纳1—50万元的反自焚保证金。若两年内未发生自焚案件，如数退还保证金；若两年内再次发生自焚案件，保证金收缴国库，同时继续缴纳保证金。

八、把自焚案件与村组（社区）干部、寺庙民主管理委员会成员及责任经师的补助挂钩，并取消当年评先列优的资格。

九、对自焚者的耕地和草场的使用权予以收回，冻结自焚者所在村（社区）土地和草场的经营权。

十、对自焚者及其直系亲属，其他积极参与者家庭（户）的宅基地和房屋只确权，不颁证，三年内不予审批一切商业经营活动。

十一、自焚者直系亲属申请出国（边）境或到西藏自治区，三年内不予审批。

十二、哪里发生自焚案件就对哪里进行"严打"整治，同时予以最严厉的综合行政执法整治。

十三、对发生自焚案件的村（社区）、寺庙，在所在乡镇、寺庙举办村民（居民）惜厄、责任经师法制学习班，对情节显著轻微、尚不构成刑事犯罪以及治安处罚的自焚者直系亲属和其他参与者必须在并地参加15天以上的法制教育学习班。

十四、对发生自焚案件的寺庙，严格限制惜厄的临时性佛事活动和跨地区的大型佛事活动。

十五、依法清理检查发生自焚案件寺庙的财务，对寺庙的经营活动予以停业整顿。寺庙财务收支情况、接受捐赠和使用情况向寺庙管理委员会（所）报告。定期向惜厄和信教群众公布。

十六、对提供自焚案件线索、情报信息者，一经查实，视其价值给予2000元—50万元的奖励，并严格保密。

本规定从发布之日起执行，若与本规定不相符的，以本规定为准。

若尔盖县人民政府

32 - Ibid.

33 - "Dzoege County: 'Maintaining Harmony and Stability'", *Tibet Watch*, October 2013, http://www.tibetwatch.org/uploads/2/4/3/4/24348968/dzoege_county_thematic_report.pdf.

Translation of Dzoege County's guideline:

Notification on the Provisional Regulation of the Work Against Self-immolation

Issued by Dzoege County People's Government

To all the Government staffs and the people of this county;

At this crucial moment when the entire county have put utmost effort towards expanding the economy and promoting long-term stability, the majority of the public, monasteries, and monks give determined adherence to the leadership of Chinese Communist Party, adherence to the Socialist System, and adherence to the system of minority's regional autonomy. All over the county, they played an active role in safeguarding the national unification and social stability. However, a tiny minority of lawless criminals with ulterior motives to fulfil their evil intentions are deliberately destroying the overall stability and unity. Normal life of the masses gets disrupted. Healthy development of economy and society got marred. In order to combat the crime, in order to praise the virtuous and punish the vices, in order to maintain harmony and stability of social environment, and in order to protect the fundamental interest of masses, these regulations are specifically formulated after careful deliberation.

1. Lineal consanguinity (parents, spouse, children, cousin) of the self-immolated person should be disqualified from applying for national public servant's post, enterprise staff, worker, unit clerk, and enlistment in army.

2. Lineal consanguinity is disqualified from participating in the elections, from deputizing National People's Congress, from member of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and from staff membership of village group (community).

3. Public servants of state organs, enterprise staffs and workers should consciously strengthen the education of their relatives. Once a self-immolation occurs among their immediate relatives, the person (Note: the government employee mentioned in the context) should be dealt seriously in accordance with the relevant regulation.

4. The family of the self-immolator should be disqualified from policies benefiting the people for three years, and the village group in which the self-immolator lived should also be disqualified from policies benefiting the people, for one year.

5. The village (community) and monastery where the self-immolator lived should be disqualified or suspended from national investment projects. All the projects of investment attraction, all the social and rural capital projects should be cut off from the village (community) in which the self-immolator lived.

6.The family (household) of self-immolator or other active participators should be listed as dishonest family. The village (community) and monastery in which the self-immolator lived should be listed as dishonest village and dishonest monastery. Loans should not be granted to them for three years. For the loans already granted by the financial institutions should only be called in and will not be granted any new loans.

7. The village (community) or monastery where the self-immolation happened should pay 10,000 to 50,0000 Yuan as the security deposit to counter self-immolation. The security deposit will be returned in full if no self-immolation happens for two years. In case if any self-immolation happens again, the security deposit will be confiscated as state treasury and simultaneously the security deposit should be continued.

8. Self-immolation cases should be linked to the subsidies for the cadres of village group (community), member of monastery's democratic management committee and recognition of monk teachers. They should be disqualified from the selection for "excellence for the year" awards.

9. The rights of cultivating land and pasture should be recalled from self-immolator. The management rights of land and pasture should be frozen for the village (community) where the self-immolator lived.

10. Only ownership confirmation can be granted to the residential property and the house belonging to the self-immolator, immediate relatives and other active participators. But certification should not be granted to their residential property and house. All their commercial operating activities will not get the approval for three years.

11. Applications for exiting the country (border) or entry into TAR, submitted by the immediate relative of self-immolator, should not get approval for three years.

12. Where the self-immolation case happens, there should be a "harsh crackdown" and punishment. Simultaneously, they would have to go through comprehensive administrative law enforcement.

13. Sessions on legal courses should be launched for the villagers, monks, nuns, and religious teachers belonging to a community or a place where self-immolations took place. If the self-immolator's case does not constitute criminal offense and penalty for breaching public security, the immediate relatives of the self-immolator and other active participants must attend more than 15 days of legal education sessions.

14. In the monastery where self-immolation takes place, religious activities and inter-regional Buddhist events should be seriously restricted.

15. In accordance with the law, inspection will be made of the financial dealings where self-immolation takes place. Financial income and expenses, the statement of the donations received and used, should be reported to the Monastic Management Committee and should be periodically announced to the monks, nuns and the devotees.

16. If anyone is able to provide intelligence report of an impending self-immolation and if the information is confirmed, the informant will be rewarded 2,000 to 500,000 Yuan. The process should be kept strictly confidential.

This regulation should be implemented from the day of its announcement. Any other regulation discrepant to this regulation should consider this regulation as final and authoritative.

Sealed by

People's Government of Dzoege County

Dated: April 8, 2013

Sentencing Tibetans for "inciting self-immolations"

Around one hundred Tibetans have been detained and sentenced arbitrarily to varying prison terms for having links to self-immolation protests. China's prosecution of Tibetans in response to the self-immolation protests, which China considers as a preventive measure to stop the self-immolation protest, is actually engendering more tragic protests, including self-immolations.

On March 28, 2018, the People's Court of Barkham, Ngaba, in a secret trial, sentenced Lobsang Sangye, 36, to five years on charges related to a self-immolation protest.[34] Although information on the self-immolation protest is scarce due to severe surveillances and internet censorship, it is known that Lobsang Sangye, a Kirti monastery monk, was detained for a long time beginning August 2012, but was later released. He was rearrested five years later in August 2017 and has been held incommunicado since then. None of his family members and relatives were informed about his trial or sentence.

When 39-year-old Wangchuk Tsetan self-immolated on April 15, 2017, three Tibetans from Nyarong County were "arrested for possessing the mobile phone" of Wangchuk Tsetan and were subjected to torture and severe beating. Another five Tibetans were arrested for taking video of the self-immolation protest. Kunchok Tsering, 39 was detained for video recording the self-immolation protest and is suspected to have died due to severe beatings endured whilst in detention.[35]

In several accounts, Tibetans linked to self-immolations were handed death sentences and lengthy prison terms. A 32-year-old Dolma Kyab, husband of self-immolator Kunchok Wangmo, aged 29, was on August 15, 2013 sentenced to death, on charges of allegedly killing his wife. Five months ago, on March 13, his wife set herself on fire, and her husband Dolma Kyab was first arrested by Chinese authorities in Dzoege County, a day after Kunchok Wangmo's self-immolation protest. Dolma Kyab was detained after he refused to follow official orders to attribute the death of his wife to domestic problems.[36]

34 - "Tibetan Monk Jailed Five Years on Charges 'Related to Self-Immolation' Protest", *Radio Free Asia*, March 30, 2018, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/monk-03302018145246.html.

35 - Tenzin Dharpo, "5 Tibetans Arrested in Kardze After Self Immolation by Tibetan", *Phayul*, April 19, 2017, http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=38940&t=1.

36 - Central Tibetan Administration, "China Sentences Tibetan to Death Over Self-Immolations", August 19, 2013, http://tibet.net/2013/08/china-sentences-tibetan-to-death-over-self-immolations/.

Similarly, on January 31, 2013, the Intermediate People's Court of Ngaba (Ch: Aba) and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture sentenced two Tibetans; Lobsang Kunchok, 40, and Lobsang Tsering, 31, to lengthy prison terms on "intentional homicide" charges for eight self-immolation protests. Lobsang Kunchok was given a death penalty with two years' reprieve while his nephew Lobsang Tsering was sentenced to 10 years in prison, with his political rights deprived for three years, according to the Chinese government-owned news agency Xinhua.[37] Both of them were detained in August 2012, but their detention and the police charges against them were announced only in December 2012.

Disseminating information related to self-immolation protests are handled with similar harshness. In October 2017, China detained at least seven Tibetans in Tridu County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, on charges of producing and sharing self-immolation protest videos recorded two years earlier. RFA reported that "Chinese authorities accused those Tibetans of making contact outside Tibet, via the internet, and also charged them with engaging in many unlawful activities."[38]

On November 3, 2014, the Intermediate People's Court in Ngaba sentenced Dolma Tso to 3 years of imprisonment for trying to lift the charred body of a self-immolator Kunchok Tsetan onto a vehicle. In the same case, seven other Tibetans were given jail term of up to 5 years for allegedly aiding the self-immolation of Konchok Tsetan. Konme was sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment, Gephel was sentenced to 2 years' of imprisonment and five other unidentified Tibetans were each sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment.

37 - "Tibetans Sentenced for 'Murder' at Show Trial to Discredit Self-Immolation Protests", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, February 1, 2013, http://tchrd.org/tibetans-sentenced-for-murder-at-show-trial-to-discredit-self-immolation-protests/.

38 - "China Detains Seven Tibetans in Yushul Over Self-Immolation Videos", *Radio Free Asia*, October 23, 2017, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/yushul-detentions-10232017164043.html.

On August 29, 2011, the Ngaba Court sentenced 46-year-old Lobsang Tsundue to 11 years of imprisonment. According to the news report by State news agency Xinhua, on 29 August 2011, "Lobsang Tsundue was sentenced under the charges of 'intentional homicide' for hiding Phuntsok and preventing him from getting medical treatment after he set himself on fire." Lobsang Tsundue is the paternal uncle and teacher of the deceased Phuntsok, the Kirti monk who self-immolated on March 16, 2011.[39]

On August 30, 2011 the Court in Ngaba sentenced Lobsang Tenzin to 13 years and Lobsang Tenzin (Nakten) to 10 years for "plotting, instigating and assisting" the self-immolation of Phuntsok.[40]

On September 5, Lobsang Dhargyal, 22 (brother of self-immolator Phuntsok), and Tseko, 30, arrested in early April, were sentenced to 3 years each for their alledged role in Phuntok's self-immolation. On 26 September 2011, after the subsequent arrest and sentencing of his brother Lobsang Dhargyal and uncle Lobsang Tsondue in August, Lobsang Kelsang, the younger brother of self-immolator Phuntsok, also staged a self- immolation protest. His family saw two of their four sons set themselves on fire, and their eldest son sentenced to 3 years, and uncle Tsondue sentenced to 11 years. It is also reported that the father and their only remaining son, who is physically challenged, are nowhere to be seen.

On January 31, 2013, the Sangchu (Ch: Xiahe) County People's Court in Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) Prefecture in Gansu Province sentenced six Tibetans to 3 to 12 years in prison for their alleged roles in the self-immolation of Dorjee Rinchen, 58, who self-immolated on October 23, 2012.[41] The six Tibetans are Pema Dhondup (12

39 - "Tibetan Monk Sentenced to 11 Yrs Term in Immolation Case", *Tibetan Centre Human Rights and Democracy*, August 29, 2011, http://tchrd.org/tibetan-monk-sentenced-to-11-yrs-term-in-immolation-case/.

40 - "China: End Crackdown on Tibetan Monasteries", *Human Rights Watch*, October 12, 2011, https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/10/12/china-end-crackdown-tibetan-monasteries

41 - Ibid.

years sentence), Kelsang Gyatso (11 years), Pema Tso (8 years), Lhamo Dhondup (7 years), Dhukar Gyal (4 years) and Yangmo Kyi (3 years).[42]

On February 28, 2013, nine Tibetans were tried on charges of "inciting self-immolations" protests challenging Beijing's rule. The court hearing in Luchu (Ch: Luqu) County in the Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) Prefecture in Gansu Province was conducted under tight security with relatives and Tibetans not being allowed to come near the court premises. The accused are identified as Kalsang Samdrub, a monk from the Dzamtsa Dongsuk monastery, Kalsang Kyab, Kalsang Sonam, Tsezung, Dorje Dondrub, Kalsang Namdren, Sonam Kyi, Lhamo Dorje, and Nyima. They all belong to Dzamtsa Lotso village in Luchu.[43]

On March 2, 2013, a Chinese court in eastern Tibet passed down heavy prison term of up to 15 years to three Tibetans for their "crimes" relating to the ongoing wave of self-immolations in Tibet. An official Chinese newspaper in Kanlho region reported that a court in Luchu carried out the ruling. The court sentenced Lhamo Dorjee to 15 years in prison, Kalsang Sonam to 11 years, and Tsesang Kyab to 10 years on charges of "intentional homicide."[44]

On March 2, 2013, Yarphel, 42, a monk from Yershong monastery was sentenced to one year and three months in prison. Yarphel is the uncle of one of the self-immolators and was sentenced to prison on charges that he carried the ashes of his nephew from Rongwo Monastery to his nephew's home during a procession in

42 - "China Sentences another 6 Tibetans over Self-Immolations", *Xinhua*, January 31, 2013, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-01/31/c_132142496.htm.; "Six Tibetans Sentenced up to 12 Years Over Self-Immolation", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy,* February 1, 2013, http://www.tchrd.org/2013/02/six-tibetans-sentenced-up-to-12-yrs-over-self-immolation/.

43 - "Nine Tibetans Go on Trial Over Burning Protests", *Radio Free Asia*, February 28, 2013, http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/court-02282013202705.html.

44 - "China Sentences Three Tibetans up to 15 Years for Self-Immolation 'Crimes'", *Phayul*, March 2, 2013, http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=33116&article=China+sen-%20tences+three+Tibetans+up+to+15+years+for+self-immolation+%E2%80%9Ccrimes-%E2%80%9D.

2012 in Rebkong (Ch: Tongren) County in Malho (Ch: Huangnan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province.

On April 18, 2013, the Yazi (Ch: Xunhua) County People's Court in Tsoshar (Chinese: Haidong) Prefecture, Qinghai Province sentenced Tsondue, aged about 27, and Gedun Tsultrim, aged about 30, both monks from Beudo Monastery located in Beudo (Ch: Wendu) township, to three years in prison. They were charged with holding religious rituals and prayer services for Wangchen Norbu, who died of self-immolation protest on 19 November 2012 in Kangtsa Township in Yazi (Ch: Xunhua) Salar Autonomous County in Tsoshar (Ch: Haidong) Prefecture, Qinghai Province. [45] The two monks, Tsundue and Gedun Tsultrim, were detained and arrested on November 21, 2012, as they were on their way to pay respects and offer prayers at Wangchen Norbu's home.[46]

On May 14, 2013, Tsekhog (Ch: Zekog) County People's Court in Malho (Ch: Huangnan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province sentenced Gartse Jigme, 36, a writer and monk, to 5 years in prison for writing a book on the issue of Tibet including self-immolation protests.[47]

News reports in October 2013 stated that a Chinese court in Huzhou (near Siling), Qinghai Province has sentenced Washul Dotruk, 51, a resident of Dungda township in Golog Pema County, to 10 years in prison. Though the charges and date of sentencing are unclear, it is believed that he was taken into custody for his

45 - "Two Monks Sentenced to 3 Years in Prison for Holding Prayers for Self-Immolator", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, June 5, 2013, http://www.tchrd.org/2013/06/two-monks-sentenced-to-3-yrs-in-prison-for-holding-prayers-for-self-immolator/.

46 - "Two Monks Imprisoned for Three Years After Prayers for a Tibetan Self-Immolator", *International Campaign for Tibet*, June 5, 2013, https://www.savetibet.org/two-monks-imprisoned-for-three-years-after-prayers-for-a-tibetan-self-immolator/.

47 - "Tibetan Writer Sentenced to 5 Yrs in Prison for Writing Book on Self-Immolation", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, May 21, 2013, http://tchrd.org/tibetan-writer-sentenced-to-5-yrs-in-prison-for-writing-book-on-self-immolation/.

alleged "involvement" in the self-immolation protest of Lobsang Gedun on December 3, 2012.[48]

Two monks from the Labrang Monastery, Jinpa Gyatso, about 39, and Kelsang Monlam, 37, were convicted on September 12, 2016 by a Chinese court in Sangchu County for their alleged "involvement" in Sangye Tso's self-immolation protest on May 27, 2015. Both monks were detained in June 2015 and the authorities did not inform their parents and relatives of the charges against them. Jinpa and Kelsang were convicted for "sharing online information and images" related to Sangye Tso's self-immolation protest.[49]

The total account of arrests, detention, torture and sentencing of Tibetans connected with self-immolations is not comprehensive. Because of the communication clampdown and strictures, it is not uncommon for detentions, arrests and sentencing of Tibetans to go unreported; the information that has reached outside Tibet requires Tibetans to risk arrest and threats to their lives.

International rights groups have criticized Chinese authorities for handing out severe prison sentences to Tibetans for their alleged association with self-immolations. Sophie Richardson, China Director of Human Rights Watch, termed these prosecutions as lacking credibility. "The Chinese government seems to think it can stop the self-immolations by punishing anyone who talks about it. But in pursuing these 'incitement' cases, the government compounds the tragedy of these suicide protests."[50]

48 - "Tibetan Handed 10-Year for Supporting Self-Immolation", *Radio Free Asia*, October 10, 2013, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/term-10102013140812.html.

49 - "Two Tibetan Monks Linked to Self-Immolation are Sentenced in a Secret Trial", *Radio Free Asia*, September 20, 2016, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/sentenced-09202016135125.html.

50 - "China: Stop Sentencing Tibetans for "Inciting" Immolations", *Human Rights Watch*, February 1, 2013, https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/02/01/china-stop-sentencing-tibetans-inciting-immolations.

International response to self-immolations

The self-immolations in Tibet and the clarion call of the Tibetans in Tibet is amplified by the Central Tibetan Administration, Tibetan activist groups, international human rights groups and advocacy groups, all urging world governments to engage with the Chinese leadership, and call for multi-lateral diplomatic intervention to resolve the issue.

The 2012 annual United States' State Department Human Rights Report on China, including Hong Kong, Macau and Tibet, asserted that deteriorating human rights in Tibet is fostered by China's discriminatory practices and repressive policies that employ "lethal force, indiscriminate shootings of peaceful Tibetan protestors, restriction on assembly, (and) arbitrary arrests of Tibetans expressing faith in the Dalai Lama."[51] The UN Committee on Torture in 2011 condemned China's policies that engender the loss of Tibetan language and restrict religious practices. The UN Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights in 2008 reported on the forced abortion and sterilization of Tibetan women in Tibet. The UN Special Rapporteur on Food in 2010 reported the "confiscation of arable land" in Tibet and the "forced eviction of Tibetan nomads from Tibet's grasslands," to make way for developmental projects marked by excessive damming and unchecked mining.[52]

On November 2, 2012, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay issued her first public statement on Tibetan self-immolation, calling for the government of China to respect Tibetans' rights and to allow UN officials and foreign media

51 - US State Department, "China: 2012 Human Rights Report," 2013, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204405.pdf.

52 - Central Tibetan Administration, "UN Special Rapporteur Challenges China's Forced Resettlement Policy", May 7, 2012, http://tibet.net/2012/03/un-special-rapporteur-challenges-chinas-forced-resettlement-policy-in-tibet/.

unimpeded access to Tibetan areas.[53] On June 1, 2013, when questioned about the UN's inability to engage China about the suffering of Tibetans, especially in the wake of the unprecedented number of self-immolations, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said: "What Tibet requires now is a political solution, and the suffering of the Tibetan people has to be accounted for and cannot go unnoticed and suppressed anymore."[54] Over 28 national governments have spoken about the self-immolations.

Since 2009, the United States' engagement with the issue of self-immolations has been the most vocal and consistent compared to statements of other governments. The official website of U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern posted on August 13, 2012, a statement by McGovern himself and Congressman Frank R. Wolf, calling on the U.S. government to lead an international conference on the Tibetan crisis, and the need for a multilateral engagement on Tibet.[55] They urged the U.S. Department of State to undertake "stronger, more coordinated, visible, international diplomatic steps to reverse the crisis in Tibet".[56]

According to Xinhuanet.com, the Chinese government sees any expression of solidarity from the United States and concern for the Tibetan immolations as "meddling" and "interfering in China's internal affairs"[57] and warns of subsequent negative consequences .

53 - International Campaign for Tibet, "UN Rights Commissioner Makes Strong First Statement on Tibet, November 2, 2012, https://www.savetibet.org/un-rights-commissioner-makes-strong-first-statement-on-tibet/.

54 - "Address Grievances of Tibetans in Tibet: UNHR asks China", *The Tibet Post International,* July 1, 2013, http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/internation-%20al/3499-address-grievances-of-.

55 - James P. McGovern and Frank R. Wolf, Members of US Congress, "Letter to Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State", August 13, 2012, https://mcgovern.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=396454.

56 - Ibid.

57 - "China Opposes U.S. Resolution on Tibet Issue", *XinhuaNet*, April 28, 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-04/28/c_137142349.htm.

Conclusion

Why do Tibetans, young and old, resort to setting themselves on fire, risking and sacrificing their precious lives and the safety of their families and communities?

The Chinese government blames His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration for "instigating" and "plotting the self-immolations."

The President of Central Tibetan Administration Dr. Lobsang Sangay attributed the genesis of Tibetan self-immolations to the repressive policies of the Chinese government in Tibet. He said that the self-immolations express the Tibetan people's denouncement of China's occupation of Tibet and serve as a political message demanding change and urgent intervention in Tibet.

Religious repression, social marginalization, second-class citizenship in their own land, exploitation of the poor and of the environment, discriminatory policies undermining Tibetan language - these are the core facets of China's six-decade rule in Tibet. Time and again, the resulting failed policies expose China's disregard for the legitimate aspirations of the Tibetan people. Their policies display China's imperialist designs over Tibet and establish its position as a colonial master.

But despite the Chinese government's draconian rule, the Tibetan people have defied and resisted the rule. They have expressed unflinching faith in His Holiness the Dalai Lama and allegiance to the Central Tibetan Administration, the moral and legitimate representative of Tibetan people inside and outside Tibet.

China has waged multiple campaigns to delegitimize His Holiness the Dalai Lama and to force the Tibetan people to denounce him. But these unceasing efforts have only led Tibetans to sense the void in Tibet felt with the absence of His Holiness, and to express their

aspiration for his return. Each self-immolator have used slogans that call for the return of His Holiness and for freedom inside Tibet.

For Tibetans inside Tibet, His Holiness is the custodian of their cultural identity and the symbol of freedom in Tibet. Their sublime devotion to him is unfaltering. Moreover, the Chinese government's efforts to assimilate Tibetans into the mainstream Chinese culture and undermine Tibetan language and expressions of cultural identity fuels the Tibetan people's deep distrust of Chinese authorities. Mass migration of Chinese people into Tibet has effectively made Tibetans a minority in their own land, leaving the Tibetan people disenfranchised and marginalized in almost all sectors. In the pivotal realm of education, Tibetan students bear the brunt of prohibitive and discriminatory fees, as well as totally inadequate facilities in rural areas.

The stranglehold of Chinese rule in Tibet forces Tibetans to resort to extreme measures such as self-immolation, to protest the policies and practices that threaten their identity, and the annihilation of the culture. At the same time, Tibet's traditional leaders - its lamas and spiritual teachers preach simple living and care of human life and the environment, and they help engender a sense of Tibetan identity, unity and spiritual belonging in a time of tremendous uncertainty and disorientation.

And this is the Chinese government's real dilemma: though it rules Tibet, it cannot win the hearts and minds of the Tibetan people. The self-immolation protests send this clear message. For good reasons, the Chinese government seeks to control the self-immolation protests. It imposes complete censorship and criminalization of self-immolators, but the severity and cruelty of the government's response to these protests has only worsened the situation.

The number of self-immolations in Tibet has not abated. The vivid images of the red and yellow flames that have engulfed Tibet over the past nine years has captured the eyes and ears of the world.

The Central Tibetan Administration believes that the only way to stop the self-immolation protests is for the Chinese authorities to address the genuine and legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people inside Tibet. The call for freedom for Tibetan people, and the rightful return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet is echoed by every Tibetan self-immolator as they breathe their last, amid the fiery flame that blazes their body to ashes.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL STATUS OF TIBET

Introduction

When the troops of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China invaded in 1949/1950, Tibet was an independent state. The Chinese military takeover constituted aggression against a sovereign state and a violation of international law. Today's continued occupation of Tibet by China, with the help of several hundred thousand troops, violates international law and the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people.

The Chinese Communist government claims a right to "ownership" of Tibet. It does not claim this right on the basis of its military conquest in 1949/1950, or its alleged effective control over Tibet since then, or since the national uprising in 1959. The Chinese Government also does not base its claim to "ownership" on the "Seventeen-Point Agreement" for the "Peaceful Liberation of Tibet" which it forced on Tibet in 1951.

China's alleged legal claim is instead based on historical relationships, primarily of Mongol or Manchu rulers of China with Tibetan lamas and, to a lesser extent, with Chinese rulers and Tibetan lamas. The primary events the Chinese government rely on occurred centuries ago, during the height of Mongol imperial expansion. In that time, particularly in the eighteenth century, Manchu emperors ruled China and expanded their political influence in Eastern Europe and throughout East and Central Asia, including Tibet.

It is not disputed that at different periods throughout its long history, Tibet came under various degrees of foreign influence: the Mongols, the Gorkhas of Nepal, the Manchu emperors of China and the British rulers of India. At other times in Tibet's history, it was Tibet which exercised power and influence on its neighbors, including China. Few states in the world today have not been subjected to foreign domination or influence at some point in their history. In Tibet's case, the degree and length of foreign influence and interference was quite limited. Moreover, to the extent they had political significance, the relationships with Mongol, Chinese and Manchu rulers were personal in nature and did not at any time imply a union or integration of the Tibetan state with, or into, a Chinese state.

However fascinating Tibet's ancient history may be, its status at the time of the Chinese invasion must, of course, be judged on the basis of its position in modern history, especially its relationship with China since 1911 when the Chinese overthrew foreign Manchu rule and became the masters of their own country. Every country can return to some period in history to justify territorial claims on neighboring states - but that is an unacceptable claim under international law and practice.

The International Commission of Jurists' Legal Enquiry Committee on Tibet reported in its study on Tibet's legal status:

> Tibet demonstrated from 1913 to 1950 the conditions of statehood as generally accepted under international law. In 1950 there was a people and a territory, and a government which functioned in that territory, conducting its own domestic affairs free from any outside authority. From 1913-1950 foreign relations of Tibet were conducted exclusively by the Government of Tibet, and countries with whom Tibet had foreign relations are shown by official documents to have treated Tibet in practice as an independent State.[58]

Forty years of independence is clearly sufficient time for a country to be regarded as such by the international community. Many members of the United Nations today have enjoyed a similar, or even shorter, period of independence. But in Tibet's case, even its ancient history has been selectively re-written by the Chinese Government to serve the purpose of defending its claim to "ownership."

Early history

According to Tibetan annals, the first king of Tibet ruled from 127 BC, but it was only in the seventh century AD that Tibet emerged as a unified state and a mighty empire under emperor Songtsen Gampo. During his rule, an era of political and military supremacy and territorial expansion began that lasted for three centuries. The king of Nepal and the emperor of China offered their daughters in marriage to the Tibetan emperor, and these marriages were of particular significance because they played vital roles in the spread of Buddhism in Tibet. Chinese propaganda always refers to the political implications of Songtsen Gampo's union with the Chinese imperial princess Wen Cheng, conveniently ignoring the Tibetan ruler's other queens, particularly his Nepalese bride whose influence was greater than that of her Chinese counterpart.

58 - Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, International Commission of Jurists, "Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic" (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1960), 5, 6.

Tibetan emperor Trisong Detsen (reign: 755-797) expanded the Tibetan empire by conquering parts of China. In 763, Tibet invaded and occupied Tang China's capital, Chang'an (modern day Xian), and the Tang Empire had to pay an annual tribute to Tibet. In 783, a treaty was concluded that laid down the borders between Tibet and China; a pillar inscription at the foot of the Potala Palace in Lhasa bears witness to some of these conquests.

In 821, a new peace treaty was drawn between Tibet and China, demarcating the borders between the two countries, as inscribed on a pillar at the Jokhang in Lhasa. This important treaty illustrates the nature of relations between these two great powers of Asia. The text, was inscribed in both Tibetan and Chinese on three stone pillars: one erected in Gungu Meru to demarcate the borders between the two nations, the second in Lhasa where it still stands, and the third in the Tang imperial capital of Chang'an. It reads: "Tibet and China shall abide by the frontiers of which they are now in occupation. All to the east is the country of great China; and all to the west is, without question, the country of great Tibet. Henceforth, on neither side shall there be waging of war nor seizing of territory."

China interprets these events to show that "the Tibetans and Chinese had, through marriage between royal families and meetings leading to alliances, cemented political and kinship ties of unity and political friendship, and formed closer economic and cultural relations, laying a solid foundation for the ultimate founding of a unified nation." In fact, both the Chinese and Tibetan historical record contradict such an interpretation, and refer instead to separate powerful empires. The late Ngabo Ngawang Jigme, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), stated in his 1989 speech:

> Some historians claim that Tibet had been a part of China from antiquity, some others claim since the time of Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo through his marriage to the Chinese princess. I do not agree with both these views. When you talk about antiquity, there is no time line or if it is from the time of Songtsen Gampo's marriage, we all know that the first queen of Songtsen Gampo was Nepal's princess in which case Tibet should be part of Nepal. How can we explain this?

Writing for the China Review in 2007, Professor Ge Jianxiong of Fudan University in Shanghai states: "China (Zhongguo) only officially became the name of our country with the founding of the Republic of China in 1912. Before this the idea of China (Zhongguo) was not clearly conceptualized." He adds "Tubo/Tufan (Tibetan empire) was a sovereign/independent of the Tang dynasty."

In the mid-ninth century, the Tibetan state fragmented into several principalities. It focused attention on India and Nepal, and these regions' strong religious and cultural influences brought about a major spiritual and intellectual renaissance in Tibet.

Relations with the Mongol Emperors (1240-1350)

The Mongol ruler Genghis Khan and his successors conquered vast territories in Asia and Europe, creating the largest empire the world had ever known, stretching from the Pacific to Eastern Europe. In 1207, the Tangut Empire, north of Tibet fell to the advancing Mongols, and in 1271, the Mongols announced the establishment of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty to rule the eastern part of the empire. By 1279, the Chinese Sung Dynasty in southern China fell before the advancing armies, and the Mongols completed their conquest of China. Today, China claims the Yuan Dynasty to be its own dynasty, and by doing so, it lays claim to all Mongol conquests of the time, at least in the eastern half of the Mongol Empire.

Prince Goden Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, dispatched an expedition to Tibet in 1240 and invited one of Tibet's leading religious hierarchs, Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen (1182-1251), to his court, thus establishing an enduring Tibetan-Mongol relationship. Here began the unique *cho-yon* (priest-patron) relationship. Kublai Khan, who succeeded Goden Khan, embraced Tibetan Buddhism and adopted Drogon Choegyal Phagpa, nephew of Sakya Pandita, as his spiritual mentor.

This *cho-yon* relationship resulted in Kublai adopting Buddhism as his empire's state religion, and Phagpa became its highest spiritual authority. In expression of gratitude, in 1254 Kublai Khan offered his Tibetan lama political authority over all Tibet, conferring various titles on him.

These early *cho-yon* relationships were followed by many similar relationships between succeeding Mongol prince and Tibetan noble families and Tibetan lamas. Besides forging a unique relationship in central Asia, it also formed the basis of later relations between Manchu emperors and successive Dalai Lamas. The *cho-yon* relationship itself was purely a personal one arising from the religious devotion of the patron for the priest, and continued to exist even when the political status of the patron changed. This was evident in the Mongol-Tibetan relationship, which continued to exist even after the fall of the Yuan Dynasty.

An essential element of the *cho-yon* relationship was the protection, not his allegiance, that the patron provided his lama in return for his religious teachings. However, some cho-yon relationships did acquire important political dimensions where the patron was expected to provide military support to protect the lama and his teaching or church. Superiority of the protector was not implied, since the lay patron was also the student and worshipper of his lama.

At the time when Buddhism became the state religion in the eastern part of the Mongol empire and the Sakya Lama (Phagpa) its highest spiritual authority, the Mongol-Tibetan relationship could be best described in terms of mutual interdependence. This concept defined the dual political and religious supremacy of the worldly emperor and the spiritual leader on the basis of equality and interdependence. While the spiritual leader depended on the emperor for protection and support in ruling Tibet, the emperor depended on the lama to provide the legitimacy for his rule of the Mongol Empire.

It cannot be denied that Mongol emperors spread their influence over Tibet. But none of the Mongol rulers ever made any attempt to administer Tibet directly: Tibet did not pay taxes to the Mongol empire, and it certainly was never considered part of China by the Mongol emperors.

Tibet broke off its political ties with the Mongols in 1350 when the Tibetan king, Changchub Gyaltsen, (ruling from 1350-1364) replaced the Sakya lamas as the most powerful ruler of Tibet. Changchub Gyaltsen did away with Mongol influence in the Tibetan administrative system and introduced a new and distinctly Tibetan one. He also enacted a Code of Law (Trimyig Shelchey Chonga, 15-Article Code), for the administration of justice in the kingdom. The Chinese regained their independence from Mongol rule and established the Ming dynasty eighteen years later.

Relations with the Ming Emperors (1368-1644)

The relationship between Mongol khans or emperors and Tibetan lamas predated the Mongol conquest of China. Similarly, Tibet broke ties with the Mongol emperors before China regained its independence from them. The Chinese Ming emperors inherited no relationship from the Mongols. The Mongol Khans, however, continued their intensive religious and cultural ties with Tibetans, often in the form of *cho-yon* relationship.

Contacts between Tibet and Ming China were spasmodic and largely limited to visits to China by individual lamas of various, sometimes rival monasteries, and the granting of honorific imperial titles or gifts to them by the Chinese Emperor. These visits are recorded in Tibetan histories of the fifteenth to seventeenth century, but there is no evidence whatsoever of political subordination of Tibet or its rulers to China or the Ming emperors.

As the late Elliot Sperling, professor of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University, noted, "An examination of the events surrounding the presentation of these titles shows clearly that the recipients held power or influence in Tibet prior to their being granted. As such, the titles did not bestow power, but rather acknowledge it, and their granting must be seen as something akin to the not uncommon presentation of honours, titles, or awards by one country to nationals of another."[59]

From 1350, Tibet was ruled by the princes of Phagmodru and then, from about 1481, by the Rimpung Dynasty. In 1406, the ruling Phagmodru prince, Dakpa Gyaltsen, turned down the imperial invitation to visit China. This clearly shows the sovereign authority of Tibetan rulers at that time. From about 1565 until the rise to power of the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1642 (two years before the fall of the Ming Dynasty), the kings of Tsang ruled Tibet. There are indications of sporadic diplomatic relations between some of these rulers and Ming emperors, but the latter exercised neither authority nor influence over them.

In 1644, the Ming Dynasty was overthrown by foreign conquerors. The Manchus succeeded in establishing their own imperial dynasty, which ruled over a large empire, the most important part of which was China. They called it the Qing Dynasty.

59 - Anne-Marie Blondeau and Katia Buffetrille, Eds., *Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

Relations with the Manchus (1639-1911)

In 1642 the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, with the help of his Mongol patron Gushri Khan, became the supreme political and religious ruler of unified Tibet. From then on, Tibetans regarded him as their *Gongsa Chenpo*, the supreme sovereign and his prestige was recognized far beyond Tibet's borders. The Fifth Dalai Lama not only maintained a close relationship with the Mongols but also developed intimate ties with the Manchu rulers.

In 1639, before the Dalai Lama had acquired supreme political power and also before the Manchu conquest of China and the establishment of the Qing Dynasty, Manchu Emperor Tai Tsung invited the Dalai Lama to his capital, Mukden (present-day Shenyang). Unable to accept the invitation personally, the Dalai Lama sent his envoy who was treated with great respect by the emperor. Thus, the *cho-yon* relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Manchu rulers was established.

As was true of the Tibetan relationship with the Mongol emperors, the links developed between Tibetans and the Manchu emperors did not involve China. As Owen Lattimore points out in reference to the Qing Dynasty, "what existed in fact was a Manchu Empire, of which China formed only one part."[60]

Having conquered China and annexed it to the Manchu empire, Emperor Shunzi invited the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1653 for a state visit to the imperial capital. In an unprecedented sign of respect, the Manchu emperor made a four-day journey outside his capital (Peking) to receive the Tibetan sovereign and foremost spiritual leader of Central Asian Buddhists. Commenting on the Dalai Lama's visit, W.W. Rockhill, an American scholar and diplomat in China, wrote: "[The Dalai Lama] had been treated with all the ceremony which

60 - Owen Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History Collected Papers 1928-1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

could have been accorded to any independent sovereign, and nothing can be found in Chinese works to indicate that he was looked upon in any other light; at this period of China's relations with Tibet, the temporal power of the Lama, backed by the arms of Gusri Khan and the devotion of all Mongolia, was not a thing for the Emperor of China to question."[61]

On this occasion, the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Manchu emperor bestowed unprecedented high complimentary titles upon each other, and the *cho-yon* relationship was reaffirmed. Throughout the Qing dynasty, relations between Tibet and the Manchu emperors remained formally based on the cho-yon relationship. The Manchu emperor readily responded to appeals for help to drive out invading Dzungar Mongols and in 1720 to escort the newly-discovered Seventh Dalai Lama to the Tibetan capital.

Manchu forces entered Tibet on three more occasions in the eighteenth century: once to protect Tibet against invading Gorkha forces from Nepal (1792), and twice to restore order after civil wars (1728 and 1751). Each time they came at the request of the Tibetans, each time the *cho-yon* relationship was invoked. Though the Manchus did succeed in establishing some degree of influence in Tibet during those periods of crisis, their influence declined rapidly afterwards, rendering them unable to play any role when Tibet fought wars against invaders from Jammu (1841-1842), Nepal (1855-1856), and British India (1903-1904). By the mid-nineteenth century, the Manchu emperor's role (and the related role of the amban) was only nominal.

To this day, China gives considerable attention to emperor Qianlong's so-called twenty-nine-article edict, or regulations of 1793

61 - Rockhill, W. W., "The Dalai Lamas of Lhasa and Their Relations with the Manchu Emperors of China. 1644-1908", *T'oung Pao Second Series* 11, no. 1 (1910): 1-104, 37, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4526129.

concerning Tibet, and to the appointment of ambans, it presents the "regulations" as if they were an imperial order proving extensive Manchu authority in Tibet. In reality, the twenty-nine points were suggestions made by the emperor for certain reforms the government of Tibet could consider following its war with Nepal. The ambans were not viceroys or administrators, but were essentially ambassadors appointed to look after Manchu interests, and to protect the Dalai Lama on behalf of the emperor.

In 1792, following a dispute between Tibet and Nepal, the Gorkhas of Nepal invaded Tibet and the Dalai Lama appealed to the Manchu emperor for help. The emperor sent a large army that helped Tibet drive out the Gorkhas, and then mediated a peace treaty between Tibet and Nepal. Since this was the fourth time the emperor was asked to send troops to fight on behalf of the Tibetan government, he wanted some say in Tibetan affairs in order to prevent Tibetans from becoming involved in conflicts which might again precipitate requests for the Manchu court's military involvement.

The "regulations" were suggestions made in the context of the emperor's protector role, rather than an order from a ruler to his subjects. This emerges clearly from the statement made by the imperial envoy and commander of the Manchu army, General Fu K'ang-an, to the Eighth Dalai Lama:

> The Emperor issued detailed instructions to me, the Great General, to discuss all the points, one by one, in great length. This demonstrates the Emperor's concern that Tibetans come to no harm and that their welfare be ensured in perpetuity. There is no doubt that the Dalai Lama, acknowledging his gratitude to the Emperor, will accept these suggestions once all the points are discussed and agreed upon. However, if the Tibetans insist on clinging to their age-old habits, the Emperor will withdraw the Ambans and the garrison after the troops are pulled out. Moreover, if similar incidents occur in the future, the Emperor will have nothing to do with them. The

> Tibetans may, therefore, decide for themselves as to what is in their favor and what is not or what is heavy and what is light, and make a choice on their own.[62]

Rather than accepting or rejecting all of the Emperor's suggestions, Tibetans adopted the twenty-nine points that were perceived to be beneficial to them and disregarded those thought to be unsuitable. As the ninth Panchen Lama, Thubten Choekyi Nyima, said: "Where Chinese policy was in accordance with their own views, the Tibetans were ready to accept the amban's advice; but…if this advice ran counter in any respect to their national prejudices, the Chinese Emperor himself would be powerless to influence them."[63]

Among the important suggestions of this twenty-nine-point edict was the emperor's proposal for the selection of great incarnate lamas, including the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas, by drawing lots from a golden urn. This important task, however, remained the responsibility of the Tibetan Government and high lamas, who continued to select reincarnations according to religious traditions. After its introduction, the Golden Urn was sometimes used as part of the selection process, such as with the 11th Dalai Lama, but often was not, such as with the 9th Dalai Lama. Traditional methods still led the process.

Another important point of this "edict" was the role of ambans. At times, it resembled that of an ambassador, and at other times that of a resident in a classical protectorate relationship. It is best defined in the explanation Amban Yu Tai gave in 1903 to Mortimer Durand, the Foreign Secretary of the government of India (as reported by him): "He was only a guest in Lhasa - not a master - and he could not put aside the real masters, and as such he had no force to speak of."[64]

62 - Ya Hanzhang, *Biography of the Dalai Lama*, *Bhod ki Lo rGyus Rags Rims gYu Yi Phrengba* 2, (1991): 316 (Lhasa: Tibet Institute of Social Science, 1991).

63 - *Diary of Capt. O'Connor,* September 4, 1903.

64 - Sir Percy Sykes, *Sir Mortimer Durand: A Biography* (London: Cassell and Company, 1926), 166.

Similarly, two Lazarist missionaries, Huc and Gabet, who were in Lhasa in the mid-nineteenth century, described the position of the ambans as follows: "the Government of Tibet resembles that of the Pope and the position occupied by the Chinese Ambassadors was the same as that of the Austrian Ambassador at Rome."[65] The reference to "Chinese Ambassadors" is a common misnomer, because the Manchu Emperors were careful to appoint not Chinese ambans but Manchus or Mongolians, a fact which stressed that the appointment of the amban was an extension of the protector's role in the *cho-yon* relationship, a relationship from which the Chinese were excluded.

The unprecedented invasion of Tibet by Manchu troops in 1908 was a turning point in relations between Tibet and the Manchu emperor. Previous imperial military expeditions had come to assist the Dalai Lama or the Tibetan Government at their invitation. But this time, largely to remove increasing British influence in Tibet, the Manchu emperor attempted to establish his authority in Tibet by force. Two years later, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama fled to neighboring India. However, the occupation of Tibet was short-lived. When the Manchu Emperor tried to "depose" the Dalai Lama in 1910, the Dalai Lama declared the termination of the *cho-yon* relationship. The protector had attacked his lama and thereby violated the very foundation of their relationship.

Resistance to the invasion succeeded when the Manchu empire collapsed in 1912, and Tibetans forced the occupying army to surrender. That summer, Nepalese mediation between Tibet and China resulted in the conclusion of the "Three Point Agreement" providing for the formal surrender and expulsion of all remaining imperial troops. After returning to Lhasa on February 14, 1913, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama issued a proclamation reaffirming the independence of Tibet.

65 - Huc P, *Decouverte du Thibet, 1845-1846 – Les Bonnes Lectures* (Le-Livre: Flammarion, 1933), 50.

Relations with Republic of China (1912- 1949)

China's position was ambiguous during this period. On the one hand, the Nationalist Government unilaterally announced in its constitution and in communications to other countries that Tibet was a province of the Republic of China (one of the "five races" of the Republic). On the other hand, in its official communications with the Government of Tibet it recognized that Tibet was not part of the Republic of China; China's President repeatedly sent letters and envoys to the Dalai Lama and to the Tibetan Government asking that Tibet "join" the Republic of China. Similar messages were sent by China to the Government of Nepal. Both Tibet and Nepal consistently refused to join China.

In response to the first letter received from Chinese President Yuan Shikai, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama rejected the invitation to join the Republic, explaining courteously but firmly that Tibetans did "not approve" of the Chinese Government due to past injustices, and stated:

> The Republic has only just been proclaimed and the national foundations are far from strong. It behooves the President to exert his energies towards the maintenance of order. As for Tibet, the Tibetans are quite capable of preserving their existence intact and there is no occasion for the President to worry himself at this distance or to be discomposed.[66]

On Tibet's independence and the border territories Tibet wanted returned from China, the Dalai Lama said: "Under the priest-patron relationship that prevailed so far, Tibet has enjoyed wide independence. We wish to preserve this. We feel that there will be long-term stability if the territories we have lost to outsiders are returned to us."[67]

66 - *Guomin Gongbao*, January 6, 1913.

67 - Record of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's communication, dated 15th day of the 4th Tibetan Month, Iron Horse Year, 1930

Chinese envoys to Tibet, such as General Huang Musung (1934) and Wu Zhongxin (1940), were also told in no uncertain terms by the Tibetan Government that Tibet was, and wished to remain, independent. It may be stated here that neither the Chinese Government, nor its "special envoy" (Huang Musung) had any role, as claimed by China, in the appointment of Reting Rinpoche as the regent after the death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1933. Though he was the first Chinese authority to be permitted to enter Tibet in an official capacity since 1911, the Tibetans did not refuse him permission because he had purportedly come to offer religious tribute and condolences for the late Dalai Lama - an act that Tibetans could hardly refuse permission to anyone. However, Huang Musung arrived in Lhasa in April 1934, three months after Reting Rinpoche became Regent.

China claims that Tibetan government officials were sent to participate in China's National Assembly sessions in 1931 and 1946 in Nanjing, China. In fact, in 1931, Khenpo Kunchok Jungney was appointed by the Dalai Lama to set up a temporary liaison office in Nanjing and maintain contact with the Chinese Government. Likewise, in 1946, a Tibetan mission was sent to Delhi and Nanjing to congratulate Britain, the United States and China on the allied victory in the second world war. They had been no instruction or authority to attend the Chinese National Assembly. Speaking about this to the International Commission of Jurists' Legal Inquiry Committee on August 29, 1959, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama said, "They (Tibetan delegates in Nanjing) had no official part in the Assembly. When the propaganda came to the knowledge of our Government they were instructed by telegram not to attend."

The status of Tibet's independence between 1911 and 1951 was substantiated by China's last head of Mission in Lhasa, Shen Tsung-Lien. After leaving the country in 1948, he wrote, "since 1911, Lhasa

(i.e. the Tibetan Government in Lhasa) has to all practical purposes enjoyed full independence".[68]

Relations with British India (1857-1947)

At the end of the nineteenth century, Britain developed a keen interest in establishing trade with Tibet. All the Himalayan states were closely linked to Lhasa, and since they had all gradually been tied to British India by means of treaties and other agreements, Tibet feared it would also lose its independence if it did not resist British efforts to gain access to Tibet.

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama steered Tibet on the path of independence. This policy frustrated the British who feared, more than anything, that a Russian infiltration into Tibet would tip the balance of power in central Asia. Unable to communicate effectively with Tibet, Britain approached the Manchu court for assistance in forcing Tibet to cooperate. Without Tibet's participation or knowledge, this led to the creation of two treaties (1890 and 1893) between Britain and China that included provisions regarding Tibet. The Tibetan government rejected these treaties as ultra vires, and this precipitated the British invasion of Tibet in 1903. The Manchu emperor did not then come to the assistance of Tibet and as noted by Amban Yu Tai, disclaimed any responsibility for the action of the Tibetans. Within one year, British troops left Lhasa, after concluding the Lhasa Convention, a bilateral treaty with the Tibetan Government.

The provisions of the Lhasa Convention necessarily pre-supposed the unrestricted sovereignty of Tibet in internal and external matters. Otherwise Tibet could not have legitimately transferred to Britain the powers specified in the treaty. The Lhasa Convention did not even acknowledge the existence of any special relationship between

68 - Tsung-lien Shen and Shen-chi Liu, *Tibet and the Tibetans* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1973) 62.

the Manchu Emperor and Tibet. The very act of concluding this Convention constituted Britain's implicit recognition of Tibet as a state competent to conclude treaties on its own behalf without needing to consult any external power.

In an effort to persuade China to cooperate, Britain convinced Chinese leaders to sign the Adhesion Agreement in 1906, once again, without the participation or knowledge of Tibetan authorities. That agreement, plus the 1907 agreement concluded between Britain and Russia, confirmed the existence of a sphere of British influence in Tibet and introduced the concept of Chinese "suzerainty" over Tibet - a concept accepted by neither Tibet nor the Manchu court.

In 1908, during the Manchu army's brief invasion of Tibet, Britain again signed a treaty with the Manchus. The treaty addressed trade with Tibet but again, there was no participation on part of independent Tibet.

Referring to the British concept of suzerainty, Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, explained: "Chinese suzerainty over Tibet is a constitutional fiction - a political affectation which has only been maintained because of its convenience to both parties…As a matter of fact, the two Chinese (i.e. Manchu) Ambans at Lhasa are there not as Viceroys, but as Ambassadors."[69]

Diplomatic activity and military threats

When India became independent in 1947, it took over the British diplomatic mission in Lhasa and inherited the treaty relations of Britain with Tibet. Its recognition of Tibet was clear from the official communication the Indian Government sent to the Tibetan Foreign Office:

69 - Accounts and Papers, Cd, 1920 (1904) [Papers relating to Tibet, No. 66]

> The Government of India would be glad to have an assurance that it is the intention of the Tibetan Government to continue relations on the existing basis until new arrangements are reached on matters that either party may wish to take up. This is the procedure adopted by all other countries with which India has inherited treaty relations from His Majesty's Government.[70]

Soon after the Communist victory over the Nationalist Chinese and the founding of the PRC on October 1, 1949, Radio Beijing began to announce that "the People's Liberation Army must liberate all Chinese territories, including Tibet, Xinjiang, Hainan and Taiwan." Partly in response to this threat, and also to resolve the long-standing border disputes with China, on November 2, 1949, the Foreign Office of the Tibetan government wrote to Mao Zedong proposing negotiations to settle all territorial disputes. Copies of this letter were sent to the governments of India, Great Britain and the United States. Although these three governments considered the spread of Communism to be a threat to the stability of South Asia, they advised the Tibetan government to enter into direct negotiations with the Chinese government as any other course of action might provoke military retaliation.

The Tibetan government decided to send two senior officials, Tsepon Shakabpa and Tsechag Thubten Gyalpo, to negotiate with representatives of the PRC in a third country, possibly the USSR, Singapore or Hong Kong. These officials were to take up with the Chinese government the content of the Tibetan Foreign Office's letter to Chairman Mao Zedong and the threatening Chinese radio announcements still being made about an imminent "liberation of Tibet." They were to secure an assurance that the territorial integrity of Tibet would not be violated and to state that Tibet would not tolerate interference.

70 - India. Ministry of External Affairs, *Notes, Memoranda and Letters Exchanged and Agreements Signed Between the Governments of India and China: White Paper* (New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, 1959), 39.

When the Tibetan delegates applied in Delhi for visas to Hong Kong, the Chinese told them that the new Chinese Ambassador to India was due to arrive in the capital shortly and that negotiations should be opened through him. In the course of those negotiations, the Chinese Ambassador Yuan Zhong Xian demanded that the Tibetan delegation accept a two-point proposal: i) Tibetan national defense will be handled by China; and ii) Tibet should be recognized as a part of China. They were then to proceed to China in confirmation of the agreement.

On being informed of the Chinese demands, the Tibetan Government instructed its delegates to reject the proposal. Negotiations were then suspended.

On October 7, 1950, under Political Commissar, Wang Qiemi, 40,000 Chinese troops attacked eastern Tibet's provincial capital, Chamdo, from eight directions. The small Tibetan force, consisting of 8,000 troops and militia, was defeated. After two days, Chamdo was taken over and Kalon (Minister) Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, the Regional Governor, was captured. Over 4,000 Tibetan fighters were killed.

The Chinese aggression came as a shock to India. In a sharp note to Beijing on October 26, 1950, the Indian Foreign Ministry wrote:

> Now that the invasion of Tibet has been ordered by Chinese government, peaceful negotiations can hardly be synchronized with it and there naturally will be fear on the part of Tibetans that negotiations will be under duress. In the present context of world events, invasion by Chinese troops of Tibet cannot but be regarded as deplorable and in the considered judgement of the Government of India, not in the interest of China or peace.

A number of countries, including the United States and Britain, expressed support toward the Indian position on the aggression.

In November 1950, the Tibetan National Assembly convened an emergency session and requested the Dalai Lama, only fifteen years old at that time, to assume full authority as the head of State. The Dalai Lama was then requested to leave Lhasa for Dromo (Yatung), near the Indian border, to be out of personal danger. At the same time, the Tibetan Foreign Office issued the following statement: "Tibet is united as one behind the Dalai Lama who has taken over full powers…We have appealed to the world for peaceful intervention in [the face of this] clear case of unprovoked aggression."

The Tibetan government also wrote to the Secretary General of the United Nations on November 7, 1950, appealing to the world body to intervene. The letter said: "Tibet recognizes that it is in no position to resist the Chinese advance. It is thus that it agreed to negotiate on friendly terms with the Chinese Government…Though there is little hope that a nation dedicated to peace will be able to resist the brutal effort of men trained to war, we understand that the United Nations has decided to stop aggression wherever it takes place." On November 17, 1950, the government of El Salvador formally asked that the aggression against Tibet be put on the General Assembly agenda. However, the issue was not discussed in the UN General Assembly at the suggestion of the Indian delegation which asserted that a peaceful solution which was mutually advantageous to Tibet, India and China could be reached between the parties concerned. A second letter by the Tibetan delegation to the United Nations on December 8, 1950 did not change the situation.

Faced with the military occupation of Eastern and Northern Tibet, the defeat and destruction of its small army, the advance of tens of thousands of more PLA troops towards Central Tibet, and the lack of active support from the international community, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government decided to send a delegation to Beijing for negotiations with the new Chinese leadership.

The Seventeen-Point Agreement

In April 1951, the Tibetan government sent a five-member delegation to Beijing, led by Kalon Ngapo Ngawang Jigme. The Tibetan government authorized its delegation to put forward the Tibetan position and to listen to that of the Chinese. Contrary to the Chinese claims that the delegation had "full powers," it was not given the plenipotentiary authority to conclude an agreement. Instead, it was instructed to refer all important matters to the government.

On April 29, negotiations opened with the presentation of a draft "agreement" by the leader of the Chinese delegation. The Tibetan delegation rejected the Chinese proposal after which the Chinese tabled a modified draft that was equally unacceptable to the Tibetan delegation. At this point the Chinese delegates, Li Weihan and Zhang Jinwu, made it clear that the terms, as they then stood, were final and amounted to an ultimatum. The Tibetan delegation was addressed in harsh and insulting terms, threatened with physical violence and members were virtually kept prisoners. No further discussion was permitted. Contrary to Chinese claims, the Tibetan delegation was prevented from contacting its government for instructions. Instead, it was given the onerous choice of either signing the "agreement" on its own authority or accepting responsibility for an immediate military advance on Lhasa.

Facing immense pressure from Chinese delegates, on May 23, 1951, the Tibetan delegation signed the "Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet," without being able to inform the Tibetan Government. The delegation warned the Chinese that they were signing only in their personal capacity and had no authority to bind either the Dalai Lama or the Tibetan government to the "agreement". None of this deterred the Chinese government from proceeding with a signing ceremony and announcing to the world

that an "agreement" had been concluded for the "peaceful liberation of Tibet." Even the seals affixed to the document were forged by the Chinese government to give the necessary semblance of authenticity.

The seventeen clauses of the "agreement," among other items, authorized the entry of Chinese forces into Tibet and empowered the Chinese government to handle Tibet's external affairs. At the same time, it guaranteed that China would not alter the existing political system in Tibet or interfere with the established status, function, and powers of the His Holiness Dalai Lama or the Panchen Lama. The Tibetan people were to have regional autonomy and their religious beliefs and customs were to be respected. Internal reforms in Tibet would be affected after consultation with leading Tibetans and without compulsion.

The full text of what came to be known as the "Seventeen-Point Agreement" was broadcast by Radio Beijing on May 27, 1951. This was the first time the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government learned of the devastating document. The reaction in Dromo (where the Dalai Lama was staying at that time) and Lhasa was one of shock and disbelief.

A message was immediately sent to the delegates in Beijing, reprimanding them for signing the "agreement" without consulting the government for instructions. The delegation was asked to send the text of the document it had signed and wait in Beijing for further instructions. In the meantime, a telegram received from the delegation conveyed the message that the Chinese government representative, General Zhang Jinwu, was already on his way to Dromo via India. It added that some members of the delegation were returning via India, and the leader of the delegation was returning directly to Lhasa.

The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government withheld public repudiation of the "agreement." The Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa on August 17, 1951 in the hope of renegotiating a more favorable treaty with the Chinese.

On September 9, 1951, an estimated 3,000 Chinese troops marched into Lhasa, soon followed by some 20,000 more from eastern Tibet and from eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang) in the north. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) occupied the principal towns of Ruthok and Gartok and then Gyangtse and Shigatse.

With the occupation of all the major cities of Tibet, including Lhasa, and a large concentration of troops throughout Eastern and Western Tibet, the military control of Tibet was virtually complete. From this position, China refused to re-open negotiations and the Dalai Lama effectively lost the ability to either accept or reject any Tibet-China "agreement." However, on the first occasion he had to express himself freely again, which came on June 20, 1959, after his flight to India, the Dalai Lama formally repudiated the "Seventeen-Point Agreement" as having been "thrust upon Tibetan government and people by the threat of arms".

In assessing the "Seventeen-Point Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet," and the occupation of Tibet, two factors are paramount. First, the extent to which China was violating international law when the PLA marched into Tibet, and second, the far-reaching effect of the signing of the "agreement."

The law governing treaties is based on the universally recognized principle that the foundation of conventional obligations is the free and mutual consent of contracting parties and conversely, that freedom of consent is essential to the validity of an agreement. Treaties brought about by the threat or the use of force lack legal validity, particularly if coercion is applied to the country and government

in question rather than only to the negotiators themselves. With China occupying large portions of Tibet and openly threatening a full-scale military advance on Lhasa unless the treaty was signed, the agreement was invalid ab initio, meaning that it could not even be validated by a later act of acquiescence by the Tibetan government. Contrary to China's claim, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government did not voluntarily sign the "agreement." In fact, Mao Zedong himself, in the Directive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Policies for our Work in Tibet, issued on April 6, 1952, admitted: "[N]ot only the two *Silons* (i.e. Prime Ministers) but also the Dalai and most of his clique were reluctant to accept the Agreement and are unwilling to carry it out…As yet we do not have a material base for fully implementing the agreement, nor do we have a base for this purpose in terms of support among the masses or in the upper stratum."[71]

The National Uprising

The Tibetan resistance movement against the Chinese started right from the time of the invasion in the 1950s, even though there had never been a popular uprising in Tibet until that time. By 1956, open fighting had broken out in the Eastern Tibetan provinces of Kham and Amdo. Three years later, the uprising took on national proportions, leading to massive demonstrations in Lhasa in March 1959, and the flight of the Dalai Lama and some 80,000 Tibetans to neighboring countries. Tens of thousands of Tibetans were killed in Tibet by the PLA during the uprisings.

The Chinese government tried to depict popular resistance to its rule as the work of a few disgruntled aristocrats who wished to restore the old system of exploitation and oppression of the Tibetan masses. It

71 - Mao Tsetung, *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1977), Vo.5, 75.

depicted ninety-five percent of Tibetans as serfs, brutally oppressed by a small number of aristocrats and lamas. What China has never been able to explain is why these allegedly oppressed masses never rose up against their masters, even though their country never had a national police force and for most of its history had no strong army. Yet these same Tibetans did rise up, and still rise up today, against the massive security apparatus and army, even knowing the tremendous risk involved in these acts of protest.

If we look at the social composition of the Tibetans involved in the uprisings and demonstrations that began in 1959 and have continued to the present day, the majority are not aristocrats and high lamas. Not in the least. Furthermore, more than eighty-five percent of Tibetans in exile belong to what the Chinese call the "serf class," and not the upper strata of society as China claims.

Events leading to the 1959 uprising

Following the entry of Chinese troops into Lhasa, every effort was made to undermine the sovereign authority of the Tibetan government and to impose the authority of the Chinese. This was carried out in three ways. First, political and regional divisions were created among Tibetans under a policy of divide and rule. Second, certain social and economic reforms, calculated to change the fabric of Tibetan society were instituted against the wishes of Tibetans. And third, various organs of the Chinese government, and new bodies under its authority were set up alongside the existing Tibetan institutions.

Between November 24, 1950 and October 19, 1953, China incorporated a large portion of Kham province into neighboring Chinese Province of Sichuan. Kham was divided into two Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures and one Tibetan Autonomous District. On September 13, 1957, another portion of southern Kham was named

the Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and put under Yunnan Province.

The bulk of Amdo, together with a small area of Kham, was reduced to the status of a Chinese province named as Qinghai. One portion of Amdo was named Ngapa Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and merged with Sichuan Province. The remaining area of Amdo was subdivided into Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous District (May 6, 1950) and Ganlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (October 1, 1953) and incorporated into the Chinese province of Gansu.

On September 9, 1965, China formally established the Tibet Autonomous Regional Government, placing under its administration the whole of U-Tsang and some areas of Kham.

Meanwhile, China stripped numerous ethnic Tibetans of their Tibetan identities, such as the Sherpas, Monpas, Lhopas, Tengpas, Jangpas, etc., even though they consider themselves to be Tibetan, and reclassified them as distinct Chinese minorities. In this same time period, the appropriation by the People's Liberation Army of thousands of tons of barley and other food pushed Tibetans to the brink of famine for the first time in history and prompted protest meetings in Lhasa.

The first major popular resistance group, the *Mimang Tsongdu* (People's Assembly), banded together spontaneously and handed the Chinese Military Command a petition demanding the withdrawal of the PLA and an end to Chinese interference in Tibetan affairs. The Chinese reaction was swift: the two Tibetan Prime Ministers, Lukhangwa and Ven. Lobsang Tashi, who had made no secret of their opposition to Chinese rule and opposed the "Seventeen Point Agreement," were forced to resign and five *Mimang Tsongdu* leaders were jailed, driving the organization underground.

In 1954, the Dalai Lama visited Beijing at China's invitation. At that time, the "special" autonomous position of Tibet, embodied in the "Seventeen-Point Agreement," was formally abolished by the adoption of the Chinese People's Congress' new Constitution. This was followed by the adoption of the "Resolution on the Establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet (PCART)," a measure designed to further integrate the administration of Tibet into that of the PRC. The Preparatory Committee was to function as the central administration of Tibet. The Dalai Lama was made its Chairman, but without any authority.

As the Dalai Lama explains in his autobiography:

> The Committee was powerless - a mere facade of Tibetan representation behind which all the effective power was exercised by the Chinese. In fact, all basic policy was decided by another body called the Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in Tibet, which had no Tibetan members.[72]

In 1956, the PCART was implemented and the Tashilhunpo estate, along with those regions under the jurisdiction of the Governor-General of Chamdo (a Tibetan Government appointee) in Eastern Tibet, were separated from the jurisdiction of the Tibetan government in Lhasa. Their administrative organs were given status equal to the Tibetan Government, thereby reducing the authority of the Tibetan government. Social, political and agrarian reforms were imposed by the Chinese government in Amdo and Kham and, to a much lesser degree, in the rest of the country. Frequent attacks were launched on religious personages and monasteries. All these policies and actions of the Chinese government led to increasingly violent reactions from the Tibetan people.

72 - Dalai Lama, *My Land and My People* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1962), 133.

The "Seventeen-Point Agreement" guaranteed that no Communist government reforms would be forced on the Tibetans. But in eastern Tibet, they were introduced and enforced at once. The mounting impatience and belligerence of the Chinese administrators provoked violent reactions and rapidly culminated in armed conflicts and a widening spiral of resistance and military repression that engulfed the entire eastern Tibetan provinces of Kham and Amdo.

As the violence spilled over to other areas of Tibet, full-scale guerrilla warfare broke out in the summer of 1956. Refugees from eastern and northeastern Tibet began to arrive in Lhasa in large numbers. Within a year, the uprising had spread to Central Tibet, and in 1958, Tensung Dhanglang Magar, (the Voluntary Force for the Defence of the Faith), a union of the *Mimang Tsongdu* and *Chushi Gangdruk* (Four Rivers Six Ranges) organizations, was founded. By the autumn of that year, this popular resistance force was in control of most districts of Southern Tibet and parts of Eastern Tibet.

The Dalai Lama took pains to calm his people so as to prevent a worse bloodbath. Nevertheless, the situation in Tibet deteriorated rapidly when the Dalai Lama visited India in 1956 to take part in the Buddha Jayanti celebrations at the invitation of independent India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. In meetings with Nehru and Zhou Enlai in Delhi, the Dalai Lama expressed his deep concern at the explosive situation in his homeland and admitted that he was contemplating seeking political asylum in India. Nehru advised the Dalai Lama against it.

To lure the Dalai Lama to return home, the Chinese government promptly announced that the "socialist and democratic reforms" would be postponed in Tibet for the time being. It was also agreed that a number of Chinese civil personnel would be withdrawn, and the PCART's departments would be reduced by half. Subsequent

events were to reveal these promises as false. In the years that followed, the Chinese intensified socialist campaigns and purges against Tibetans and sent considerable army reinforcements to Tibet, more than offsetting the earlier modest reduction of Chinese cadres.

National Uprising and the escape of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

The inevitable showdown occurred in March 1959. By then, there was widespread fear that the Chinese authorities planned to abduct the Dalai Lama and take him to Beijing. These fears for the safety of the Dalai Lama became acute when the Chinese Army Command invited the Tibetan leader to a theatrical show in the military barracks on March 10. Tibetans had had bitter experiences in Kham and Amdo where important lamas and local leaders disappeared mysteriously after being invited to Chinese cultural shows and other functions. Tibetans became even more suspicious when the Chinese insisted that the Dalai Lama not be accompanied by his bodyguards, as was customary.

The people of Lhasa would not allow the Dalai Lama to give in to this Chinese subterfuge. On March 10, 1959, they held a massive demonstration and thousands of people surrounded the Dalai Lama's summer palace, the Norbulingka, to prevent him from attending the Chinese show. Over the following days, Tibetans held mass meetings in Lhasa with citizens demanding that the Chinese quit Tibet and restore the country's full independence. The Dalai Lama, fearing the dangerous consequences of these mass demonstrations, urged the large crowd around the Norbulingka to disperse. He wrote three letters to the principal Chinese General, Tan Guansan in an effort to placate the Chinese and stave off impending violence. Explaining the circumstances in which he wrote these letters, the Dalai Lama says in his autobiography:

> I replied to all his letters to gain time - time for anger to cool on both sides and time for me to urge moderation of the Lhasa people…my most urgent moral duty at that moment was to prevent a totally disastrous clash between my unarmed people and the Chinese army.[73]

But despite the Dalai Lama's efforts, open fighting broke out in Lhasa soon afterwards, with disastrous consequences for Tibetans. Seeing that all efforts to prevent open confrontation and bloodshed had ultimately failed, and that cooperation with the Chinese authorities to minimize their oppression was no longer possible, the Dalai Lama decided to escape to India in order to appeal for international help to save his people. He left Lhasa on the night of March 17, 1959.

On March 28, 1959, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai issued an Order of State Council "dissolving" the government of Tibet. The Dalai Lama and his ministers, while still en route to India, reacted promptly by declaring that the new Chinese administration in Lhasa would never be recognized by the people of Tibet. Upon his arrival in India, the Dalai Lama re-established the Tibetan administration and publicly declared: "Wherever I am, accompanied by my government, the Tibetan people recognize us as the government of Tibet." Within months, around 80,000 Tibetans made arduous escapes and reached the borders of India, Nepal, and Bhutan. Many more could not even make it to the border.

The Chinese government have tried to protray these events as the work of a handful of Tibetan reactionaries who, with the help of the CIA, created an armed "rebellion" which was "resolutely" opposed by the masses. The Chinese claim the Dalai Lama was "carried away under duress" to India. China further claims that the resistance amounted to no more than 7,000 "rebels," and was squashed in two days.

73 - Ibid., 187.

This view is hardly credible and has been contradicted even by the Chinese authorities themselves; Chinese army intelligence reports admit that the PLA eliminated 87,000 members of the Tibetan resistance in Lhasa and surrounding areas between March and October 1959 alone.[74] The CIA's half-hearted assistance to the Tibetan resistance started in earnest only after the uprising, and, though welcomed by Tibetans, amounted to little.

All evidence shows that the uprising was massive, popular and widespread. The brutal repression which followed in all regions of Tibet only confirms this reality.

74 - *Xizang Xingshi he Renwu Jiaoyu de Jiben Jiaocai*, PLA Military District's Political Report, 1960.

CHAPTER THREE

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN TIBET

Introduction

This chapter documents the systematic and severe human rights violations that continue to pervade Tibet under the authority of the Chinese government. All available evidence suggests that China violates with impunity the norms of civilized conduct embodied in international law. The most basic and fundamental human rights enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights are denied to Tibetans in Tibet. Indeed, any single act or mere opinion not to the liking of the Chinese government can be met with severe consequences and punishment.

Tibetans are also denied their right to self-determination, a rule of customary international law, which is reflected in a range of international instruments, including the UN Charter.[75]

75 - Article 55, UN Charter, http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-ix/index.html.

Until the grave human rights abuses in Tibet are addressed, the Chinese government's claim to be the rightful ruling government of Tibet remains illegitimate. Acknowledging the truth of the situation and, at a minimum, addressing the violations, would be the first step towards attaining a peaceful resolution of the Tibet issue and to making Tibet a genuinely autonomous region.

Destruction of Tibet (1949-1979)

In 1993, the Central Tibetan Administration published its report, *Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts*,[76] which documented that over 1.2 million Tibetans died between 1949 and 1979 as a direct result of the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet. Today, it is difficult to come across a Tibetan family that has not had at least one member imprisoned or killed by the Chinese regime.

Based on information compiled by the CTA, Figure 1.1 below shows the manner in which over 1.2 million Tibetans died across the three provinces of Tibet.

Figure 1.1

Cause of Death	U-Tsang	Kham	Amdo	Total
Tortured in prison	93,560	64,877	14,784	173,221
Summarily executed	28,267	32,266	96,225	156,758
Killed in fighting	143,253	240,410	49,042	432,705
Starved to death	131,072	89,916	121,982	342,970
Suicide	3,375	3,952	1,675	9,002
"Struggle sessions"*	27,951	48,840	15,940	92,731
Total	427,478	480,261	299,648	1,207,387

*During "struggle sessions" (Tib: Thamzing), Tibetans were forced to publicly accuse, criticize and beat each other. Any Tibetan who had worked in the independent Tibet's government or had achieved prosperity or a high level scholarship was categorized under the black hats of "landlords, moneylenders, serf owners" etc., and were tortured.

76 - Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, *Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts* (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, 1996), http://tibet.net/1996/01/tibet-proving-truth-from-facts-1996/.

Accounts of massacres, torture and killings, bombardment of monasteries, and the extermination of whole nomad camps are well documented. A number of these reports have also been documented by the International Commission of Jurists' 1960 report on Tibet.

A Chinese source revealed that the Peoples Libration Army (PLA) "exterminated" more than 5,700 Tibetan "soldiers" and imprisoned about 2,000 in various areas of eastern Tibet between October 7 and 24, 1950.[77] Another secret Chinese military document revealed that the PLA crushed 996 rebellions in Kanlho, Amdo, over the period of 1952-58, killing over 10,000 Tibetans.[78] Similarly, another Amdo area, Golok, had its population reduced from about 130,000 in 1956 to 60,000 in 1963.[79]

The late 10th Panchen Lama, testifying at a meeting of the Sub-Committee of the National People's Congress in Beijing on the situation in Tibet on March 28, 1987, stated:

> If there was a film made on all the atrocities perpetrated in Qinghai Province, it would shock the viewer.... The soldiers told the family members and relatives of the dead people that they should celebrate since the rebels had been wiped out. They were even forced to dance on the dead bodies. Soon after, they were also massacred with machine guns.[80]

He further stated: "In Amdo and Kham, people were subjected to unspeakable atrocities. They were shot in groups of ten or twenty… Such actions have left deep wounds in the minds of the people."[81]

77 - *A Survey of Tibet Autonomous Region,* Tibet People's Publishing House, 1984.

78 - Work Report of the 11th PLA Division, 1952-1958.

79 - *China Spring*, June 1986.

80 - The Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, *The Panchen Lama Speaks* (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, 1991), 12.

81 - Ibid., 12.

In a crackdown operation launched in the wake of March 10, 1959 uprising in Lhasa, 10,000 to 15,000 Tibetans were killed within three days. According to a 1960 PLA Tibet Military District Political Department report, between March 1959 and October 1960, 87,000 Tibetans were killed in Central Tibet alone.[82]

Prisoners were subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and died while in prison and labour camps. Documenting the conditions of prisons and labour camps in 1962, the late Panchen Lama wrote:

> The guards and cadres threatened prisoners with cruel, ruthless and malicious words, and beat them fiercely and unscrupulously… [The prisoners'] …clothes and quilts could not keep their bodies warm, their tents and buildings could not shelter them from the wind and rain and the food did not fill their stomachs. Their lives were miserable and full of deprivation, they had to get up early for work and come back late from their work; what's more, these people were given the heaviest and most difficult work... They caught many diseases, and in addition, they did not have sufficient rest; medical treatment was poor, which caused many prisoners to die from abnormal causes.[83]

A compilation of figures based on testimonies from survivors of prisons and labour camps show that across Tibet about seventy percent of inmates died. For example, in the wilderness of the northern Tibetan plains at Jhang Tsalakha, more than 10,000 prisoners were kept in five prisons and forced to mine and transport borax. According to survivors of these camps, every day, ten to thirty inmates died from hunger, beating and overwork; in one year, more than 8,000 inmates died. According to a former inmate, Adhi Tapontsang from Nyarong, Kham, in eastern Tibet, from 1960 to 1962, 12,019 inmates died at a lead mine in Dartsedo District.[84]

82 - *Xizang Xingshi he Renwu Jiaoyu de Jiben Jiaocai*, PLA Military District's Political Report, 1960.

83 - *Bskal-Bzan-Tshe, A Poisoned Arrow: The Secret report of the 10th Panchen Lama* (London: Tibet Information Network, 1997). The book includes full text of 70,000 character petition submitted by the 10th Panchen Lama to Mao Zethong and Zhou Enlai in 1962.

84 - Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, *Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts* (1996).

Rise in mass protests (1980-1990s)

The death of Mao Zedong in September 1976 led to a change in Chinese policies and subsequently embraced economic liberalization and openness. However, liberalization and openness in Beijing did not signal a change of attitude towards political freedom in Tibet.

In May 1982, 115 Tibetan political activists were arrested and branded as "delinquents" and "black marketeers." More arrests and public executions followed, and by the end of November 1983, 750 political activists had been jailed in Lhasa alone.

1987 protests: In the autumn of 1987, Tibetans staged three major demonstrations in Lhasa. In its clampdown on these successive demonstrations, the Chinese police opened fire, killing and critically wounding many on the spot and imprisoning unarmed demonstrators.

The first demonstration took place on September 27, 1987, coinciding with the Dalai Lama's meetings with the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus and announcement of his Five-Point Peace Plan for resolving the issue of Tibet. More than 200 Tibetans staged a demonstration in response to the Chinese authorities' media campaign to demonize the Dalai Lama. Local television in Lhasa ran a segment on the Dalai Lama's visit to the U.S., condemning the visit and encouraging demonstrations be held against the Dalai Lama.

However, the demonstrations were staged by a group of 21 monks, later joined by around 100 lay Tibetans, against the Chinese rule. Protestors carried the banned Tibetan national flag and handmade banners expressed support for the Dalai Lama, and shouted slogans such as "Tibet is independent" and "May the Dalai Lama live ten thousand years". Chinese security forces swiftly resorted to a violent clampdown against the demonstrators and arrested all of the monks and five of the lay protestors.

The second demonstration took place on October 1, the official Chinese National Day. A group of 34 monks, including 23 monks from Sera Monastery,[85] 3 monks from Nechung Monastery,[86] and 8 monks from the Jokhang Temple led a march through the *Barkhor*, the streets that encircle the Jokhang temple in Lhasa. They waved the banned Tibetan national flag and shouted slogans for Tibetan independence.

Chinese security personnel confronted the protestors with beatings and arrest. A crowd consisting of around 2,000 to 3,000 Tibetans then stormed the police station, demanding the immediate release of all protestors from police custody. Shortly after, Chinese police opened fire into the crowd from the roof of the police compound. At least 8 Tibetans died in the shooting, and dozens were wounded.

During the next several weeks, around 600 Tibetans were arrested, mostly at night between 11:00 pm and 2:00 am. An American tourist who was briefly detained for taking photographs of the protest reported that, inside the police station, he had seen a policeman hitting some monks on the head with a shovel.[87]

On October 6, a group of 50 monks from Drepung Monastery led the third demonstration to protest against the continued detention of 21 monks from Drepung Monastery who had been arrested following the September 27 protests. The protesting monks called for the immediate release of the detained monks and also called for Tibetan independence. Around 250 armed police arrived within minutes and arrested all of the monks. They were violently beaten with belts, sticks and metal rods.

85 - About 5 km north of Lhasa.

86 - Near Drepung Monastery (distance about 8 km from Lhasa).

87 - Ronald D.Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual In the Tibetan Uprising* (Hurst & Company, London,1994).

1988 protests: Despite stringent measures such as severe punishment and constraint, demonstrations continued throughout Tibet after 1987. In July 1988, China's security chief, Qiao Shi, while on a tour of the "Tibetan Autonomous Region" (TAR), announced "merciless repression" of all forms of protest against Chinese rule in Tibet.[88] The policy was implemented at once by local officials.

According to a western journalist, during the crackdown on the December 10, 1988 demonstration at the Jokhang temple, one officer was heard ordering his men to "kill the Tibetans." A monk who also witnessed the protest stated:

> The Chinese soldiers had surrounded the temple and there was no way of getting out. Many monks were trapped inside. It was impossible to get out because they fired tear gas. The soldiers burst into the temple and started to hit the monks indiscriminately.[89]

On that day at least 15 Tibetans were killed, over 150 seriously wounded, and many others arrested.

Monks from the Sera, Drepung and Ganden monasteries collectively decided to boycott the annual Monlam festival, which is regarded as the most important Tibetan Buddhist celebration. The monks felt that holding the Monlam prayer was unacceptable given that monks involved in the 1987 protests were still in detention.

However, monks were forced to partake in the Monlam festival to support the Chinese government's efforts to showcase religious freedom in Tibet. Severe consequences for the lack of participation were announced, including expulsion from one's monastery. Despite the risks, on the last day of the festival as party officials attended the

88 - Jane Macartney, "Detainee complains of beatings", *UPI*, July 20, 1988, https://www.upi.com/Archives/1988/07/20/Detainee-complains-of-beatings/5300585374400/.

89 - Ronald D.Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual In the Tibetan Uprising* (London: Hurst & Company, 1994), 81.

closing ceremony, monks from Ganden Monastery led a demonstration calling for the release of detained Tibetans. The Chinese security forces responded by shooting 15 monks to death. Others were shoved into military trucks and many were dragged unconscious.

Widespread arrest, night raids, torture and interrogation had become a common practice in Tibet by this time.

1989-1990s protests: Tibetans continued to protest against the Chinese rule and posters demanding Tibetan independence appeared in and around Lhasa. On the morning of February 7, 1989, which marked the beginning of the Tibetan New Year (known as Losar), the banned Tibetan flag appeared in front of Jokhang Temple in Lhasa and remained for several hours before it got removed by Chinese authorities.

Tibetans also began circulating leaflets, calling for the commemoration of the Tibetan National Uprising of March 10. Around 1,700 People's Armed Police (PAP) arrived in Lhasa on February 17, establishing checkpoints at the entrances into Barkhor. Groups of 10 to 12 soldiers screened all Tibetans seeking to enter the area.

Despite the growing military presence, for three days beginning March 5, 1989, Lhasa was again in turmoil with demonstrators waving the Tibetan national flag and shouting for independence. During the police crackdown, automatic weapons were fired, some going into nearby homes. Estimates of the number of death varied from 80 to 400. The official Chinese figure was only eleven. According to Tang Daxian, a Chinese journalist who was in Lhasa during this period, some four hundred Tibetans were massacred, several thousand injured and three thousand imprisoned.[90]

At midnight on March 7, 1989, Martial Law was formally imposed in Lhasa. Arbitrary arrest and detention became the norm in Tibet.

90 - Tang Daxian, *Events in Lhasa, March 2nd-10th 1980*, (London: TIN, 1990).

Tibetans were banned from participating in assemblies and demonstrations.

Just less than a year later, on May 1, 1990, China announced the lifting of Martial Law. However, the first Australian Human Rights Delegation who visited China and Tibet in July 1991, observed: "Though Martial Law had been lifted on May 1, 1990, it continues to exist in all but in name." Amnesty International, in its 1991 report, also confirmed this, adding "the police and security forces retained extensive powers of arbitrary arrest and detention without trial."[91]

In the run up to China's celebration of the 40th anniversary of its annexation of Tibet, 146 "criminals" were arrested on April 10, 1991, followed by more arrests announced at public sentencing rallies. On the day of the celebration, the whole of Lhasa was placed under curfew.

In a sudden clampdown, starting February 1992, groups of ten Chinese personnel raided Tibetan houses in Lhasa and arrested anyone found in possession of anything deemed subversive; these included photographs, tapes and books containing speeches or teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Over two hundred were arrested.

Available reports confirm that between September 27, 1987 and the end of 1993, some two hundred demonstrations of various sizes were held throughout Tibet. Despite the memories of the bloody Chinese crackdown in March 1989, large numbers of Tibetans once again took to the streets on May 24, 1993. Eyewitnesses, including tourists, estimate over 10,000 demonstrators. The demonstration, which continued throughout that day and the following one, was once again quelled with brutal force as the demonstrators were on their way home at dusk.

91 - "Amnesty International Report 1991", *Amnesty International*, 1992, 64.

Widespread unrest during Beijing Olympics and Tibetan National Uprisings (2008)

2008 was an historic year for the Tibet movement. With the upcoming 2008 Summer Olympics placing the international spotlight on China, protests that began in Lhasa on March 10, 2008 the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day - brought to the world's attention the Chinese government's grave human rights violations inside Tibet and the Tibetan people's struggle for justice

The 2008 uprisings were widespread, extending beyond Lhasa and into the Tibetan areas located outside of central Tibet. It is estimated that over 300 protests took place during this period of time and involved Tibetans from all walks of life, including lay persons, farmers, nomads, and students.

A group of over 300 monks from Drepung Monastery led the March 10 commemoration protest towards Barkhor in Lhasa. They called for Tibetan independence and the immediate release of all monks who had been arbitrarily detained. When the protestors were stopped by a large contingent of the People's Armed Police (PAP), the monks staged a sit-in protest and recited prayers for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. About half an hour later, monks from Sera monastery also staged a protest, distributing pamphlets on Tibetan independence and carrying the banned Tibetan national flag. Following these demonstrations, "[T]he three well-known great monasteries in Lhasa - Drepung, Sera and Ganden, as well as Jokhang and Ramoche temples in the heart of Lhasa were sealed. All religious teachings in the monasteries were forced to stop as well."[92]

92 - Tsering Woeser, "Tibet Updates 2: April 2 -16, 2008", https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2008/04/tibet-update-2/.

Following the outbreak on March 10, an estimated 344 protests[93] of varying sizes occurred in 2008. At least 6,500 Tibetans were arrested, and 190 Tibetans are known to have been sentenced to prison terms ranging from nine months to life imprisonment. Most were sentenced under charges of "endangering state security." Seven Tibetans, all below the age of 30, were sentenced to death. Lobsang Gyaltsen and Loyak were executed on October 20, 2009, and other five Tibetans - Tenzin Phuntsok, Kangtsuk, Penkyi, Pema Yeshi and Sonam Tsering - were sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve. Over one thousand cases of involuntary or enforced disappearance were reported.[94]

On March 14, 2008, Chinese armed forces fired live ammunition into the protesting Tibetans; around 80 were shot dead.[95] On April 3 of that year, at least 14 Tibetans were shot dead when armed security forces fired indiscriminately into Tibetan protestors near Tsongkhor Monastery in Kardze County.[96] On March 16, 2008, Chinese security forces retaliated against a protest in Ngaba County in which thousands of Tibetans participated, resulting in the death of at least eight Tibetans.[97] The youngest among the dead was a 16-year-old Tibetan school girl, Lhundup Tso.[98]

93 - Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, *2008 Uprising in Tibet: Chronology and Analysis*, (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, 2010), 167.

94 - Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, *Human Rights in Tibet Annual Report 2008* (Dharamshala: Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, 2009), 5.

95 - "'Eighty killed' in Tibetan unrest", *BBC*, 16 March 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7299212.stm.

96 - Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, "Pictures of Tibetans shot dead by Chinese armed police on 3 April 2008", *Phayul*, April 17, 2008, http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=20724&t=1.

97 - "Photographic Evidence of the Bloody Crackdown on Peaceful Protesting Tibetans at Ngaba County, Sichuan Province, on 16 March 2008", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, Press Release.

98 - "Middle School Student Shot Dead in Ngaba County, Sichuan Province, on 16 March 2008", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, March 20, 2008, http://tchrd.org/middle-school-student-shot-dead-in-ngaba-county/.

The Chinese authorities' use of armed force against the peaceful protestors subsequently led to worldwide condemnation of China's gross violations of Tibetans' basic rights. The UN Committee against Torture, in its 4th periodic report, expressed concerns about the Chinese government's failure to provide information on Tibetans detained or arrested in the aftermath of the March 2008 demonstrations. It further criticized the lack of reporting of the deaths resulting from indiscriminate firing by the police into crowds of largely peaceful demonstrators in Lhasa, Kardze County and Ngaba County. In addition, in April 2008, a group of seven UN human rights mandate holders called on China for "greater and unfettered access to the regions concerned for journalists and independent observers."

Self-immolation protests

The Chinese government's heavy-handed policies in Tibet continue despite the Tibetan people's repeated show of defiance, and demand for rights over these many decades. In fact, China's repressive policies worsened in many ways during President Xi Jinping's first term. Freedom House's 2017 report, *Battle for China's Spirit: Religious Revival, Repression, and Resistance under Xi Jinping* reveals that "new measures includ[ing] punishing those who provided assistance to self-immolators, cancelling previously permitted festivals, increasing intrusive restrictions on private religious practice, and more proactively manipulating Tibetan Buddhist doctrine and the selection of religious leaders" have been adopted, further deteriorating the human rights situation in Tibet.

The Chinese government suppresses any expression of opinion that they deem unfavourable to the Communist party. Peaceful protestors, whether en masse or solo, are subjected to detention, enforced disappearance, arrest, torture and imprisonment. One of the results of this oppression is that some Tibetans have turned to drastic mea-

sures to make themselves heard. In 2009, a wave of self-immolation protests began in Tibet and continues today. At least 152 Tibetans inside Tibet have burned themselves alive in protest against the Chinese rule of Tibet. The self-immolators called for freedom for Tibet and the return of the His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. However, these calls have been met with criminalization, arrest and imprisonment of the self-immolators, as well as their family members and friends. Benumbing regulations have been issued, as the authorities' attempt to avert further self-immolation protests.

Chapter One of this report delves into the details of this ultimate call for freedom.

Tibetan political prisoners

China's constitution and criminal law prohibit the unlawful search, arbitrary detention and arrest of its citizens. For example, Article 37 of the Chinese constitution states: "Unlawful detention or deprivation or restriction of citizens' freedom of the person by other means is prohibited, and unlawful search of the person of citizens is prohibited." However, the Chinese government has implemented numerous ways of violating these constitutionally-protected rights under the guise of preserving "social order."

According to the 2016 Human Rights Watch report, *Relentless: Detention and Prosecution of Tibetans under China's "Stability Maintenance" Campaign,* of the nearly 500 cases they analysed, "all cases are of Tibetans detained or tried from 2013-2015 for political expression or criticism of government policy - 'political offences.'" Tibetans are commonly arrested and sentenced on charges of "subverting state secrets" or "national stability" to further intensify China's "stability maintenance" campaign. The report further states that, between 2008 and 2012, an average of 61 arrests per year or in total, 304

people were formally arrested in the TAR and Qinghai for crimes of "endangering state security."[99]

Furthermore, torture is known to be the primary method of interrogating prisoners. China's ratification of the United Nations' Convention Against Torture did not alter this reality. In the 2015 review of China's record on torture, the UN Committee Against Torture "urged China to end the rampant use of torture in its prisons" and to shut down all secret jails; they also expressed deep concern over the high number of custodial deaths.

China continues to deny holding any political prisoners or engaging in the practice of torture despite abundant evidence to the contrary. The methods and instruments of torture and ill-treatment used by Chinese authorities have been described by a number of former prisoners subjected to them. These means of torture include inflicting shocks with electric batons; beating with iron bars, rifle butts and nail-studded sticks; branding with red-hot shovels; pouring boiling water over prisoners; hanging prisoners upside down or by the thumbs from the ceiling; shackling; kicking with boots; setting ferocious dogs upon prisoners; exposure to extreme temperatures; deprivation of sleep, food and water; prolonged strenuous "exercise"; long periods of solitary confinement; sexual violence; and taunts and threats of torture and death.

In 2018,[100] reports of arbitrary arrest, detention and torture continued to flow in from Tibet.

On September 20 this year, Shonu Palden, aged 41, passed away after battling prolonged illness which is consequently because of enduring torture in prison. Shonu was arrested on 18 June 2012 for his

99 - "Relentless: Detention and Prosecution of Tibetans under China's 'Stability Maintenance' Campaign", *Human Rights Watch*, May 22, 2016, https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/05/22/relentless/detention-and-prosecution-tibetans-under-chinas-stability-maintenance.

100 - At the time of writing, October 16,, 2018.

involvement in the 2008 mass protests. He was held in incommunicado detention for more than two months at Mandu county, Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province, traditionaly part of Tibet's Amdo region. He was later sentenced to two years and nine months of imprisonment for spearheading protests in March 2008 in Machu county but he was released before completing his sentence on 24 July 2013 with multiple health conditions.

On January 27, 2018, Ngawang Tsomo, a 51-year-old nun and a former political prisoner died of ailments sustained due to torture in prison. She had sustained ailments, including acute headache, during her 7 year imprisonment for participating in a peaceful protest in Lhasa in 1993. In prison, Ngawang Tsomo was subjected to torture and ill-treatment, and after her release, she did not receive proper medical care. Her health condition deteriorated further last year. Ngawang Tsomo died while waiting in the corridor of the hospital to receive treatment in Phenpo Lhundrub County, Lhasa.

On January 28, 2018, Lodroe Gyatso, aka Sogkar Lodroe, "disappeared again into police custody" after he staged a peaceful protest in Tibet's capital Lhasa on January 28, reported Radio Free Asia (RFA). Lodroe Gyatso's family members fear that he might have been re-arrested by Chinese authorities after his protest. He was previously jailed for over twenty years for homicide and political activism.

After being held incommunicado for a year, 55-year-old journalist and former political prisoner, Tsegon Gyal, was sentenced by the Tsojang People's Intermediate Court in Siling, Qinghai on January 10, 2018, to three years in prison for "inciting separatism." The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) reported that Tsegon Gyal was not provided any legal representation or access to a fair trial,. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention questioned the legal basis of his detention but received no response from the Chinese government.

Geshe Tsewang Namgyal, a former monk at the Draggo monastery jailed for six years for political protests, was released after suffering permanent injuries to his legs due to beatings in prison. He was released on January 24, 2018 but according to sources, he is now unable to walk normally due to leg injuries. He has been arrested in January 2012 and was later sentenced for participating in peaceful demonstration in Draggo County.

On March 28 this year, Lobsang Sangay, a 36-year old monk from Kirti Monastery, was sentenced to five years in prison, as reported by *Tibet Times*, a Dharamsala-based Tibetan press. He was sentenced by the Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang) People's court in Ngaba Prefecture, allegedly for political and self-immolation related issues. Lobsang Sangay was arrested on August 14, 2012 and three days later, his roommate at the monastery, Lobsang Kunchok was also arrested.

In April, 2018, around 30 Tibetans from Tibet's Driru County were detained after a village leader "disappeared" for protesting a Chinese mining project in the area of Sebtra Zagyen, a sacred mountain. According to reports, Chinese authorities detained Karma, the village head of Markor in late February 2018 "for challenging an official order that forced all residents of Markor, Wathang and Gochu [villages] to sign a document that allowed local authorities to conduct mining" at the sacred mountain.[101] Confronting the government officials, Karma asked them to produce evidence of approval to the mining project from party leaders leading to his disappearance. Later, when news of Karma's detention surfaced outside Tibet, local Chinese authorities called the Tibetan villagers of Markor, Wathang and Gochu villages from Shakchu town for an urgent meeting in Driru county, Nagchu prefecture, TAR. During the meeting held on around April 2, 2018, Tibetans suspected of leaking the news

101 - "Village Leader Among 31 Tibetans Detained for Opposing Mining at Sacred Mountain", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, May 14, 2018, http://tchrd.org/ village-leader-among-31-tibetans-detained-for-opposing-mining-at-sacred-mountain/.

about Karma's disappearance, which had reached the exiled Tibetan community, were "beaten up and detained."

Chinese police detained two monks from Wopo Monastery in Sershul County, Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on separate instances. Lobsang Lhundrub was arrested on March 9, 2018 with further details unknown, while Choechok was arrested on December 25, 2017, also for unknown reasons.

According to TCHRD, on April 16, 2018, Chinese authorities detained two Tibetan monks from Tsang monastery in the Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province for "posting sensitive pictures and articles" on WeChat (Chinese social media app). The County police reportedly detained Woechung Gyatso and an unidentified monk.

According to RFA, Jinpa Gyatso, a monk from Labrang monastery monk in Sangchu county, Gansu Province "disappeared" after police took him into custody on March 27, 2018. "Chinese state security officers had called him on the phone on the day he disappeared, and he had told a friend he received the call," an unnamed source told RFA. Jinpa Gyatso was released after spending 10 days in secret detention without being given any "explanation" for his arrest.

According to RFA sources, in April this year, Lhamo Dolkar, a 60-year-old Tibetan woman, has reportedly disappeared. She was traveling along with several relatives to Lhasa for a religious pilgrimage when she went missing after "several Chinese plainclothes security agents" took her to an unknown place for interrogation. Confirming the disappearance, Ngawang Tharpa, a Tibetan parliament member said, "Since then, there is no word of her whereabouts, and she has disappeared."[102]

102 - "Tibetan Pilgrim Disappears After Chinese Police Interrogation on Her Way to Lhasa", *Radio Free Asia*, April 13, 2018, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/pilgrim-missing-04132018160220.html.

The UK-based Free Tibet reported that Gangye, a Tibetan in his 50s from Trido town in Sog County was arrested on the morning of May 8 this year after Chinese police personnel "found books by the Dalai Lama and a CD of the Dalai Lama's Kalachakra initiation" that are banned in Tibet.

In the previous year too, reports of multiple cases of arbitrary detention and arrest surfaced, mainly through social media and online spaces. While Article 35 of the Chinese constitution protects "freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration," Tibetans who participate in peaceful, solo marches calling for Tibetan independence for freedom and for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama do not enjoy these constitutional protection. Among these demonstrators, many continue to remain in custody in undisclosed locations; their family members and relatives have no information about their whereabouts or medical condition.

On January 5, 2017, Sonam Tashi, a young Tibetan, staged a solo protest in Sichuan's Serthar county. He was seen throwing leaflets in the air calling for freedom for Tibet and long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as he marched in the street. Sonam Tashi was taken away by Serthar County police, and his whereabouts have remained unknown since then.

Similarly, Lobsang Tsultrim, a monk from Ngaba's Kirti Monastery, has not been heard of since security officials took him into custody after he carried out a solo protest calling for freedom in Tibet on February 25, 2017.

On February 27, 2017, Khedup, a 50-year-old senior monk and head of the Mura monastery hospital was detained for the second time. Accused of writing about human rights and the Dalai Lama, he was taken into custody by the county Public Security Bureau officers.

On March 16, 2017, Lobsang Dargye, a monk from Kirti monastery disappeared after he staged a lone protest calling for Tibetan freedom and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Initially, Lobsang Dargye's whereabouts was not known but after the efforts of many people, his location was traced to a newly built army camp in Ngaba county. Lobsang Dargye has been severely tortured. His family, relatives and friends are concerned that he might die from the beatings sustained while in detention.

On March 18, 2017, a Tibetan woman named Dukpe was taken into custody after staging a solo protest in Ngaba town. Her current whereabouts remain unknown.

According to RFA, on May 4, 2017, police in western China's Sichuan province detained Gonpo, a monk around 43 years old from Oephung Monastery in Nyarong County, Kardze Prefecture. He was suspected of spreading news to contacts outside Tibet about recent self-immolation protests.

According to TCHRD, a monk who was detained in July 2017 for about four months in a Chinese "re-education center" in Sog county, Nagchu prefecture revealed that torture and sexual abuse are "rampant in the re-education centers." The monk whose identity is not revealed for security reasons shared that the older monks and nuns, particularly nuns, became the target of prison authorities.

Tulku Lobsang, another monk from Boroe monastery in Kardze Prefecture was reportedly summoned to the local police office on July 21, 2017, without being provided any reason. Since then, Tulku Lobsang's whereabouts and well-being have remained unknown.

In the same month, Jampa Choegyal, 30, was arbitrarily detained and interrogated on charges of establishing contacts with his relative Ngawang Jampa, who is based in India and deemed a member of the "Dalai Clique" by the Chinese authorities.

In June 2016, Yudruk Nyima, a Tibetan man in his forties, was beaten to death while in police custody. The reason for Nyima's detainment is still unclear. Those who are released have an average life expectancy that is drastically cut short. On average, Tibetan political prisoners die within three years of release as a result of the severity of injuries sustained from ill-treatment during imprisonment.

On November 21, 2016, Tashi Choeying, 37, "vanished after being taken into custody by police," reported RFA. Tashi Choeying was visiting his family in Tibet with a Chinese government issued travel permit. His family and relatives had no information on his whereabouts until the end of 2017 when, they learned through a released fellow inmate, that Tashi Choeying has been sentenced to six years for an unknown charge.

In December 2011, the Central Tibetan Administration released a video footage of Chinese police and paramilitary forces making raids at dawn in village homes near Lhasa in 2008. The video footage captured Chinese forces detaining eight Tibetans by waking them up from their sleep and beating one while his hands were restrained behind his back. The arrests were in relation to the mass protests staged by Tibetans during the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

Khenrab Tharchin, a Tibetan monk in his forties was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 2008 for refusing to participate in a "patriotic re-education" session. He was released in frail condition in 2013 after serving his sentence. On August 8, 2016, while on his way to a hospital, Tharchin succumbed to injuries sustained during his imprisonment and died.

Tibetans participating in peaceful, solo marches have become increasingly common in recent years. These protestors are often seen calling for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet while holding his portrait or while their hands are clasped in a praying gesture

as they shout slogans for freedom. In some cases, lone protesters are subjected to arrest and are never heard of again, leaving their loved ones with no means to check on their whereabouts or wellbeing. On June 7, 2016, Lobsang Tsering, a 20-year-old monk from Kirti Monastery, was arrested shortly after he staged a solo protest on the Hero's Road, a street in Ngaba County in eastern Tibet. Tsering was seen walking through the street holding a portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama over his head. He was severely beaten and taken by police to an unknown location and his condition and whereabouts remain unknown to this day. Unfortunately, Tsering's case is merely one example of the pattern of abuse in Tibet.

High-profile political prisoners: Panchen Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

On May 14, 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama recognized a 6-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th Panchen Lama, the spiritual leader who traditionally played a vital role in the succession process of the Dalai Lamas. Three days after the announcement, the Government of China abducted the child and his family members.

On several occasions, including at the United Nations, China has admitted to holding the Panchen Lama. For more than 20 years, Tibetans, their supporters, and international human rights groups, including the UN Committee against Torture, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Working Group on Enforced Disappearance, have called for information on the Panchen Lama's wellbeing and whereabouts but no response has been provided. The Panchen Lama remains one of the world's longest-serving political prisoners.

In November 2017, the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, called on China to allow the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of

Religion and Belief to visit Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. Minister Freeland also urged China to "provide information on the location of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents, the level of education that he completed, and the expected date for his return along with his parents."

In commemoration of the 29th birth anniversary of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and 23rd anniversary of his enforced disappearance, the U.S. State Department issued a statement on April 26, 2018 calling for his immediate release.[103] The statement issued on April 26 by Heather Nauert, Department Spokesperson read:

> On April 25, we marked the birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who has not appeared in public since he was reportedly abducted two decades ago by the Chinese government at age six. The United States remains concerned that Chinese authorities continue to take steps to eliminate the religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibetans, including their ongoing destruction of communities of worship, such as the Larung Gar and Yachen Gar monasteries. We call on China to release Gedhun Choekyi Nyima immediately and to uphold its international commitments to promote religious freedom for all persons.[104]

At a hearing held on May 8, 2018 at the Canadian Parliamentarians' Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Canadian Parliamentarians questioned the so-called delegation from "Tibet Autonomous Region"[105] on the status of the Panchen Lama In response to concerns raised by Canadian parliamentarian Garnett Genuis on the status of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi

103 - U.S. Department of State, "Commemorating the Birthday of the Disappeared Panchen Lama", April, 26, 2018, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/04/281248.htm.

104 - Ibid.

105 - Central Tibetan Administration, "Chinese-Appointed 'Delegation' from Tibet Fails to Confirm Panchen Lama's Whereabouts, Denies Access", May 12, 2018, http://tibet.net/2018/05/chinese-appointed-delegation-from-tibet-fails-to-confirm-panchen-lamas-whereabouts-denies-access/.

Nyima, as well as international access to Tibet, Baima Wangdui spoke on behalf of the Chinese government-appointed delegation, repeating what the government has maintained over the years: "[Gedhun Choekyi Nyima] has already received the modern education and he and his family members do not want to be interrupted by an external environment. I think that if there is an opportunity, you will see that he has a very good life now."

The delegation failed to confirm the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, abducted in 1995 at the age of six along with his family and held incommunicado ever since.

a) Tashi Wangchuk

A Tibetan language rights advocate, Tashi Wangchuk was detained in January 2016 after appearing in a 2015 video documentary produced by *The New York Times*. In the documentary, *A Tibetan's Journey for Justice*, Tashi Wangchuk travels to Beijing in the hopes of filing a lawsuit against the local Yushu government officials over the lack of Tibetan language education in schools and the imposition of Mandarin as the main medium of instruction even when the majority of the students are Tibetans. However, the video showed that no law firm was willing to take on the lawsuit.

According to sources, during the trial held on January 4 this year, which lasted for about four hours, the court said that Tashi Wangchuk defamed and blamed the government of "murdering ethnic culture" and "destroying the written and spoken language," and "controlling the Tibetan people's actual use of Tibetan ethnic culture" and "tight surveillance" and "arbitrary arrests" for any reason. The courts pronounced that such actions "are against the Article 103 Section 2 of the Criminal Law of the PRC […] and that he committed incitement of separatism." Wangchuk pleaded not guilty to charges of "inciting separatism."

The 32-year-old's trial, held at the Intermediate People's Court in Yulshul (Ch: Yushu) County in eastern Tibet, received international attention, but Chinese court officials refused to allow diplomats from the U.S., European Union, Britain, Germany or Canada to attend

According to Tashi Wangchuk's lawyer, Liang Xiaojun, *The New York Times* documentary was used as a key piece of evidence by the prosecution to prove that his client was deliberately engaged in acts to incite "separatism." However, Tashi Wangchuk maintains that he only wants to ensure that Tibetan children have access to their mother tongue and that he does not seek Tibetan independence.

The presiding judge told the courtroom that a verdict would be delivered at a later date. China's Communist Party-controlled courts have a conviction rate of more than 99%, especially in politically controversial cases. On May 22, 2018, he was sentenced to 5 years in prison.

After the court pronounced the verdict, Dr. Lobsang Sangay, President of the Central Tibetan Administration said, "It's a sad day for those who believe in rule of law, but we will continue to advocate his release." Dr Sangay affirmed that the sentencing exposes the fallacy of China's claims to follow international norms and laws.

On August 23 this year, an appeal against Tashi Wangchuk's sentencing was rejected and the court upheld his sentence.

International human rights organizations rejected Tashi Wangchuk's prison sentence, calling it "grotesquely unjust," "bogus separatism charges," and named the the January trial a "politically motivated trial." Human Rights Watch's China Director, Sophie Richardson, said: "Tashi Wangchuk's only 'crime' was to peacefully call for the right of minority people to use their own language - an act protected by China's constitution and international human rights law." In their statement on the conviction, Amnesty International's East Asia Re-

search Director, Joshua Rosenzweig stated, "Today's verdict against Tashi Wangchuk is a gross injustice. He is being cruelly punished for peacefully drawing attention to the systematic erosion of Tibetan culture."[106]

United Nations' experts denounced Tashi Wangchuk's sentencing to five years despite repeated calls to China. "It is deeply concerning that this sentencing came after we issued two joint communications calling for his immediate release and for all of the charges to be dropped," reported a press statement published on the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights website.[107] Several foreign diplomats and parliaments raised concerns over Tashi Wangchuk's sentencing. Following the court verdict, the Chair of the European Parliament, the Canadian Government, the US State Department, German Parlimanet and the French Senate immediately voiced their concerns, some condemning the court's decision and calling for Tashi Wangchuk's release. Earlier this year, the European Parliament also adopted urgency resolutions calling on China to release Tashi Wangchuk, while the Latvian Parliament and French Senate called for a "fair and transparent judgment process" for the Tibetan language advocate.

b) Shokjang

Druklo, a prominent Tibetan writer and blogger who goes by the pen name Shokjang, was detained in March 2015 by national security police officers at a hotel in Rebkong County, Eastern Tibet. Then on February 17, 2016, he was sentenced to three years in prison for "inciting separatism." He was reportedly released on March 19,

106 - "China: Tibetan activist handed grotesquely unjust 5 year prison sentence after featuring in New York Times video", *Amnesty International*, 22 May, 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/05/china-tibetan-activist-unjust-sentence-nyt-video/.

107 - United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, "China: UN Human Rights Experts Condemn 5-year Jail Term for Tibetan Activist", June 1, 2018, https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23176.

2018. Shokjang was known for his critical articles about the current situation in Tibet, including the 2008 uprisings and forced resettlement of Tibetan nomads.

c) Tenzin Delek Rinpoche

A prominent 65-year-old Tibetan religious leader, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche received a suspended death sentence in 2002, commuted to life imprisonment in 2005, on charges of "causing explosions" and "inciting separation of the state." The charges were related to a bomb explosion in Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan. Tenzin Delek's alleged co-conspirator, Lobsang Dondrup, was also found guilty and executed on January 26, 2003.

Human Rights Watch provided a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding Tenzin Delek Rinpoche arrest and conviction, and stated that it was plagued with irregularities and lacked any credible evidence against Rinpoche. The report concluded, "[M]any reasons remain for questioning [the Court's] findings and those of the review court or courts that upheld the original sentences. The trial was procedurally flawed, the court was neither independent nor impartial, and the defendants were denied access to independent legal counsel. Lawyers chosen by members of Tenzin Delek's family were not permitted to defend him at his appeal hearing. Claiming that state secrets were involved, Chinese authorities still refuse to release any of the evidence presented at trial."[108]

The US, EU and international human rights organizations have all criticized Rinpoche's sentence and called for his immediate release.

The case of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche was widely viewed as politically motivated and an attempt to silence him, given his growing popular-

108 - Mickey Spiegel, "Trials of a Tibetan Monk: The Case of Tenzin Delek", *Human Rights Watch*, February 8, 2004, https://www.hrw.org/report/2004/02/08/trials-tibetan-monk/case-tenzin-delek.

ity among the public and his loyalty toward His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Local Tibetans viewed Tenzin Delek Rinpoche as a champion for the economic, cultural, religious, and environmental rights of the Tibetan people.

Tenzin Delek died in custody on 13 July, 2015, under mysterious circumstances after spending13 years in prison. The Chinese government claimed that Rinpoche died of a heart attack. However, Tenzin Delek's niece Nyima Lhamo, who later escaped to India, rejected this official explanation. She testified at the 9th Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy stating that Rinpoche had been tortured and poisoned to death. Nyima Lhamo revealed that when the family was finally allowed to see Rinpoche's body, they noticed his lips were dark.

Neither Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's body nor his ashes were returned to his family for them to perform Buddhist last rites, despite an outcry from local Tibetans and international supporters.

e) Yeshe Choedron

A retired medical doctor and mother of two, Yeshe Choedron was arrested in Lhasa in March 2008 following the mass protests in Tibet. She was accused of sharing information related to the crackdown and was charged with "espionage," for allegedly providing "intelligence and information" to "the Dalai clique's Security Department" based in Dharamsala.[109] On November 7, 2008, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced this 52-year-old resident of Ramoche in Lhasa to 15 years in jail.[110] Eight years into her sentence, in 2016, unconfirmed reports said Yeshe Choedron had been hospitalized in a state of deteriorating health due to torture endured in prison.

109 - Sophie Richardson, ed., "'I Saw it With My Own Eyes', Abuses by Chinese Security Forces in Tibet, 2008- 2010", *Human Rights Watch*, July 21, 2010, https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/07/21/i-saw-it-my-own-eyes/abuses-chinese-security-forces-tibet-2008-2010.

110 - Ibid.

Restrictions on freedom of movement

In-country movement

> "Chinese people on airplanes, trains, buses and motorcycles are streaming into and out of Tibet in thousands, Tibetans themselves have become outsiders in their own land, blocked at every turn."- Chinese writer and scholar Wang Lixiong.

In flagrant violation of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, China has strengthened its series of regulations restricting the free movement of Tibetans within their own country. Tibetans have to be registered at a particular place and are entitled to reside and buy food rations only at that particular palce. Going from one place to another for any purpose, even for a short duration, requires official permission.

The People's Armed Police (PAP) and local public security bureaus have set up roadblocks and checkpoints on major roads and monasteries within and on the outskirts of cities. At these checkpoints, Tibetans are thoroughly searched for anything deemed "illegal" or "separatist," such as images of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan national flag, or other prohibited materials.

At the Lhasa Railway Station, it is mandatory for Tibetans to undergo severely restrictive entry requirements. Tibetan passengers are taken to the police station where each of them is required to present a local guarantor, a practice that is not applied to non-Tibetan travellers who can travel freely from the train station to their desired destinations. Beijing-based writer Woeser reported that, during her visit to Lhasa, Chinese authorities were scanning ID cards of the Tibetans who arrived on the same train with her, whereas Chinese visitors did not have to go through the same process. The ID cards

are subsequently scanned at all checkpoints around Lhasa to keep track of Tibetan travellers and to restrict access to certain parts of the city.

In some cases, Tibetans are required to obtain special permission from multiple government offices in order to travel to and from TAR. Many Tibetans report encountering obstacles to obtaining such permits. This not only makes it difficult for Tibetans to make pilgrimages to sacred religious sites in the TAR, but also obstructs land-based travel to India through Nepal, as further discussed below. In addition, Tibetans from outside the TAR who travelled to Lhasa also reported that authorities there required them to surrender their national identification cards and notify authorities of their plans in detail on a daily basis. After pilgrimage to the Potala Palace in Lhasa, an unnamed person described his experience, saying, "there are more surveillance cameras than windows, more soldiers than Lamas, more mice than Boddhisattvas."[111]

Foreign travel

> "Getting a passport is harder for a Tibetan than getting into heaven. This is one of those 'preferential policies' given to us Tibetans by [China's] central government."- A Tibetan blogger posted on a Chinese-language website.

Over the years, Human Rights Watch (HRW) has provided detailed accounts of how Tibetans face routine denial of, among other things, basic freedom of movement including stringent discriminatory measures in obtaining passports. According to a 2015 HRW report, in Chamdo Prefecture, which has a population of 650,000, only two passports were issued in the year 2012.[112] The report entitled *One*

111 - Tsering Woeser, "'Brainwashed' in Lhasa After Attending Buddhist Teachings in India", *High Peaks and Pure Earth,* May 28, 2012, https://highpeakspureearth.com/2012/brainwashed-in-lhasa-after-attending-buddhist-teachings-in-india-by-woeser/.

112 - "One Passport, Two Systems | China's Restrictions on Foreign Travel by Tibetans and Others", *Human Rights Watch*, July 13, 2015, https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/07/13/one-passport-two-systems/chinas-restrictions-foreign-travel-tibetans-and-others.

Passport, Two Systems, further stated that since 2012, Chinese authorities have confiscated all ordinary passports held by registered residents of the TAR region—of which over 90% are Tibetans—with no replacements.[113]

Many Tibetans continue to report difficulties obtaining new passports or renewing existing ones. Sources report that Tibetans and other minorities had to provide far more extensive documentation than other Chinese citizens when applying for a passport. For Tibetans, the passport application process can take years, and frequently ends in rejection. Some have to resort to bribery in order to obtain passports. In the TAR, a scholar needs to get about seven stamps with signatures from various government offices to apply for a passport in addition to other standard required documentation.

Tibetans looking to travel to India face series of challenges to acquire a passport. The U.S. Department of State's 2016 *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* noted that "Tibetans and other minorities had to provide far more extensive documentation than other Chinese citizens when applying for a Chinese passport."[114] The report concludes:

> For Tibetans, the passport application process could take years and frequently ended in rejection. Some Tibetans reported they were able to obtain passports only after paying substantial bribes. Tibetans continued to encounter substantial difficulties and obstacles in traveling to India for religious, educational, and other purposes. Individuals also reported instances of local authorities revoking their passports after they had returned to China. [115]

113 - Ibid.

114 - US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, "Human Rights and Labor, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016 - China, Tibet, 2017", https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2016humanrightsreport/index.htm?dynamic_load_%20id=265330&year=2016#wrapper.

115 - Ibid.

Travel restrictions during 2017 Kalachakra in India

Many Tibetans had spent years obtaining passports to legally travel to India for the 2017 Kalachakra ceremony, a Tibetan religious ceremony led by His Holiness the Dalai Lama held from January 3-14. However, the Chinese government made sure to place severe travel restrictions in order to prevent the devotees from traveling there.

In its 2017 report, the US Congressional-Executive Committee on China stated:

> An estimated 7,000 Tibetan pilgrims from Tibetan areas of China attempted to attend an important religious teaching given by the Dalai Lama in Bodh Gaya, India, in early January 2017. In November 2016, Chinese officials confiscated passports, issued threats, and ordered Tibetans who had already travelled to India and Nepal to return to China, violating their rights of religious freedom and movement. [116]

In addition, travel agencies in Nepal received a travel advisory circulation from China that asked all travel agencies and airlines to cancel all bookings made until January 10.[117] In some instances, officials at airports in Guangzhou and Kunming reportedly tore up the passports of Tibetans upon their arrival. These pilgrims were forced to return between the 1st and the 15th of January, and severe consequences were put in place for anyone who failed to do so, including the loss of subsidies and jobs.[118]

In the latest International Religious Freedom report released on May 29, 2018, the US State Department listed China as a country of

116 - "Congressional-Executive Commission on China, Annual Report- 2017", October 5, 2017, https://www.cecc.gov/publications/annual-reports/2017-annual-report.

117 - Anil Giri and Sangam Prasain, "China Issues Travel Restriction to Nepal", *Kathmandu Post*, December 24, 2016, http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-12-24/china-issues-travel-restriction-to-nepal.html.

118 - "Kalachakra Returnees Passports Torn at Airports in China", *Voice of America*, January 24, 2017, https://www.voatibetanenglish.com/a/3692184.html.

concern yet again. The report highlights the widespread state interference and restrictions on religious freedom and practices of the Tibetan people. The US Secretary of State has stated in the report: "In China, the government tortures, detains, and imprisons thousands for practicing their religious beliefs, including Falun Gong members, Uighur Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists." [119]

Extensive State Surveillance

> "All villages become fortresses, and everyone is a watchman."- Official slogan used by China's grid management teams.

The 2018 *Freedom in the World* report by Freedom House ranked Tibet as the second least free place in the world after Syria.[120] The severe lack of freedom in Tibet is bolstered by the Chinese government's massive range and reach of surveillance that deprives Tibetans of their fundamental right to privacy as individuals.

State surveillance of Tibetans intensified in 2011, when China launched what is referred to as the "grid system" for "social stability maintenance.[121] The grid system is intended to facilitate the identification and close monitoring of "potential troublemakers" and gather real-time information from the community workers stationed within each area. Every movement of residents is monitored on screens in offices and information is fed to these offices by grid staff members equipped with smartphones that upload geo-tagged photographs. Towns and cities are divided into small sub-divisions for surveillance

119 - US Department of State, "China (includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau) 2017 International Religious Freedom Report", https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281058.pdf.
122 "Freedom in the World 2018", Freedom House, https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018.

120 - Ibid.

121 - "China: Alarming New Surveillance, Security in Tibet", *Human Rights Watch*, May 20, 2013, https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/03/20/china-alarming-new-surveillance-security-tibet.

by security workers. For example, Chengguan District, which includes most of Lhasa and its surrounding area, is divided by Chinese authorities into 175 divisions to ensure that no citizen escapes surveillance.

Under this system, the Chinese government created over 600 "convenience police-posts" supplied with high-tech equipment to monitor the daily lives of ordinary Tibetans, focusing particularly on "special groups" in the region - namely, former prisoners and those who have returned from India.[122]

In its report entitled *China: No End to Tibet Surveillance Program,*[123] Human Rights Watch (HRW) produced an extensive study of the grid-system. According to this report, the monitoring teams question "Tibetans in villages, including questioning about their political and religious views, subjecting thousands to political indoctrination, establishing partisan security units to monitor behavior, and collecting information that could lead to detention or other punishment." In 2011, the government deployed around 21,000 party cadres, in teams of at least four, in each of the 5,000 villages in TAR, costing more than one-quarter of the regional government's total revenue.

The "intensive surveillance program" was due to end after four years, but Beijing has decided to continue the program indefinitely. Sophie Richardson, HRW's China Director, stated: "The new normal is one of permanent surveillance of Tibetans." [124] Ultimately, the grid system exacerbates not just the denial of the Tibetan people's right to privacy but also their right to freedom of expression and freedom of movement.

122 - Ibid.

123 - "China: No End to Tibet Surveillance Program", *Human Rights Watch*, January 18, 2016, https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/01/18/china-no-end-tibet-surveillance-program.

124 - Ibid.

China has also targeted social media as part of its surveillance program, particularly the state-owned online chat forum called WeChat. According to a private source:

> WeChat is currently the most popular social media platform in Tibet, and in every WeChat group there is the presence of at least one Chinese intelligence agent…and now they have begun targeting the exile Tibetan community. They may not be able to control the information shared within the exile community, but they can certainly collect information and spread disinformation by probing these social media platforms.[125]

In May 2017, RFA reported that many Tibetans have been arrested and detained "for reporting politically sensitive developments with media contacts outside China" through WeChat.[126] Two individuals, Argya Gya and monk Lodroe were sent to prison for their participation in a WeChat group formed to celebrate His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday.[127]

Lack of access to information

> "[T]he Tibet Autonomous Region, as China calls central Tibet, is harder to visit as a journalist than North Korea."- The Washington Post, September 2016.

The Chinese government has become increasingly effective at halting the flow of information into and out of Tibet. As the US State Department's 2016 human rights report states:

> The Chinese government severely restricted free travel by foreign journalists to Tibetan areas. In addition, the Chinese government harassed or detained

125 - Name and details of source withheld for security reasons.

126 - "Tibetan Social Media Draw Chinese Police Attention After Self-Immolations", *Radio Free Asia*, May 30, 2017, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/media-05302017150250.html.

127 - "Second Tibetan Jailed Over Dalai Lama WeChat Group", *Radio Free Asia*, July 26, 2016, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/second-07262016170418.html.

> Tibetans who spoke to foreign reporters, attempted to provide information to persons abroad, or communicated information regarding protests or other expressions of discontent through cell phones, e-mail, or the internet. The few visits to the TAR by diplomats and journalists that were allowed were tightly controlled by local authorities.[128]

Reporters Without Borders (RWB) lists Xi Jinping among the "enemies of the internet" and "press freedom predators" and states that "China has seen a marked decline in respect for freedoms since Xi Jinping took over as President in late 2012."[129] In the past decade, only a handful of government-organized tours were allowed, and were all closely controlled.[130]

Freedom House named China as the world's "worst internet abuser" for the third consecutive year in its *Freedom on the Net 2017,* an annual report that analyzes countries' online manipulation, use of disinformation tactics, and restrictions on mobile internet services for political reasons.

Tibetans face serious restrictions when looking to access information from the outside world or even just communicate with others inside Tibet. Authorities curtail cell phone and internet service in the TAR and other Tibetan areas, sometimes for weeks or even months at a time, during periods of unrest and political sensitivity. Reports of authorities searching cell phones suspected of containing suspicious content are widespread. Many individuals in the TAR and other Tibetan areas have reported receiving official warnings after using their cell phones to exchange what the government deemed to be sensitive information.

128 - US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016 - China, Tibet", https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2016humanrightsreport/index.htm?dynamic_load_%20id=265330&year=2016#wrapper.

129 - "China: Still World's Biggest Prison for Journalists and Citizen-Journalists", *Reporters Without Borders*, June 2, 2017, https://rsf.org/en/news/china-still-worlds-biggest-prison-journalists-and-citizen-journalists.

130 - Simon Denyer, "Tibet is Harder to Visit than North Korea. But I got in and Streamed Live on Facebook", *Washington Post*, September 16, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/09/16/in-tibet-the-door-cracks-opens-for-foreign-media-and-then-slams-shut-again/?utm_term=.93868bf93c9b.

The head of TAR Party Committee Internet Information Office has emphasized that "the Internet is the key ideological battlefield between the TAR Party Committee and the 14th Dalai (Lama) clique." Authorities consistently block users in China from accessing foreign-based, Tibet-related websites critical of official government policy in Tibetan areas. Well-organized computer-hacking attacks originating from China have repeatedly harassed Tibet activists and organizations outside China.

In November 2017, the National People's Congress Standing Committee passed a cyber security law that further strengthened the legal mechanisms available to security agencies to survey and control content online. Some observers noted that provisions of the law, such as Article 12, could disproportionately affect Tibetans and other ethnic minorities. Article 12 criminalizes the use of the internet to commit a wide range of ill-defined crimes of a political nature, such as "harming national security," "damaging national unity," "propagating extremism," "inciting ethnic hatred," "disturbing social order," and "harming the public interest." The law also codifies the practice of large-scale internet network shutdown in response to "major [public] security incidents," a practice that public security authorities in Tibetan areas have done for years without a clear basis in law. A work conference held in Lhasa on November 8, 2017 urged the TAR and other provinces with Tibetan areas to step up coordination in the management of the internet.

Conclusion

It is not possible to cover all aspects of the human rights violations in Tibet in one chapter or even one book. The human rights issues and cases covered here are just a small part of the repressive situation inside Tibet under Chinese rule. But despite the communication clampdown, Tibetans inside Tibet continue to send information

outside Tibet. They take great risks, potentially including the cost of their lives, in the hope that the international community will intervene and help ensure a life "free and equal in dignity and rights" as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The situation in Tibet remains tense. The already limited space for Tibetans to live as Tibetans, to preserve their identity, culture, language and tradition, is shrinking further and with newfound swiftness due to the Chinese government's recent regulation changes. The implementation of even harsher cyber-censorship rules following the 19th Party Congress and the abolition of presidential term limits, which paves the way for Xi Jinping to remain in power indefinitely, indicate the continuation of the crackdown on Tibetan people's freedom and violations of their human rights for the next many years.

It is critical that the international community continue to monitor the situation inside Tibet, pushing the Chinese government to respect and uphold the rights of the people, and ensuring accountability for violations of international norms. The ultimate solution is for China to work with the Tibetan people to adhere to its own laws as enshrined in its Constitution and create a lasting, tangible solution - instead of further worsening the human rights situation in Tibet.

CHAPTER FOUR

CULTURAL GENOCIDE IN TIBET

Genocide: Physical and cultural

The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment for the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as follows:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

(a) Killing members of the group;
(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.[131]

131 - Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, UNGA Res. 260 (III), 9 December 1948, in force in January 1951, 78 UNTS 277.

In addition to the physical-biological understanding of genocide noted above, there is legitimate legal foundation in international law to argue that the term is broad enough to include cultural genocide as a component. In fact, when Raphael Lemkin first coined the term genocide in 1944, the original definition recognized the concept of cultural genocide.[132]

A landmark study in Canada into the injustices and harms inflicted on Indigenous peoples through the state-funded residential school system provided this all-encompassing definition of cultural genocide:

> Cultural genocide is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.[133]

In August 2001, International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) further defined the relevance of cultural factors in prosecuting genocide under the Convention. In its landmark judgments, the ICTY set precedents with regard to the destruction of cultural characteristics of a targeted group as an aspect of genocide. It stated:

132 - Lemkin Raphael, *Axis Rule In Occupied Europe: Occupation, Analysis Of Governments, Proposal for Redress,* Publications of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, Washington, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944).

133 - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future," (Manitoba: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), 1, http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Exec_Summary_2015_05_31_web_o.pdf.

> The physical destruction of a group is the most obvious method [of genocide], but one may also conceive of destroying a group through purposeful eradication of its culture and identity resulting in the eventual extinction of the group as an entity distinct from the remainder of the community..... [W]here there is physical or biological destruction there are often simultaneous attacks on the cultural and religious property and symbols of the targeted group as well, attacks which may legitimately be considered as evidence of an intent to physically destroy the group.[134]

In that legal case it was held that the Serbian destruction of Muslim libraries and mosques, and its attacks on cultural leaders, established genocidal intent against Muslims in former Yugoslavia.

Furthermore, the right to cultural existence is recognized in other landmark international instruments, including the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights.[135] It was later affirmed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Article 1 of the ICESCR states: "All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. " Article 15 recognizes the right to "take part in cultural life."[136] The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) also specifically protects minority cultural rights in Article 1 and 27.[137]

Today, international law has evolved considerably and calls for the need to implement effective legal instruments for the punishment of cultural genocide.

134 - Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, IT-98-33-T, Trial Chamber, ICTY, August 2, 2001, 574, 580 http://www.icty.org/x/cases/krstic/tjug/en/krs-tj010802e.pdf.

135 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNGA Res. 217 (III), 10 December 1948, Article 27.

136 - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, UNGA Res. 2200 (XXI), 16 December 1966, in force 3 January 1976, 993 UNTS, Articles 1 and 15.

137 - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UNGA Res. 2200 (XXI), 16 December 1966, in force 23 March 1976, 999 UNTS 171, Articles 1 and 27.

Cultural destruction documented by Central Tibetan Administration, Jurists, the United Nations and Scholars

In fewer than 60 years, the Chinese Communist Party has destroyed the rich Tibetan culture, religion and identity that has thrived for thousands of years.[138] As a direct result of the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet, over 1.2 million Tibetans died between 1949 and 1979.[139] Today, it is difficult to come across a Tibetan family that has not had at least one member imprisoned or killed by the Chinese regime.

The acts of genocide against the Tibetan people are well-documented in various reports published by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ). The first report in 1959 *The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law*, concluded that the evidence points to: "(a) a prima facie case of acts contrary to Article 2 (a) and (e) of the Genocide Convention of 1948; (b) a prima facie case of a systematic intention by such acts and other acts to destroy in whole or in part the Tibetans as a separate nation and the Buddhist religion of Tibet."[140]

In 1960, the ICJ published its second report, *Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic: A Report to the International Commission of Jurists* by its Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, which found that acts of genocide have been committed against Tibetans in order to destroy them as a religious group.[141]

After the ICJ presented its findings on Tibet to the UN General Assembly, three important resolutions on Tibet were passed. First, in 1959, the General Assembly passed a resolution calling on China

138 - Counting from 7th century onwards.

139 - Refer fig. 3.1 on the information compiled by the CTA on the manner of death of the more than 1.2 million Tibetans who died across the three provinces of Tibet.

140 - The International Commission of Jurists, *The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law*, (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1959).

141 - Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, (1960).

to ensure "respect for the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and for their distinctive cultural and religious life."[142] A second resolution was passed in 1961, when the UN called on China to stop "practices which deprive the Tibetan people of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, including their right to self-determination."[143] The General Assembly passed a third resolution in 1965. This resolution expressed grave concern "at the continued violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet and the continued suppression of their distinctive cultural and religious life."[144]

Similarly, in 1991, the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minority Rights passed a resolution on Tibet criticizing the Chinese government's "violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms which threaten the distinct cultural, religious and national identity of the Tibetan people." It called on China to "fully respect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people."[145]

The ICJ published a third report on Tibet in 1997, *Tibet: Human Rights and the Rule of Law.* Adama Dieng, the Secretary-General of the ICJ, made the following comment about it:

> [The third report on Tibet] documents a new escalation of repression in Tibet, characterized by a 're-education' campaign in the monasteries, arrests of leading religious figures and a ban on the public display of photos of the Dalai Lama. It also examines the increasing threats to aspects of Tibetan identity and culture through the transfer of Chinese population into Tibet, the erosion of the Tibetan language and the degradation of Tibet's environment[…]The report concludes that Tibetans are a 'people under alien subjugation,' entitled to but denied the right of self-determination.[146]

142 - UN resolution no. 1354 (ivx), 1959.

143 - UN resolution no. 1723 (ivx), 1961.

144 - UN resolution no. 1354 (ivx), 1965.

145 - Situation in Tibet. No. E/N.4/sub.2/91, 43 Session.

146 - International Commission of Jurists, *Tibet: Human Rights and the Rule of Law*, (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1997.

This report further documented the Chinese Communist Party's continued repression inside Tibet and its strategic plan to eliminate Tibetan culture and religion, stating:

> Repression in Tibet has increased steadily since the 1994 Third National Tibet Work Forum, a key conclave at which senior officials identified the influence of the exiled Dalai Lama, the leading figure in Tibetan Buddhism, as the root of Tibet's instability, and mapped out a new strategy for the region. The Forum endorsed rapid economic development, including the transfer of more Chinese into the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and a campaign to curtail the influence of the Dalai Lama and crackdown on dissent. The results of the Forum included heightened control on religious activity and a denunciation campaign against the Dalai Lama unprecedented since the Cultural Revolution; an increase in political arrests; stepped up surveillance of potential dissidents; and increased repression of even non-political protest. [147]

In addition, the ICJ advised the UN and the international community to "pay heed to the plight of Tibet and to come to the defense of fundamental principles of international law which have been trampled upon."[148] It called for a referendum to be held in Tibet, under the supervision of the UN, to consider the views of the Tibetan people in the decision-making process about their own way of life.

In 2013, Spain's National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*) issued an arrest warrant for China's former President Hu Jintao on charges of committing genocide in Tibet during 1980s and 90s. The arrest warrant included charges against several other prominent Chinese leaders who served in that period of time, including former President and Party Secretary Jing Zemin; former Prime Minister Li Peng; former head of Chinese security and responsible for the People's Armed Police during the martial law period in Tibet in the late 1980s, Qiao

147 - Ibid.

148 - Ibid.

Shi; Party Secretary in the Tibetan Autonomous Region Chen Kuiyuan; and former Minister of Family Planning Peng Pei Yun.

The case was filed by Comite de Apoyo al Tibet, a Spain-based Tibet support group along with a Tibetan plaintiff in Spain, employing the principle of universal jurisdiction, a doctrine in international law which recognizes that states have an obligation to prosecute grave crimes irrespective of location of the crime or the nationality of the perpetrator or the victim.

While this was a groundbreaking legal case, the Chinese government was quick to denounce the Spanish court's ruling and assert political pressure on Spain's lawmakers to prevent the case from further proceedings. China threatened that such actions could hurt the bilateral relations between the two countries and consequently, the Spanish Parliament voted to limit its universal jurisdiction, requiring the suspect to be Spanish or a foreign resident in Spain. The High Court later dismissed the case for failing to comply with that new law.

In February 2014, International human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, issued an open letter expressing serious concerns over China's influence over a country like Spain, a pioneer in the fight against impunity for serious international crimes.

Recent efforts to eradicate Tibetan Buddhism: The destruction of Larung Gar and Yarchen Gar monasteries

> "With no permanent place to stay, the monks are on their own to fend for shelter" -Tsering, a student resident at Larung Gar who escaped Tibet into exile India, told Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration in December 2017.

Since July 2016, Chinese authorities have carried out demolitions and mass expulsions of Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns from two major religious institutes- Larung Gar and Yarchen Gar. Larung Gar is one of the largest Buddhist centers in the world and Yarchen Gar is another major monastic encampment. Both are based in Serthar (Ch: Seda) and Palyul (Ch: Baiyu) counties, Karze (Ch: Ganzi) Tibetan Prefecture, incorporated into China's Sichuan Province. Human rights groups Free Tibet and Tibet Watch have reported that since July 2016, at least 4,725 homes have been dismantled and more than 4,825 monks, nuns and lay students have been evicted from the institutes. Saddened by the Chinese government's destructive action, three nuns of Larung Gar committed suicide. On July 19, 2016, two nuns- Tsering Dolma and Semgha- died by hanging at their quarter. A day later, on July 20, another nun, Rigzin Dolma also committed suicide by hanging.

Fifteen years earlier, on April 18, 2001, Larung Gar had endured a similar crackdown. The encampment, believed to house between 7,000-8,000 monks and nuns, was forced to set a ceiling of 1400 monks and nuns. Thousands were expelled. Dozens of monastic dwellings were dismantled. Some nuns from the center were reportedly offered $24 to move back to their home districts, but a large number from the encampment were reduced to destitute wandering in the nearby mountains.

Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, a highly-respected and influential Tibetan Buddhist teacher and the founder of Larung Gar Buddhist institute, was held incommunicado for a year. Subsequently, on the evening of January 6, 2004, Khenpo died under mysterious circumstances in the military hospital "363" in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, where he had been receiving medical treatment. Khenpo was 72 years old.

In June 2016, in a systematic effort to dilute and destroy Tibetan Buddhist culture, the Chinese authorities issued an eight-point Larung Gar demolition order, dictating step-by-step guidelines with deadlines to demolish housing facilities of thousands of monks, nuns and lay practitioners. Their expulsion reduced the number of residents to the government-set ceiling of 5000. Citing the decisions taken at the Sixth Tibet Work Forum Conference and the Second National Work Conference on Religion, the document stated that the demolition order was aimed at proper regulation and management of Larung Gar Buddhist institute.

Research reports and eye-witness accounts revealed that the demolition and destruction of Larung Gar, under the guise of "regulation and management" of the institute, are politically motivated.

Tsering, a resident at Larung Gar in his 20s who escaped into exile in India, provided convincing testimony on the true turn of events at Larung Gar. He refuted the reasons of "over-population" and "inadequate housing and sewage management" given by the Chinese authorities. Instead, Tsering claimed that it is the growing influence of the institute that the authorities feared.

A western scholar who managed to sneak into Larung Gar confirmed that the important Buddhist learning center will be reduced and diluted to attract "temporary visitors and spiritual seekers." After holding multiple special meetings of six construction companies, China's concerted efforts to transform the institute into tourist destinations began.

The evicted monks and nuns were forced to sign a document pledging not to return to the institute or continue their practices in their hometown. "Some of the monks were even forced to disrobe after their eviction, while a few lucky ones managed to join other monasteries."[149]

149 - Central Tibetan Administration, "They would tell us 'The Sky Belongs to the Chinese Communist Party and so does the Earth': Larung Gar Resident Speaks", December 19, 2017, http://tibet.net/2017/12/they-would-tell-us-the-sky-belongs-to-the-chinese-communist-party-and-so-does-the-earth-larung-gar-resident-speaks/.

Physical destruction of Larung Gar that has come to light constitutes only a fraction of the total devastation. The full impact of the demolition goes much deeper, as the residents and students of the institute have been "deeply disturbed", both psychologically and physically. "Those who were evicted have suffered from depression and some of the Tibetan nuns, and even some Chinese students, became depressed," said Tsering. Video footage received despite the communications crackdown has caused deep distress among Tibetans around the world. Nuns are seen wailing helplessly as they watch their fellow nuns shoved into buses and sent back to their hometowns. Many of these evictees are forced to undergo patriotic education exercises and videos show Tibetan nuns dressed in military uniform, singing the song "Chinese and Tibetans are Children of One Mother." Another video show Tibetan nuns believed to be evictees of Larung Gar performing on stage, to Chinese pop songs. This is not only a violation of their monastic vows but also the worst form of humiliation a nun can face.

Larung Gar continues to remain under tight security, with the heavy presence of police forces both in uniform and civilian clothes. According to reliable sources, the Special Police Force (PRC's SWAT units called *tè jing* in Chinese) is the primary police unit exerting repression and intimidation in Larung Gar.

In addition to transforming Larung Gar into tourist center, in August 2017, the Communist Party's Committee in Kardze Tibetan Autonomous region declared the appointment of Chinese Communist members to take over the daily administration of Larung Gar. The announcement entailed the appointment of six Chinese Communist members to take over the administrative role of abbots, the traditional heads of the institute. The decision to appoint party members conforms to the eight-point administrative order stating that the monastery is to accept joint management with gov-

ernment or Chinese Communist Party officials in accordance with guidelines issued in section 7.4 of the order in July 2016. The appointment of Communist Party members reflects China's effort to integrate Communist member and its propaganda office in the institute-turned-tourist-center.

In October 2017, human rights groups Free Tibet and Tibet Watch, with assistance of the US-based satellite specialist Apollo Mapping, revealed satellite images that demonstrated the scale of destruction caused to the Buddhist academy. This evidence of the wide-scale demolition of Larung Gar and the subsequent eviction of monks and nuns drew international condemnation and action. In February 2017, on the eve of the 34th session of UN Human Rights Council, a group[150] of UN human rights mandate holders made public a joint intervention communication transmitted to the Chinese Government in November 2016, on the case of Larung Gar and Yarchen Gar. The group questioned the Chinese government about the legal basis for the demolition of the Buddhist institutes and expulsion of the monastic residences. Similarly, the European Parliament had adopted an urgency resolution condemning the demolition of Larung Gar in December 2016.

Efforts to eradicate Tibetan Buddhism (cont):

The administration of monasteries

In 1962, 'Democratic Management Committees' (DMC) were established in monasteries around Tibet. Though many of their members engaged in immoral practices such as excessive drinking and associating with prostitution, the government-controlled DMCs have

150 - The group included six UN Special Rapporteurs in the field of: Cultural Rights; issues of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; Rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to Non-discrimination in this context; minority issues; and freedom of religion or belief.

since taken over the administrative role of abbots, the traditional heads of monasteries. These committees are composed of state-approved "patriotic" monks and nuns, party cadres and government officials, and in some cases, "trusted" Tibetan officials. They are given the responsibility of administering monasteries and imposing rules and regulations through "patriotic education" programs and serve as links between the Chinese government and the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. They also monitor the activities and movements of monks and nuns.

Under the Religious Affairs Regulations issued by the State Council of China on July 7, 2004 the DMC regulates movement within monasteries, records monastic activities, promulgates political education and imposes other means of scrutiny on monastic institutions. In addition to the surveillance by DMC in monasteries, the Chinese government has created "work teams" (groups of governmental personnel) to disseminate 'patriotic education' in an institution or locality. Specifically, these workers forcefully teach monks and nuns about the Chinese version of Tibetan history, condemn His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and make them follow Chinese religious regulations and restrictions. In addition, the DMCs enter monasteries and nunneries with the special task "to carry out investigations, hold meetings, conduct surveillance, and identify candidates for arrest."

The combination of these state-sanctioned practices violates freedom of religion. They attempt to mold Tibetan Buddhism to represent the Chinese in politically correct ways, and they force the Buddhist establishment into a political and psychological warfare that elevates piety to the Community Party at the expense of the centuries-old traditional customs, beliefs and values of Tibetan Buddhism.

A leaked document obtained by Tibetans in exile in November 2015 reflects an entirely new level of repression in the monastic institutes. Titled *Notification of the Driru County People's Government on the need to intensify and deepen the work of cleaning up and reforming the religious institutions (For temporary implementation),*[151] it reveals systematic efforts to convert Tibetan monastic institutions into Chinese government offices and the monastic population into Chinese Communist Party members. The document contains a set of regulations that identify activities through which religious institutions will be reformed and it states:

> The Chinese authorities will control all financial activities of religious institutions, including offerings made to reincarnated or senior monks. The Chinese authorities will keep an account of all monastic properties and retain the sole authority to make decisions regarding their storage and repair. Every Thursday, monks and nuns at all religious institutions in Driru County are required to attend political education sessions.

The crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism worsened even further. In 1994, the Chinese Communist Party convened the "Third National Work Forum on Tibet" with the ostensible objective to produce "stability and development." But in fact, the Forum held discussions on terminating "the unbridled construction of monasteries and nunneries as well as the unbridled recruitment of monks/nuns," and added that "the struggle between ourselves and the Dalai Clique is neither a matter of religious belief, nor a matter of question of autonomy, it is a matter of securing unity of our country and opposing splittism...This is a life-and-death struggle."[152] It maintained that the

151 - "Document Exposes Intensification of State-Sanctioned Religious Repression in Troubled Tibet Country", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, November 9, 2015, http://tchrd.org/document-exposes-intensification-of-state-sanctioned-religious-repression-in-troubled-tibetan-county/.

152 - *Dus Rabs Gsar par Skyod Pa'i Gser Zam* (A Golden Bridge Leading to a New Era). A document issued after the Third Work Forum on Tibet which was held in Beijing from 20-23 July 1994.

root of instability in Tibet was "Dalai Clique's splittist activities," referring to association with Tibetan independence movement. However, time and again, His Holiness the Dalai Lama himself has said that he is not seeking independence, and has since the late 1980s promoted the Middle Way policy, which seeks genuine autonomy within the framework of People's Republic of China. (This approach will be explored in detail in Chapter Nine of this report). The Forum implemented restrictive measures on Tibetan Buddhism, such as limiting the number of monks and nuns since the Chinese government found that members of the monastic institutions spearheaded most freedom protests.

Following the Forum in 1994, China vehemently implemented its anti-Dalai Lama campaign. Images of the Dalai Lama were prohibited in private homes of governmental officials and banned in outdoor places and public markets. Chinese hostility toward the Dalai Lama heightened over the years as authorities created a campaign to not only demean his religious power, but also rigorously demean and delegitimize his political influence.

Monlam (prayer) ceremony restrictions

The celebration of the *Monlam Chenmo* (Great Prayer Festival) in Lhasa Jokhang had been banned since 1960s and not hosted again until 1986, when the late 10th Panchen Rinpoche was able to convince the Chinese government of Monlam Chenmo's religious and cultural significance. Then, following the series of mass protests and demonstrations in Lhasa which led to the imposition of Martial Law in 1989, it was again banned in 1990.

Damage and distortion in education and Tibetan language

Patriotic education

Patriotic re-education or patriotic education, initially launched in Tibet in 1996 as part of Beijing's "Strike Hard" campaign, intended to target crime and corruption in China. The campaign has been expanding ever since, and today covers the entire region - even the most remote parts of Tibet. The core message of the campaign decrees, "loyalty to the state is prerequisite to be a good monk or nun." Under this campaign, a Work Team (in Tibetan: *ledon rukhag*), consisting of both Chinese and trusted Tibetan officials, visits monasteries and nunneries to force monks and nuns to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama and declare their allegiance to the Communist party leadership through an examination, or by signing a pledge. These campaigns have been met with high resistance, at times leading to arrest and detention of monks and nuns, and additional repercussions for non-compliance.

Moreover, under the "Nine Must Haves" program, which is under the umbrella of patriotic re-education campaign, all monasteries and nunneries must display the portrait of the Chinese communist leaders and the Chinese national flag. Any attempts to boycott the session or defy the demands of the Work Team may result in expulsion, arrest, or torture.

Tibetan monks and nuns are required to study four books and were examined on their memorizations and the content which included anti-Dalai Lama information, China's version of Tibet, China's legal aspect, and its restrictions on religion. Under the campaign, they were required to chant -"I oppose the Dalai clique; I will not keep the Dalai's photo in my house; my thinking will not be influenced by the Dalai clique; I love the Communist Party; I will follow the Party no matter what." If they failed or expressed hostility toward it, they faced harsh consequences such as expulsion and imprisonment.

Due to this brutal coercion and indoctrination, many monks and nuns denied denouncement and fled into exile. Tibetan Buddhists regard His Holiness the Dalai Lamas as a manifestation of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. The current Dalai Lama, an icon of world peace, is close to the hearts of his followers around the world, and is revered by Tibetans in Tibet and outside. Tibetans have strongly rejected any name calling, or acts of disrespect by Chinese authorities against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In recent times, more than 150 Tibetans have burned themselves after expressing their wish for the return of His Holiness to Tibet. The self-immolation is a dire form of protest against China's continued repressive methods to efface Dalai Lama from Tibetan identity. (These acts of protest are addressed in full detail in the Chapter One of this report).

China's second White Paper on Tibet, published in February 1998, states that it "respects and protects its citizens' right to freedom of religious belief in accordance with the law" and that "the Chinese government has accorded consistent respect and protection to the Tibetan people's right to freedom of religious belief." In addition, one of the conditions in the Seventeen-Point Agreement was preserving and protecting Tibetan religious sites and institutions. These official statements and declarations are in stark contradiction with the state-imposed rules of religious indoctrination, the expulsion and imprisonment of nuns and monks, and the repressive Chinese religious rules on Tibetan Buddhism, directly distorting and undermining the traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

Attempts to annihilate the Tibetan language

Throughout history and across all cultures, language is deemed of paramount importance as the means of human communication and the vehicle to establish cultural identity and a functioning society and nationhood.

The Chinese government's third *White Paper on Tibet,* published in 2000, gives lip service to this belief. It highlights the importance of preserving Tibetan culture with the help of the government. Moreover, it states, "the spoken and written Tibetan language is universally used." Under the Chinese legal framework of the 1949 Common Program, language is a celebrated right that "granted minorities freedom to develop their languages, and preserve or reform their traditions." Even the Seventeen-Point Agreement mentions that Tibetans "shall have the freedom to develop their spoken and written language and to preserve or reform their customs, habits and religious beliefs." The Chinese constitution itself and the laws on regional autonomy consistently uphold the freedom of language.

However, these declarations and documents vastly differ from the practice and reality of life in Tibet. Under the pretext of promoting bilingual education, the Government of China has implemented Mandarin as the medium of instruction in Tibetan schools. The current language policies have not only prevented learning Tibetan language in schools but rendered it to be unmarketable and without value in personal and professional life.

The Chinese Constitution and Law on Regional Autonomy provides minorities the right to use and develop their own spoken and written languages. There are many other provisions that provide language rights to minority nationalities. Despite these provisions, however, Tibetan language advocates are detained and charged with political crimes for simply expressing concern over the marginalization of Tibetan language and demonstrating against the Chinese authorities for their failure to abide by their own laws.

These language policies have led to massive protests in Tibetan areas. For example, in October 2010 when the government announced plans to switch the language used in schools completely to Mandarin, thousands of Tibetan students and teachers gathered in the

streets of Rebkong, Amdo to demand respect for their linguistic rights. The demonstrators demanded a return to Tibetan language education and the introduction of more Tibetan language classes. Through slogans, and in an open letter to the government, the protestors enumerated the drawbacks of Mandarin-based education, and called for the language policy to be reviewed and revised.

Many of these protestors were detained, illustrating the pattern of Tibetans - be they students, writers, singers, teachers, or other intellectuals jailed for celebrating Tibetan national identity and criticizing Chinese rule. Many Tibetans work to preserve Tibetan language by running local language courses. However, they risk being arrested by the authorities, as in the case of Khenpo Kartse, a respected local leader who advocated for the preservation of Tibetan language and the environment, and who was imprisoned for two and a half years in 2013. Several musicians have been jailed for writing songs that call for use of Tibetans' mother tongue. A case in point is Kalsang Yarphel, who was sentenced to four years in prison.

In the 1960s, the grammar of Tibetan language was modified under 'reforms' initiated by the government. Some Chinese terms were used in Tibetan, and some Tibetan words like *Gyanak*, (meaning China in Tibetan), were banned. Tibetans were instead required to include the Chinese term for China, *Zhongguo*, in the Tibetan language. In addition, the educational system was "designed to deny them [Tibetan students] the opportunity and ability to learn their own histories and languages" and to "indoctrinate children and instill a sense of inferiority complex regarding Tibetan culture, religion and language relative to Chinese culture."[153] A *New York Times* article offers a bleak peek into a Tibetan school in TAR:

> A portrait of Mao hangs in the lobby. All classes are taught in Mandarin Chinese, except for Tibetan language classes. Critics of the government's

153 - "China: Minority Exclusion, Marginalization and Rising Tension", *Human Rights in China*, 2007, 28-29.

> minority policies say the education system in Tibet is destroying Tibetans' fluency in their own language, but officials insist that students need to master Chinese to be competitive. Some students accept that.
>
> "My favorite class is Tibetan because we speak Tibetan at home,but our country's mother tongue is Chinese, so we study in Chinese," said Gesang Danda, 13.
>
> On a blackboard in one classroom, someone had drawn in chalk a red flag with a hammer and sickle. Written next to it was a slogan in Chinese and Tibetan: "Without the Communist Party, there would be no new China, and certainly no new Tibet."[154]

Tibetan language is marginalized by being relegated to as the second language in Tibetan schools with Mandarin as the first. In addition, the educational system is a platform that manipulates Tibetan students into cultivating ideological beliefs that reject their identity and existence.

In 2012, middle school students in Qinghai (Amdo) protested after they returned from spring break to find new Chinese-language textbooks. Thousands of Tibetan students followed and participated in the peaceful demonstrations. Then in March of that year, Tsering Kyi, a 19-year old student from Machu Tibetan Middle School from Gansu province set herself on fire, becoming the 24th Tibetan to self-immolate since 2009. It is reported that she had participated in the 2010 language rights protest. Tibetan students struggle to speak their mother tongue, but as intended by the Chinese government, they find Chinese language to be the most convenient and viable means for communication and opportunities in society. The late Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, the abbot of Larung Gar Buddhist Institute, articulated this grave problem when he wrote:

154 - Edward Wong, "China's Money and Migrants Pour in Tibet", *The New York Times*, 24 July 2010, https://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/25/world/asia/25tibet.html.

> Actually, the Tibetan language has no value in present-day Tibet. For instance, if a letter were mailed with an address written in Tibetan, it wouldn't reach its destination even within Tibet, let alone outside.
>
> In the case of travels, no matter how literate in Tibetan a person might be, he or she would not be able to decipher the bus schedule or read the seat number on the ticket. Even in an emergency, if one had to look for a hospital or a shop in the county headquarters or a city, knowledge of Tibetan would be useless. A person who knows only Tibetan will find it difficult even to buy small daily necessities.
>
> "If our language is useless in our own country, where else will it have any use? If the situation remains like this much longer, the Tibetan language will become extinct one day... Rare in Tibet are schools where one can study Tibetan language and culture... Moreover, parents have developed the habit of not sending their children to school. This is because the primary school teaches Chinese rather than Tibetan. Even if the students learn Chinese and graduate from the middle school, there is no employment scope in Tibet. There is, of course, a slight opportunity for learning Tibetan. But the parents know that Tibetan language is useless in day-to-day life. Therefore, they have no motivation to send children to school"[155].

In 2016, *The New York Times* highlighted the violation of the Tibetan people's cultural and language rights in two articles and a documentary featuring Tashi Wangchuk, a Tibetan language-rights advocate. Subsequently, Wangchuk was arbitrarily detained and arrested by Chinese authorities. Wangchuk had called for implementation of the rights and freedom associated with the equal protection and promotion of Tibetan language and culture, as stipulated in the Chinese Constitution as well as the Law on Regional National Autonomy. However, he was charged with "inciting separatism". Wangchuk

155 - Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administraton, *Tibet Under Communist China: 50 Years*, (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, 2001) 41.

pleaded not guilty to charges of "inciting separatistism" during a four-hour trial held on January 4, 2018. On May 22, 2018, he was sentenced to 5 years in prison. (For a fuller description of Tashi Wangchuk's case, see Chapter Three of this report).

In the cities and county headquarters, people are unable to speak Tibetan, even though both their parents are Tibetans. Many of them have lost their Tibetan characteristics. Moreover, Tibetan officials cannot speak pure Tibetan. One-fifth or two- thirds of the words they use are Chinese and consequently, ordinary Tibetans can't understand their speech.

Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's letter confirms the unfortunate fate of Tibetan language, uncared for and abandoned from societal institutions. Those who speak fluent Tibetan feel inferior for not having conformed to the imperatives of the mainstream and many others who identify themselves as Tibetan feel more comfortable speaking in Chinese. China's attempts to degrade, devalue, and decrease the usage of Tibetan language poses a genuine threat to the survival of Tibetan language.

Order No. 5

In January 2007, China's State Administration of Religious Affairs issued a new regulatory measure called "Order No. 5" on "management measures for the reincarnation of living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism." The decree makes it compulsory for all the *Tulkus* (incarnate emanation bodies) to register and receive government approval. Article 2 of the regulation states, "reincarnating living Buddhas shall not be interfered with or be under the dominion of any foreign organization or individual" and shall be "recognized by the provincial or autonomous regional Buddhist Association or the

China Buddhist Association in accordance with religious rituals and historically established systems."[156] This will be discussed further in Chapter Eight of this report.

Intermarriage policy

Chinese authorities have launched a campaign to strengthen its policy of encouraging marriages between Tibetans and Chinese. In August 2014, Chen Quanguo, the highest Chinese officials in charge of the "Tibet Autonomous Region" (TAR) ordered a run of stories in local newspapers promoting mixed marriages. For weeks, government-run newspapers in the TAR featured stories and images of happy mixed marriages in which the children are shown to love both cultures and speak in both Tibetan and Mandarin. In response to an interview by *The Washington Post*, Tsering Woeser, a Beijing based prominent Tibetan blogger, stated: "There is nothing objectionable about couples as people from different backgrounds coming together naturally. However, when the authorities use it as a tool and create policies to encourage it, it feels wrong".[157]

A report published in August 2014 by the Communist Party's research office in TAR said mixed marriages had increased annually by double-digit percentages for the past five years, from 666 couples in 2008 to 4,795 couples in 2013.

Chen Quanguo, then the Party Secretary of TAR who chaired Ethnic Intermarriage Family Forum on June 18, 2014 implored party and government officials to act as "matchmakers."[158]

156 - Article 7, State Religious Affairs Bureau Order No-Five, September 1, 2007.

157 - William Wan and Xu Yangjingjing, "China Promotes Mixed Marriages in Tibet as way to Achieve 'Unity'", *The Washington Post*, August 16, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/china-promotes-mixed-marriages-in-tibet-as-way-to-achieve-unity/2014/08/16/94409ca6-238e-11e4-86ca-6f03cbd15c1a_story.html?utm_term=.febb7c80d509.

158 - "Chinese Party Official Promotes Inter-Racial Marriages in Tibet to Create 'Unity'", *International Campaign for Tibet*, August 28, 2014, https://www.savetibet.org/chinese-party-official-promotes-inter-racial-marriages-in-tibet-to-create-unity/.

Destruction of the nomadic way of life

An estimated 2.25 million nomads live on the Tibetan Plateau. Throughout history, the Tibetan nomads skillfully managed their livestock, and sustained the land, while adapting to the realities of Tibet's fragile ecological system.[159] Both nomads and farmers engaged in a barter system in which nomads gave salt, butter, meat, dried cheese and wool in exchange for barley, clothes and other items of daily use. However, this nomadic way of life was gradually replaced by the commune system. Today the biggest threats to the Tibetan nomadic families are forcible relocation and removal of nomads from pastureland. Between 2006 and 2012, around two million[160] nomads were removed from their land.

In a comprehensive report titled *No one has the Liberty to Refuse* published in June 2007,[161] the New York-based Human Rights Watch revealed alarming facts and figures about China's nomadic resettlement project. Claiming environmental protection as the reason for the fencing off of pastureland, the Chinese government carried out policies such as "convert farmland to forest"[162] and "revert pasture to grassland."[163] The report highlighted that "Since 2000, the Chinese government has been implementing resettlement, land confiscation, and fencing policies in pastoral areas inhabited primarily by Tibetans, drastically curtailing their livelihood. The policies have been

159 - For detailed report on the traditional Tibetan environmental protection see Jamyang Norbu, "Wildlife and Nature Conservatory in Old Tibet", *Shadow Tibet*, December 6, 2009, www.shadowtibet.com. Julia Martrin, ed., *Ecological Responsibility: A Dialogue with Buddhism: A Collection of Essays and Talks*, (New Delhi: Tibet House and Sri Satguru Publications, 1997).

160 - Brad Adams, "They Say We Should Be Grateful: Mass Rehousing and Relocation Programs in Tibetan Areas of China", *Human Rights Watch*, June 27, 2013, https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/06/27/they-say-we-should-be-grateful/mass-rehousing-and-relocation-programs-tibetan .

161 - Sophie Richardson, "'No One Has the Liberty to Refuse' Tibetan Herders Forcibly Relocated in Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, and the Tibet Autonomous Region", *Human Rights Watch*, June 2007 Volume 19, No. 8 (C), https://www.hrw.org/reports/2007/tibet0607/.

162 - Ibid., 17.

163 - Ibid.

especially radical.… Many Tibetan herders have been required to slaughter most of their livestock and move into newly-built housing colonies in nearby towns, abandoning their traditional way of life."[164]

Fencing off pastures, limits imposed on herds and relocation in permanent settlements, have all forced the nomads to seek other sources of income for which they either do not have enough skills or opportunities.

A Tibetan interviewed by Human Rights Watch shared that "Chinese are not letting us (nomads) carry on our occupation and forcing us to live in Chinese-built towns, which will leave us with no livestock and won't be able to do any other work."[165]

In 2003, a total ban was imposed on grazing in Golok in northeastern Tibet and nomads were forced to move into government-built houses. The nomads were often made a one-time payment for their livestock, and are given houses with no job prospect or steady source of income[166]. As a result, they resort to collecting and selling *yartse gunbu* or caterpillar fungus, a medical root that has high demand and very high market value. During summer, almost the entire population in nomadic areas scour the grasslands for this plant.[167] In some areas, local leaders issue passbooks that allow people to collect the root and then officials act as middlemen in selling it to make huge profits. Some officials organize video nights in the mountains for root collectors during which adult films are shown and cheap alcohol is sold. There were also cases of violent and often fatal conflicts over trading and scarcity as Jonathan Watts reports in the June 17,

164 - Ibid., 3

165 - Ibid., 3.

166 - Ibid., 57-64.

167 - Ibid., 49; also see, Wang Lixiong and Tsering Shakya, *The Struggle for Tibet* (London: Verso Books, 2009), 160-168.; Jonathan Watts, "Fungus gold rush in Tibetan plateau rebuilding lives after earthquake", *The Guardian*, June 17, 2010, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/17/fungus-tibetan-plateau.

2010 issue of *The Guardian*: "In July 2007 eight people were shot to death and 50 wounded in one such conflict."[168]

Another assault on nomads' traditional values and religious sentiments is the building of series of slaughter houses[169] in pastoral areas by the Chinese government and setting quotas for each household to provide animals to these houses. Punishments are meted out by local officials if herders fail to comply with the order to slaughter animals. In Sershul county in Kardze in eastern Tibet, people petitioned the local authorities against the slaughter house built in the locality. When the petition was rejected, some monks of Bumnyak Monastery and lay people wrote an appeal saying: "There is no greater harm to Buddhist religion than this. Even if we don't protect living creatures, slaughtering them without mercy is against Buddhism. This is the wish of the people."[170] The official response was the arrest of the three Tibetans who submitted the appeal.

Following his visit to China in December 2010, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, submitted a report titled *Mission to China* on January 20, 2012. The report highlighted the issues surrounding the nomadic resettlement in Tibet, and called for the suspension of the non-voluntary resettlement of Tibetan nomadic herders from their traditional land. It said China must improve employment opportunities, education and health services in "new socialist" villages, in order to enable the realization of the right to adequate food for all resettled rural habitants.

Further, the report urged China to "allow for meaningful consultations to take place with the affected communities, permitting parties to examine all available options, including recent strategies of sustainable management of marginal pastures."[171]

168 - Jonathan Watts, (2010).

169 - Sophie Richardson (2007), 64 -71.

170 - Ibid., 69.

171 - Human Rights Council, Nineteenth session, A/HRC/19/59/Add.1, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/A-HRC-19-59-Add1_en.pdf.

In March 2012, during an interactive debate at the 19th Session of the UN Human Rights Council held in Geneva, Olivier De Schutter challenged China's forced resettlement policy in Tibet. "I believe there are many serious problems in China and not least the situation of herders in Tibet," he said. Schutter also argued that the resettlement policies were failing because since March 2011, 25 Tibetans had self-immolated in protest against the policies that were implemented in this region. He relayed that 18 of the 25 who burned themselves were actually herders forcibly resettled in the new socialist villages. "This I have to say is not compatible with the idea that these would be 'very popular policies," he said.[172]

Beijing has accused the Tibetan nomads and their way of life as threatening the environment and have claimed that they live a "primitive life" bound by traditional concepts of self-sufficiency and "did not know how to make money by selling their domestic animals."[173] In reality what is actually being threatened and driven into extinction is the millennial-old nomadic way of life, and the cultural identity of over two million nomads.

Conclusion

For the last six decades, China has carried out systematic annihilation of the cultural heritage of Tibet with the destruction of Tibetan Buddhism and religious traditions, language, cultural practices and traditional way of life.

Social, economic, cultural and political policies relentlessly carried out in these areas have robbed Tibetans of their culture and language and damaged their traditional way of life.

172 - Central Tibetan Administration, "UN Special Rapporteur Challenge China's Forced Resettlement Policy in Tibet", March 7, 2012, http://tibet.net/2012/03/un-special-rapporteur-challenges-chinas-forced-resettlement-policy-in-tibet/.

173 - for more see "Drokpa in Peril and Pastoral-Nomadism of Tibet: between Tradition and Modernization", *Tibetan Bulletin*, September-December 2000.

These acts of cultural genocide have been and are still being committed. The cultural assimilation has engendered the sinicization of Tibet.

China's true imperial motives are reflected in its destruction of Tibet's Buddhist civilization. The challenge now is whether China will adhere to international norms and domestic laws, and revisit, revise and revoke its failed policies in Tibet?

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TIBETAN PLATEAU AND ITS DETERIORATING ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

The ecological state of the Tibetan plateau is deteriorating at an alarming rate due to both natural and human factors. The impact of global warming on the Tibetan plateau has been severe, particularly in recent decades. Unfortunately, weak environmental policies and the lack of sincere environmental conservation efforts by the Chinese government has further exacerbated these conditions. Rampant mining has caused severe destruction to Tibet's environment as well as distress to its people and the relentless push for development has turned China into a toxic land of severely contaminated soil, water and air. If the current trend of environmental destruction continues unabated in the Tibetan areas, Chinese authorities will soon turn the world's highest plateau into yet another toxic Chinese province, creating a disaster for Tibet, for China and for the millions of Asians who depend on Tibet's rivers.

The climatic condition of the Tibetan plateau greatly influences Tibetan culture and way of life. Historically, Tibetans have protected and respected their environment and have not only successfully adapted to the ever-changing climatic condition of the plateau but have also prospered as a powerful civilization. The ancient Bon culture of Tibet, which believed in the presence of deities in the mountains and lakes, gave rise to belief in the sacredness of the ecosystem and the subsequent conservation of the fragile plateau for thousands of years. During his reign in the 7th century, Emperor Songtsen Gompo, the 33rd King of Tibet, issued edicts that reprimanded his subjects for harming and killing animals. The founder of the Phagmodrupa Dynasty in Tibet, Tai Situ Changchub Gyaltsen (1302–1364), issued similar edicts that prohibited hunting on various occasions and enforced ingenious policies of large scale tree plantation in central Tibet. Forest officers were appointed to protect the 200,000 trees planted annually. Environmental conservation efforts were further strengthened during the Gaden Phodrang rule (1642-1959) in Tibet. Both the 5th and the 13th Dalai Lama issued strict prohibitions on hunting and the felling of trees at important ecological sites. Protection of the environment is among the three main commitments of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, a strong advocate of environmental conservation.

The global significance of the Tibetan plateau

The ecological role and global significance of the Tibetan plateau is evident from the various names used by scientists to describe it: the "Roof of the World", the "Third Pole", the "Water Tower of Asia" and the "Weather Maker".

Most popularly known as 'the Roof of the World,' the Tibetan plateau sits at an average elevation of more than 4000 meters above sea level, with an area of 2.5 million square kilometers. At nearly 2% of

earth's land surface, it is the world's highest[174] and largest plateau. The presence of 46,000 glaciers, covering an area of 105,000 km., makes the plateau the largest source of accessible fresh water on the planet and the third largest reservoir of ice, after the North and South Poles. For this reason, scientists sometimes refer to it as "the Third pole."

Of further significance, the plateau is the head source of Asia's six largest rivers: the Drichu/Yangtze, Machu/Yellow, Zachu/Mekong, Gyalmo Ngulchu/Salween, Senge Khabab/Indus and Yarlung Tsangpo/Brahmaputra. These rivers from 'the Water Tower of Asia' help feed millions of people in some of the most-densely populated nations in the world including Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and China. The melt water from the 12,000 km of glaciers in Tibet ensures a constant flow of Asia's major rivers, greatly influencing the social and economic development of a fifth of the world's population.[175]

The timing and intensity of the Indian and the east Asian monsoons are greatly influenced by climate change on the Tibetan Plateau: the Indian summer monsoon is intensified and the East China summer monsoon is weakened due to human-induced land cover change on the Tibetan plateau.[176] For this reason, the plateau is also called 'the Weather Maker of Asia.' Even the worsening heat waves in Europe and northeast Asia are linked to the plateau's receding snow cover .[177]

174 - Shichang Kang et al, "Review of Climate and Cryospheric Change in the Tibetan Plateau", *Environmental Research Letters* 5, no. 1(2010), 8, https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/29577783.pdf.

175 - Tandon Yao et. Al., "Third Pole Environment", *Environmental Development* 3, (2012): 52–64, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6300/f2ba7cd4f6979e214f4b30af0fe2cce11538.pdf.

176 - Cui Xuefeng et al, "Climate Impacts of Anthropogenic Land Use Changes on the Tibetan Plateau", *Global and Planetary Change*, no. 56 (2006): 33-56, https://pure.mpg.de/rest/items/item_994506/component/file_994505/content.

177 - Zhiwei Wu et al, "Can the Tibetan Plateau Snow Cover Influence the Interannual Variations of Eurasian Heat Wave Frequency?", *Climate Dynamics* 46, no. 1-12 (2016): 3405-3417, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00382-015-2775-y.

It is clear that the ecological health of the Tibetan plateau is vital for the stable social, economic and environmental well-being of China. Some of the greatest cultures, histories, and economies of China flourished on the banks of the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers, which originate from the melting glaciers and permafrost of Tibet and continue to feed millions in China as they flow parallel to each other across almost all of China's provinces. But over 40 percent of China's rivers are seriously polluted and about 20 percent of rivers are so excessively polluted that their water quality has been rated too toxic even to come into contact with.[178] Three-quarters of its lakes and reservoirs are unsuitable for human consumption and fishing.[179]

Further degradation of the land, polluted air and contaminated water on the Tibetan Plateau will exacerbate this dire situation and bring catastrophic consequences. Unlike some provinces of China, Tibetans have preserved the natural state of their environment. But under the PRC rule, with the current rapidly deteriorating state of the environment on the plateau, it will become increasingly difficult for the millions of Chinese tourists flocking into Tibet, to find a breath of fresh air and a glimpse of a pristine ecology.

The impact of climate change on the Tibetan plateau: Glacial retreat

The impact of climate change on the Tibetan plateau has been extreme, causing unprecedented natural disasters due to rapid glacial retreat, permafrost degradation and extensive desertification.

Home to 46,000 glaciers, the Tibetan plateau is the world's largest concentration of ice beyond the two poles. However, the right-

178 - Yang Jian, "China's River Pollution 'a Threat to People's Lives'", *English.people.cn*, Febuary 17, 2012, http://en.people.cn/90882/7732438.html.

179 - "China's Water Crisis Part II- Water Facts at a Glance", *China Water Crisis*, March 2010, http://www.chinawaterrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Chinas-Water-Crisis-Part-2.pdf.

ly-called Third Pole is melting at an alarming rate, primarily due to rapid temperature rise. Since the 1950s, a temperature rise of up to 0.3°C per decade has been recorded in Tibet, twice the average rise in the global temperature. This increase resulted not only in the melting of more than 82 per cent of the glaciers[180] but also the heating up of the plateau to the extent that no net accumulation of ice has occurred since the 1950s.[181] Also, summers come faster, forcing the melting seasons on the plateau to begin earlier and last longer.[182] Scientists have warned that if the current rate of melting continues, then two-third of the glaciers on the Tibetan plateau will be depleted by 2050.[183]

The rapid melting of glaciers leaves many parts of east and southeastern Tibet with fewer snowcapped mountains. Glaciated peaks once considered eternal by locals have become seasonal. This fast melting also led to a surge in river flow and increased flooding across Tibet during the summer. It has resulted in the formation of new glacial lakes in the mountains that threaten to burst anytime; glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF) have been a serious threat across Nepal, Bhutan and many parts of northern Indian states in the Himalayan belt. Fortunately, Tibet has witnessed very few GLOFs despite the plateau's geographical conditions, which are similar to those regions that do see many GLOFs. But we cannot be complacent. Researchers at the Tibet Policy Institute have observed the formation of dozens of new glacial lakes within a small radius of a mountain range in Kham (eastern Tibet).

180 - Jane Qiu, "China: The Third Pole, Climate Change is Coming Fast and Furious to the Tibetan Plateau", *Nature Journal* 454, (2008): 393-396, https://www.nature.com/news/2008/080723/full/454393a.html.

181 - Sichang Kang et al, "Dramatic Loss of Glacier Accumulation Area on the Tibetan Plateau Re- vealed by Ice Core Tritium and Mercury Records", *The Cryosphere* 9, 3 (2015): 1213–1222, https://www.the-cryosphere.net/9/1213/2015/.

182 - Xu Baiqing of the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research.

183 - Tandong (2007), director of the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research.;
Also see, Timothy Gardner, "Tibetan Glacial Shrink to Cut Water Supply by 2050", *Reuters*, January 17, 2009, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-glaciers/tibetan-glacial-shrink-to-cut-water-supply-by-2050-idUSTRE50F76420090116.

The Chinese government has put very little effort or investment into monitoring the new glacial lakes formed on mountains across Tibet. This disaster waiting to happen requires genuine effort by the Chinese government, for glacial lakes are formed between unstable natural barricades and can collapse at any time. Instead of rushing in with post-disaster relief works, preventive action is needed to save lives and mitigate damage.

Further impact of climate change on the Tibetan plateau: Permafrost degradation

Approximately 70 percent of the Tibetan plateau is covered by various types of permafrost, mostly alpine permafrost (due to its high altitude).[184] When the permafrost melts moderately during the summer months, it nurtures the growth of vegetation on the rain-scarce Tibetan plateau, a process that has sustained life on the vast grassland across much of north and northeastern regions of Tibet. But according to a 2001 study published in the journal of Desert Research, 313,000 square kilometers of land in Tibet was degraded in 1995 and that an additional 30,000 square kilometers of potentially desertified land has been identified. A UNDP report (2007) states that Tibet's grasslands are being turned into desert at a rate of 2,330 square kilometers per year.[185] Desertification at the Zoige wetland in North eastern Tibet is reported (2012 China dialogue) to be increasing at 10 percent per year. Alpine grasslands are the most dominant ecosystem on the Tibetan plateau, occupying over 60 percent of the total area, and the rapidly increased rate of permafrost degradation

184 - Environment and Development Desk, Central Tibetan Administration, *The Impact of Climate Change on the Tibetan Plateau: A synthesis of Recent Science and Tibetan Research* (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, 2009), http://tibet.net/2009/01/climate-change-report-on-tibet-2009/.

185 - Kishan Khoday, "Climate Change and the Right to Development, Himalayan Glacial Melting and the Future of Development on the Tibetan Plateau", *UNDP*, May 7, 2007, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241759387_Climate_Change_and_the_Right_to_Development_Himalayan_Glacial_Melting_and_the_Future_of_Development_on_the_Tibetan_Plateau.

has led to faster desertification of grassland in many parts of north and northeastern Tibet. If this continues, much of Tibet could become a desert.

The Chinese government has realized the threat and has taken a few steps to tackle the problems, but has failed repeatedly to make a significant impact, or to implement effective plans. It refuses to consult and incorporate the ecological wisdom of local Tibetan communities and in most cases, frames and imposes policies without fully informing the local Tibetan communities about why they are needed or what they mean.

Such arrogance is partly due to the lack of sincerity in dealing with the problem of grassland desertification. For example, the Chinese government has enforced the planting of sea buckthorn across Tibet, including Kardze, a southeastern region of Tibet, repeating a policy used in the arid northern plains of China. But unlike the northern plains, Kardze is a very fertile valley with rich forest cover, moderate annual rainfall and numerous river basins and a type of tree more suitable to the local environment should have been planted instead of forcing Tibetans in the region to plant sea buckthorn in their fertile fields. This misguided policy affected both the people's source of livelihood, and the fertility quotient of the land. It was a clear case of enforcing uniform policies regardless of social and geographical differences, thus undermining the social realities and the environmental conditions of the region. Tibet is absolutely in need of afforestation and the protection of existing forests, but a more informed and realistic approach is needed.

Another threat from rapid permafrost degradation is the release of carbon into the atmosphere. About one-third of the world's soil carbon is stored in permafrost regions and it is estimated that the alpine permafrost on the Tibetan plateau stores about 12,300 million tons

of carbon.[186] This is warm-permafrost, which is sensitive to climate change and particularly vulnerable to warming temperatures. Any degradation will lead to a huge amount of carbon entering the atmosphere, which will further intensify the rising temperature across the globe.

Recent landslides in Machen (August 30, 2017) and mudslides in Zatoe (September 7, 2017) are clear indication of the severity of the rate of permafrost thawing. As frozen grounds quickly thaw across Tibet due to rising temperature on the plateau, they release a large quantity of meltwater into the surface soil, which results in the loosening of the ground, causing mudslides. The Chinese government has yet to propose adequate policies to prevent such disasters from recurring in the future.

Destructive mining: Public interest overlooked and environmental norms breached

Since the occupation of Tibet, Chinese authorities have imposed a destructive and irresponsible mode of development that ignores the actual social, environmental and economic needs of the Tibetan people. Their declaration of mining and tourism as pillar industries across Tibet clearly contradicts the claim of following a "sustainable path compatible with the harmonious co-existence of economy, society and ecological environment."[187] In particular, the government's mining on Tibet's sacred mountains exposes one of the most blatant acts of disrespect for the cultural sentiments of the people, as well as of disregard for the environment itself. It is worth noting here that scientific research has affirmed that the Tibetan people's beliefs in the

186 - Ibid.

187 - The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, White Paper titled "Tibet's Path of Development is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide", *Xinhuanet*, April 15, 2015, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2015-04/15/c_134152612.htm.

sanctity of sacred sites has greatly contributed to the environmental protection of key ecologically sensitive areas.[188]

Tibet has deposits of an estimated 132 different minerals, and these account for a significant share of the world's reserves of resources, including chromium, salt, copper, silver, coal, gold, lithium, lead, zinc, asbestos, oil, gas, magnesium, potash and uranium. Extraction of mineral ores and natural resources has been vigorously carried out by the Chinese government to fuel its growing economy and to lessen its dependence on costly imports. The Chinese Geological Survey in 2007 estimated that the Tibetan plateau holds about 30-40 million tons of copper reserves, 40 million tons of zinc, and several billion tons of iron. The proven reserve of more than 7.8 million tons of copper at the Yulong Copper Mine makes it the largest in China and the second largest in Asia. As tallied in 2010, there are more than 3,000 proven mineral reserves containing 102 varieties of resources in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" (TAR) alone.[189]

The destructive and unethical methods of China's mining practices has led to protests and disharmony across Tibet. Since 2009, there have been more than 30 known large-scale, mine-related protests in Tibet. The following cases, representing just a few of the numerous cases, help further illustrate the environmental situation caused by destructive mining in Tibet under the Chinese occupation.

Mining inside a nature reserve in Zatoe

On August 16, 2013, more than 4,500 local Tibetans from Zachen, Atod and Chiza nomadic communities of Zatoe (Central North)

188 - Danica M. Anderson et al, "Conserving the Sacred Medicine Mountains Vegetation Analysis of Tibetan Sacred Sites in Northern Yunnan", *Biodiversity and Conservation* 14, no. 13 (2005) :3065- 3091, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10531-004-0316-9.; also see, Salick, J et al, "Tibetan Sacred Sites Conserve Old Growth Threes and Cover in the Eastern Himalaya", *Biodiversity and Conservation* 16, (2007): 693, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10531-005-4381-5.

189 - "Tibet to Step up Exploitation of Mineral Resources", *China Daily*, March 13, 2010, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-03/13/content_9584983.htm.

in Tibet protested against mining on their sacred mountain located inside the Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve (SNNR).[190]

"I felt a sense of helplessness, as there was no one we could go for justice," explained local protestor Sokpo Choedup. As around 500 Chinese para-military forces brutally fired tear gas and rubber bullets on the peaceful protestors. A Tibetan man Sokpo Choedup stabbed himself in desperation. A similar case of extreme helplessness is expressed in other instances, as well.

The SNNR was established in the year 2000 by the Chinese government to protect the headwaters/source of Yangtze, Yellow and Mekong rivers. The nature reserve covers a vast grassland where one of the largest Tibetan nomadic community has been living, and with the declaration of the region as a nature reserve, many nomads were forced to move out from the area. But ironically, in the year 2013 the Qinghai provincial government issued mining licenses for resource extractions in Atod and Zachen, areas which were clearly listed as part of the SNNR,[191] thereby violating the very law the Chinese government proclaimed 13 years earlier. This action strengthened the long-held fear that the Chinese government's policy to remove Tibetan nomads from the vast grassland was motivated by their plans to make space for Chinese mining companies. The declaration of more and more nature reserves in recent years is a welcome gesture, but the apparent lack of sincere effort by the Chinese government to protect those nature reserves is startling.

A further breach of nature reserve regulation is the large open-pit coal mines on the vast grassland of Muli region, as reported in an

190 - Central Tibetan Administration, "Tibetan Parliament Condemns China's Repression on Mining Protest", August 22, 2013, http://tibet.net/2013/08/tibetan-parliament-condemns-chinas-repression-on-mining-protest/.

191 - "Yushu Mine Protest Crackdown Exposes China's 'Nature Reserve' Sham", *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy*, August 24, 2013, http://tchrd.org/yushu-mine-protest-crackdown-exposes-chinas-nature-reserve-sham/.

undercover investigation by Greenpeace China on August 7, 2014.[192] The investigation team found that the massive Muli coalfield consisted of four opencast mines on the plateau - two operational and two on the verge of opening. By 2013, the expansion of the Jiancang and Juhugeng mines had resulted in the loss of 42.6 square kilometers of pristine meadows. The Jiancang and Juhugeng mines exist in the Qilian Mountains National Ecological Functional Zone for Glacier and Water conservation, and the two new ones have their facilities set up in the Qinghai Qilian Mountains Nature Reserve for the Sources of Three Rivers (Datong, Shule and Buha rivers). The report stated that the region was meant to be an even stricter conservation area.

Landslide at Gyama mining site

On March 29, 2013, 83 workers at the Gyama mine were killed by a landslide at the mining site. Chinese officials hurriedly concluded that the landslide was caused by natural factors.[193] Xinhua News, dutifully published the official statement without conducting a journalistic investigation, despite the loss of so many lives. But according to an Assessment Report[194] published by the Environment and Development Desk (EDD) of the Central Tibetan Administration on April 9, 2013, the actual cause of the Gyama mine landside was due to mismanagement of the mine.

In order to acquire maximum profit in the shortest possible time, mining in Gyama has been pursued aggressively. Whole swathes of

192 - "Exposed: Coal Mining at the Source of China's Yellow River", *Greenpeace*, August 7, 2014, http://www.greenpeace.org/eastasia/news/blog/exposed-coal-mining-at-the-source-of-chinas-y/blog/50394/.

193 - "Fatal Tibet Landslide Caused by Natural Factors: Experts", *English.people.cn*, April 6, 2013, http://en.people.cn/90882/8195797.html.

194 - Environment and Development Desk, Central Tibetan Administration, "Assessment Report of the Recent Landslide Event in the Gyama Valley: Its Possible Cause and Impacts", April 9, 2013, http://tibet.net/2013/04/assessment-report-of-the-recent-landslide-event-in-the-gyama-valley/.

land have been excavated in several sites and in some cases the whole face of a mountain has been stripped off in the process of exploration, water diversion, mining and road construction. It was just a matter of time that such large scale and aggressive expansion of mining was going to cause a large-scale disaster, the report declared.

The report further stated that "the landslide in Gyama is a man-made phenomenon rather than a natural disaster. The rocks were disintegrated into smaller pieces as part of the mining process and not due to glacial dynamics as Chinese officials are trying to expect the world to believe. EDD had enough evidence to suggest that loose rock that turned into a landslide came from the surface mining at the top of the mountain which had been dumped on the eastern flank where the landslide originated."[195]

River Pollution in Minyak Lhagong

On May 4, 2016, a sudden mass death of fish at Lichu River brought hundreds of local Tibetans of Minyak Lhagong in Karze out on the street, protesting against a lithium mining company called Ronda Lithium Co Ltd.[196] Minyak Lhagong is a Tibetan area incorporated into the Chinese province of Sichuan, the Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. The company had released mine waste (possibly lithium waste storage) into the local river, a tributary of Nyakchu/Yalong River.[197]

This was not the first time or an isolated case of river water pollution. In 2013, the same river had been polluted with lithium mine waste, causing the deaths of marine life and threatening local drinking water.

195 - Ibid.

196 - Yeshi Dorje, "Chinese Police Clamp Down on Tibetan Mining Protest", *Voice of America*, May 6, 2016, https://www.voanews.com/a/chinese-police-clamp-down-tibetan-mining-protest/3319093.html.

197 - Yeshi Choesang, "Tibetans Protest Against Chinese Mining in Minyak County, Tibet", *The Tibet Post International*, May 6, 2016, http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/4998-tibetans-protest-against-chinese-mining-in-minyak-county-tibet.

In a similar case, on September 23, 2014, more than 1,000 local Tibetans of Dokar and Zibuk villages (Lhundrup County, Shigatse Prefecture) near Lhasa, the Tibetan capital city protested against the poisoning of their rivers by the Gyama Copper Poly-metallic Mine. The mine is located close to a stream that locals use for drinking water, irrigation and feeding animals. Predictably, local officials declared that the water pollution in the river was caused by natural factors and not by the mining company. But a 2010 article, "Environmental impact of mining activity on the surface water quality in Tibet: Gyama valley" by Xiang firmly states:

> The great environmental concerns are the many mining and processing deposits in the valley, containing large amount of heavy metals, such as lead, copper, zinc and manganese etc. These deposits are prone to leak its contaminants through seepage water and erosion of particulates, and therefore pose a future risk for the local environment and a potential threat to the downstream water quality. [198]

A local resident of the village told Radio Free Asia, "In the past, our rivers were crisp and clean, the mountains and valleys were known for their natural beauty. But now the rivers are polluted with poisonous waste from the mines,"[199] clearly describing the rapid destruction of the local environment.

Mining on a sacred mountain in Amchok

On May 31, 2016, an estimated 2,000 local Tibetans in Amchok gathered to protest mining activities on their sacred Mt. Gong-nyong

198 - Huang X et al, "Environmental Impact of Mining Activities on the Surface Water Quality in Tibet: Gyama Valley, *Science of The Total Environment* 408, no. 19 (2010): 4177-4184, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969710004882?via%3Dihub. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969710004882?via%3Dihub.

199 - "Villagers Protest in Tibet's Maldro Gongkar County Over Mine Pollution", *Radio Free Asia*, September 29, 2014, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/pollution-09292014152011.html.

Lari. Eight different local communities consider the mountain highly sacred. Mining on that mountain brazenly disregarded those local communities and their beliefs.

Amchok is in the Labrang region of Amdo, a Tibetan area incorporated into the Chinese province of Gansu (Sangchu County, Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture). The protestors were calling for "protection of environment, protection of the sacred mountain and protection of people's safety."

The Chinese government brutally suppressed the peaceful gathering, seriously injuring many protesters and detaining six of them.

The total disregard for the sentiment and the concerns of the local Tibetans caused by mining on their sacred mountain led Tsering Dhondup and Konchok Tsering, to set themselves on fire on November 20, 2012, and on November 26, 2012, respectively at the mine site. A third self-immolator, Tsultrim Gyamtso, on December 19, 2013, also expressed immense agony caused by the mining on their sacred mountain as a reason for his sacrifice. Article 10 of the Mineral Resources Law of the People's Republic of China states: "In mining mineral resources in national autonomous areas, the state should give consideration to the interests of those areas and make arrangements favorable to the areas' economic development and to the production and well-being of the local minority." But in recent years, an increasing number of cases of environmental destruction caused by mining and the suppression of peaceful environmental protests show the absence of protection and respect for local interests. As frustration with these policies deepens among Tibetans, the Chinese government shows a lack of understanding or concern for Tibet's environment, culture and people.

Irresponsible damming: Mega dams destabilizing the fragile plateau and threatening millions of lives in Asia

Tibet has seen unceasing construction of dams on its rivers since the 1950s. A new trend of building mega dams, however, poses an even more serious threat to the world's highest plateau, which is very prone to seismic activities[200] that could be further aggravated by the more recent cluster of competing mega dams on its rivers. Probe International warned in April 2012 that 98.6 percent of the dams being constructed in western China were located in moderate to very high seismic hazard zones.[201] In the month of November 2017, a series of earthquakes occurred in the Nyingtri region[202] where many of the mega dams on Yarlung Tsangpo were built.

The impact of mega dams on the region's wildlife habitat and river flow is apparent, but the most dreadful threat is from Reservoir-Induced Seismic (RIS) activities such as the Wenchuan and Ludian earthquakes. Scientists believe mega dams can be both the trigger and the victim of earthquakes; damage to any mega dams from an earthquake is likely to cause a chain reaction that expands the earthquakes' impact. According to Fan Xiao, the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake that killed 80,000 people and the 2014 Ludian earthquake in Yunnan were both induced by nearby mega dams, including the Zipingpu Dam and the Xiluodu Dam.[203] Despite

200 - Deng Qi-Dong et al, "Seismic Activities and Earthquake Potential in the Tibetan Plateau", *Chinese Journal of Geophysics* 57, no. 5(2014): 678-697, 2014, http://html.rhhz.net/Geophy_en/html/20140506.htm.

201 - "Press Release: Feverish Chinese Dam Building could Trigger Tsunami", *Probe International*, April 3, 2012, https://journal.probeinternational.org/2012/04/03/press-release-feverish-chinese-dam-building-could-trigger-tsunami/.

202 - Yang Yi, ed., "No Casualties from 2 Tibet Earthquakes", *XinhuaNet*, December 20, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/20/c_136839848.htm.

203 - Jane Qiu, "Chinese Data Hint at Trigger for Fatal Quake", *Nature*, September 10, 2014, https://www.nature.com/news/chinese-data-hint-at-trigger-for-fatal-quake-1.15883. Fan Xiao was the Chief Engineer, Regional Geological Survey Team, Sichuan Geology and Mineral Bureau, Chengdu.

the known risks and clear warnings from scientists, the Chinese government continues to build mega dams on the highly seismic-prone regions of Tibet. These include: the 510-megawatt Zammu hydropower dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo in Gyatsa area of Central Tibet, not very far from the fault line of the devastating 2015 Nepal earthquake; the 295-meter-high Lianghekou Dam on the Nyakchu River in the Nyarong area of eastern Tibet, not very far from both the Ludian and Wenchuan earthquakes; and the recently declared 1.2 million kilowatt Suwalong hydropower station on the Yangtze River bordering the Markham and Bathang regions of southeastern Tibet.

One of the powerful earthquakes of its kind on record, the 8.6 magnitude Assam-Tibet earthquake in 1950 killed hundreds of people in the Nyingtri, Chamdo and Zayul regions of southeast Tibet. The intensity of the quake caused landslides and ground cracks and the village of Yedong in Metok was washed away as the area slid into the Yarlung Tsangpo. This powerful earthquake also caused massive damage in India, where large landslides blocked the Subansiri River in Arunachal and Assam. This natural dam broke eight days later, creating a wave 23 feet high, which inundated several villages and killed 536 people.[204] If a similar scenario of ground cracking occurred today, it could weaken dam walls, or landslides could splash and burst dams, resulting in an unimaginable catastrophe both within Tibet and for downstream countries. Clearly, the current trend of quickly constructing a succession of competing mega dams on Tibetan rivers poses severe dangers.

Since Tibet is a sparsely populated region with hundreds of large rivers, its energy needs could be easily met by efficient, small hydropower stations, or by harnessing the vast solar energy potential.

204 - "Historic Earthquakes, Assam – Tibet 1950 August 15", https://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/official19500815140934_30/impact.

However, the PRC continues to build these dams to support the rapid expansion of mining and urbanization. For example, at a ceremony held on November 28, 2009, for the construction of the Guoduo Hydropower Station (the second largest hydropower station in the Tibet Autonomous Region at the time) 122in Chamdo region, then vice-chairman of the "Tibet Autonomous Region."

Pema Tsewang, stated that the station would ensure the availability of power for the Yulong Copper Mine.[205] Yulong has the largest copper deposit in China. Even the proposed Lhasa-Nyingtri-Chengdu railway line takes an unusual turn by making a long detour, off the most direct route between its namesake cities to reach the Yulong mining site.[206]

Another motive behind the dam frenzy is to support the mass migration of Chinese into certain parts of Tibet, such as Ningtri in southern Tibet, a resource-rich region that enjoys a temperate climate with immense forest cover. The Chinese government has heavily invested in the rapid construction of highways, railways, airports and mega dams to facilitate the eventual mass migration of Chinese into this Tibetan region.

Extensive dam construction is also aimed at meeting the Chinese government's carbon emission goals. The PRC's commitment to control carbon emissions and to source 20 percent of its total energy consumption from renewable resources by 2030[207] is a welcome effort, but should not be done at the cost of destroying the Tibetan plateau and displacing Tibetan people. About 6,000 Tibetans were

205 - "Preparations for Constructing Guoduo Hydropower Station Begin", *China Tibet Online*, November 30, 2009, http://chinatibet.people.com.cn/6827895.html.

206 - Cheodon, "Chengdu-Tibet Railway Line from Dartsedo to Nyngtri Construction will Begin next Year", *China Tibet Online*, November 9, 2016, http://tb.tibet.cn/2010news/xzxw/lyjt/201611/t20161109_4132682.html.

207 - Grace Mang, "No Need to Sacrifice Asia's Rivers to Power China's Development", *China Water Risk*, February 10, 2015, http://www.chinawaterrisk.org/opinions/china-no-need-to-sacrifice-rivers-for-power/.

forced out of their ancestral homes to pave way for the construction of the Lianghekou dam in the Nyakchu area of southeastern Tibet.[208]

Forced removal of Tibetan nomads: Guardians of grassland are pushed into poverty

Tibet's rangeland covers approximately 70 percent of its total area. The alpine grassland at high altitude covers, in turn, 60 percent of the total Tibetan rangeland. Pastoralism on the Tibetan Plateau involves adaptation to a cold environment at elevations above the limit of cultivation. According to archaeological fieldwork, pastoral nomads have developed a deep understanding of grassland dynamics and veterinary knowledge, and have extensively used the Tibetan plateau while maintaining a unique pastoral culture for more than 8,000 years.

To this day, Tibetan nomads have lived an ecofriendly and self-sufficient life spread out on the vast grassland of the plateau. But the Chinese government has removed more than two million[209] Tibetans from their land and pushed them into large-scale settlements with no medical, educational or business opportunities to support a dignified life and to retain their identity.

The Chinese government continues to talk about restoring grassland by prohibiting grazing under the incorrect presumption that grazing is the only cause of grassland degradation. Many scientists, including Chinese scientists, have written extensively about the need for moderate grazing to maintain the ecosystem's health. The forceful removal of Tibetan nomads who have preserved the fragile grassland has in fact accelerated its degradation.

208 - "China's Drive to Build Dams for Green Power Threatens Homes and Sacred Mountains", *South China Morning Post*, June 26, 2017, https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2099970/chinas-drive-build-dams-green-power-threatens-homes-and-sacred.

209 - "China: End Involuntary Rehousing, Relocation of Tibetans", *Human Rights Watch*, June 27, 2013, https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/06/27/china-end-involuntary-rehousing-relocation-tibetans.

The forced resettlement of Tibetan nomads is a clear case of irresponsible governing on the part of China: first the nomads were blamed without sufficient evidence for degrading grasslands, then forcibly alienated from their traditional way of life, and finally transferred into poorly planned settlements in the middle of nowhere without farms, livestock and sufficient jobs to sustain them.[210] Schools, hospitals and jobs promised to the forcibly evicted nomads have not yet materialized. Tibetan nomads, who once lived healthy and self-sufficient lives, have been suddenly thrust into dislocation and poverty. Ultimately, this is the state-engineered destruction of a culture and way of life.

Rampant littering: Garbage treatment facilities provided only in cities

The Chinese government has neglected one of the most basic measures and mechanisms needed to cope with increasing human activities in Tibet: garbage management and garbage treatment facilities. The increase in human activities caused by rapid urbanization, the massive influx of tourists, pilgrims, and construction workers, and the abundance of food products packaged in plastics have all inundated the Tibetan plateau with unregulated garbage disposal. Lack of institutional measures or adept governance of waste management has bred rampant littering on the mountains and waste dumping in the rivers. The traditional ways of waste management—a natural process of waste decomposition due to the presence of a cold and dry climate - is no longer a viable solution.

Much of the government investment in waste management is concentrated in a few select tourist centers and cities that house government officials, such as Gyalthang, Dartsedo, Lhasa, Shigatse, Kyegu-

210 - Fachun Du, "Ecological Resettlement of Tibetan Herders in the Sanjiangyuan: A Case Study In Madoi County of Qinghai", *Nomadic Peoples* 16, no.1 (2012): 116-133.

do and Zitsadegu. As soon as one travels outside these towns and cities, littering is rampant and waste management almost non-existent. The situation has compelled local communities to step up their own efforts: voluntary environmental groups have formed to collect truckloads of garbage from surrounding mountains. In the absence of infrastructural provisions to deal with garbage, locals burn the waste, unintentionally causing greater environmental hazards. Local Tibetans have voiced their helplessness as the government has failed to provide them with necessary facilities, such as sending garbage trucks to rural areas to collect waste or building garbage treatment sites in the area.

Such a formidable scenario demands forward-looking leadership to provide sufficient and sustainable infrastructure and mechanisms to redress the severe problems. But the leadership in Beijing has utterly failed to surmount the pressing challenges. First, they have failed to make the general public and government officials aware of the health hazards and the environmental impact of garbage; and second, they have failed to provide the required governance and basic infrastructure necessary for waste management in rural areas.

Increasing natural disasters: A threat overlooked and badly managed

The year 2016 saw an unprecedented number of natural disasters within a short span of time. On July 9, mud floods and landslides in Tsolho in northeastern Tibet killed two people and injured more than thirty. In July, drought in Chumarleb and Matoe in central-north Tibet left behind dry rivers with hundreds of dead fishes. On July 17, a glacial avalanche in Ruthok County of Ngari in western Tibet killed nine people and buried 110 yaks and 350 sheep.[211] A flood in

211 - "Massive and Mysterious Ice Avalanche in Tibet", *Earth Observatory*, September 7, 2016. https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=88677.; see also, "A Second Massive Ice Ava- lanche in Tibet", NASA, https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/view.php?id=88953.

Labrang and Sangchu on August 22 in northeastern Tibet destroyed significant amounts of property.

Tibet suffered even more extreme natural disasters during 2017 when more than 6,000 homes were flooded, affecting 30,000 people in Rongdrak on June 15; four homes were damaged by floods in Sokzong on June 16; many homes were damaged by floods in Dege on July 6; and three people lost their lives and many homes were damaged by floods in Jomda in eastern Tibet in the month of July. Local Tibetans worry about the new trend of frequent natural disasters, a trend that scientists, researchers and the general public in Tibet fear might become the "New Normal in Tibet."[212]

Unfortunately, the Chinese government has done little to combat these disasters. The loss of life and damage to property from the floods and landslides could have been greatly reduced had the Chinese government taken more proactive measures and implemented proper policies. Even the simple task of building necessary river embankments across Tibetan villages and towns located on river banks could have prevented much of the damage.

Although a 2015 report[213] by Chinese Academy of Science warned of increasing natural disasters including landslides, torrential floods, snow disasters and forest fires,[214] the government has not taken any measures or framed new policy guidelines to face these challenges.

The impact of climate change has been aggravated by the increasing scale of resource extraction and dam construction across Tibet. Mining has become an enormous concern for both the land and

212 - Zamlha Tempa Gyaltsen, "Natural Disasters in Tibet: Is it the New Normal?", *Tibet Policy Institute*, August 8, 2016, https://tibetpolicy.net/comments-briefs/natural-disasters-in-tibet-is-it-the-new-normal/.

213 - "Report on Scientific Assessment of Environmental Changes in Tibet Plateau", *Chinese Academy of Sciences*, November 18, 2015, http://www.cas.cn/yw/201511/t20151117_4465636.shtml#rdss.

214 - Ibid.

people of Tibet, causing landslides, grassland degradation and water pollution. Local residents of Tsolho blamed the recent mud flood in the region on excessive mining and tunneling of mountains in the region.

Despite the severe impact from climate change, the lack of directives and awareness programs persist and the Chinese government does not attempt to mitigate the alarming climatic conditions affecting the Tibetan Plateau. Instead, much of its environment-related policies framed in recent years aim to solve urban coastal pollution problems rather than protecting the fragile environment in the ethnic regions of Tibet and Xinjiang.

Conclusion

The introduction of the new Environment Protection Law in 2015 is a welcome step forward as it tries to strengthen the enforcement of the law and restructure the powerless environment protection offices in China. But fair and firm enforcement of the new environmental protection law across Tibet is yet to be seen. The recent increase in the building of mega dams, expansion of resource extraction, and suppression of peaceful environment-related protests clearly contradicts what is called for by the new environment law.

Cases of such contradictions and insincerity are numerous. In one case, Tibetans en mass abandoned the tradition of wearing animal fur- and skin-decorated clothes after 2006, as advised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This unprecedented act of ceasing an age-old and highly-valued tradition is one of the greatest contributions made by Tibetans to the protection of the environment. However, the Chinese government continues to encourage and compel Tibetan officials in Chinese government, and lawmakers to wear animal furs, clearly contradicting and undermining its own law that lists 125 species of wild animals under state protection.

The Chinese government must respect and protect the rights of the Tibetan peoples and their cultural beliefs in the sanctity of the sacred mountains, lakes and rivers of the Tibetan plateau. The Chinese government must set firm, uncompromising and transparent license procedures for mining permits in Tibet based on competitive and reliable Environmental Impact Assessments and Social Impact Assessment reports. The Chinese government must also strictly monitor and prohibit mining companies from dumping hazardous mine wastes into the surrounding areas and rivers.

Tibetan pastoral nomads are expert custodians of the alpine pastures and their knowledge and experience must be incorporated into climate mitigation and adaptation practices. Decision-making mechanisms should be transparent and inclusive of all regional stakeholders, especially Tibetan nomads. There should be an immediate halt to the forcefed removal of Tibetan nomads from their lands, and those who wish to return to their pastures should be allowed to do so. The Chinese government must also promptly address the poorly planned resettlement programs of Tibetan nomads. Having lost their traditional, self-reliant ways of life, the Chinese government must provide the newly-resettled nomads with jobs, education, healthcare services, and business opportunities to restore their dignity.

On the positive side, in recent years the Chinese government has declared more national parks and nature reserves across Tibet. In future, formulation of such laws and policies should take into consideration cultural sentiments of the Tibetan people. Moreoever local knowledge should be included, and people's voices and needs should be heard and considered. The lives of millions of Tibetans residing in the areas declared as nature reserves should not be undermined.

The rapid expansion of towns and cities places a severe ecological burden on Tibet's fragile ecosystem. Clear urban planning guidelines must be established and rigorously adhered to by the Chinese gov-

ernment. The mistakes made in urbanizing mainland China must not be repeated on the Tibetan plateau. The influx of tourists into Tibet must be regulated with clear guidelines to protect the plateau's fragile ecosystem. The Chinese government must involve the local Tibetan population in decision-making processes for any major development projects in Tibet. Urban planning should also take into account the impact of climate change. The increasing number of natural disasters in Tibet since 2016, with subsequent loss of life and damage to property, has been exacerbated by unregulated and poorly planned urbanization. As climate change accelerates, the effects will resonate far beyond the Tibetan Plateau, changing the water supply for billions of people and altering the atmospheric circulation over half the planet. Beijing has been a prominent player in the Paris Climate Accord, and needs to show its intent, not just on paper but in practice. It needs to recognize the global environmental significance of the Tibetan plateau and protect its ecosystem. It must respect the Tibetan people and their environmental concerns.

As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has constantly emphasized, environmental conservation is a universal issue that rises above political concerns. The Chinese government must work together with Tibetans to protect the world's highest plateau from further damage and degradation.

CHAPTER SIX

THE TRUE NATURE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN TIBET

Introduction

Shortly after the Chinese government issued a white paper on Tibet in 2015, a report in *China Daily* on September 6, 2015 claimed that Tibet is "now in its golden age,"[215] benefiting from the PRC's policy of regional ethnic autonomy. A report in Xinhua on the same day stated that "both urban and rural residents' living conditions have greatly improved." Alluding to the White Paper, it goes on to say that "Tibet's GDP soared from 327 million Yuan in 1965 to 92.08 billion Yuan ($14.5 billion) in 2014, a 281-fold increase…"[216] Likewise, more recently, *China Daily* carried a report on July 29, 2017 in which it declared the "Tibet Autonomous Region" to be enjoying "robust economic growth," and that in the first half of the year, the GDP growth rate was still steadily growing at 10.8 percent.[217]

215 - "China Issues White Paper on Tibet," *China Daily*, September 6, 2015, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-09/06/content_21796167.htm.

216 - "Tibet's GDP Increased by 281 Times in 50 Years: White Paper", *Xinhua net*, September 6, 2015, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-09/06/c_134593930.htm.

217 - "Tibet Reports Robust GDP Growth in H1", *China Daily*, July 29, 2017, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-07/29/content_30288305.htm.

In other words, the Chinese government paints a lofty image of Tibetans now living in a "golden age."

The remarkable GDP growth in the region is a metric that has served China well in announcing its achievements. As the aforementioned white paper stated: "Since 1994, Tibet's GDP has grown at an annual rate of 12.4 per cent on average, registering double-digit growth for 20 consecutive years." Undoubtedly, a huge state-induced economic transformation has occurred in Tibet. However, China has made it increasingly difficult for researchers and reporters to investigate, report, and study Tibet independently, particularly in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR); finding unbiased, measured and scientific studies on the economy of Tibet and China's development policies is extremely challenging.

This challenge is partly due to the way the PRC has divided up Tibet. In 1965, China established the TAR. According to China's 2010 census report, the population of Tibetans in the TAR is a little over three million. The rest of the total of 6.3 million Tibetans live in the portions of Tibet incorporated into the neighboring provinces of Sichuan, Yunan, Gansu and Qinghai[218] making a comprehensive, accurate and scientific study on Tibet's economy and the implications of China's developmental policies for Tibetans as a whole difficult, if not impossible. Researchers must piece together fragments of information and data to understand the status of Tibet's economy.

Despite such inherent and imposed restrictions on researchers and reporters, a few illuminating independent studies on China's development projects and policies in Tibet have come to light in the last few decades. Many of these studies have based their findings on statistics published by the Chinese government. A critical reading

218 - See Anne-Marie Blondeau and Katia Buffetrille, eds., "Population", *Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's One-Hundred Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008) 133-158.; also see, Xiawei Zang, *Ethnicity in China: A Critical Introduction (China Today)* (Cambridge: Polity, 2015).

of these statistics and other broad economic trends raises some distressing and pertinent questions about China's development policies in Tibet.

For those looking only at GDP growth figures to read the pulse of the Tibetan economy, it is easy to be misled. Tibet's GDP growth figures are ballooned by the PRC's massive subsidies. However, the state of the region's economy today, especially when looked at through the lens of the well-being of the Tibetan people, demonstrates that it takes more than an infusion of cash to create positive economic development. Instead of bolstering development and creating a "golden age" for Tibetans, the Chinese government's approach has mostly served its own interests.

A look at the history of the PRC's development policies in Tibet will help illuminate the true state of the region's present economy.

1950-1980s: Socialist transformation of Tibet

Following the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) occupation of the Tibetan areas of Chamdo and other parts of Kham and Amdo in 1950, Mao Zedong was determined to bring socialist transformation to Tibet. However, Mao recognized the ethnic differences between Chinese and Tibetans, and the fact that relations between the two had ranged from marginal to turbulent over previous centuries. He was also cognizant of the ongoing resistence by the Tibetan people in central Tibet. Therefore, he exempted central Tibet from all forms of socialist reforms from 1950 to 1958 in order to win over the Tibetan elite's loyalty and secure a stable foothold in Tibet. Still, this policy failed to win over the people, as reflected in the 1959 mass uprising in Lhasa.

Consequently, Beijing drew a different conclusion: that the fundamental improvement of relations between nationalities depended

on the complete emancipation of the working class within each. Through class struggle, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) proclaimed itself no longer a party of the Chinese people but a leader and spokesman of all poor people in China. The class struggle aimed to win over the poor and lower-class Tibetans from their national and religious allegiances to the elite.[219]

Eventually, after the 1959 mass uprising, the PRC began rigorously transforming Tibet, especially central Tibet, attempting to make it an equal part of the socialist transformation of China. Some important aspects of China's economic development policies during the Mao era were agricultural reforms, industrialization, infrastructure development, mutual aid and the commune system.

In accordance with these socialist transformations, property and other possessions of wealthy and aristocratic families and monasteries were confiscated. Initially, their land was confiscated and distributed equally, but it was later collectivized. The key objective of the commune system and reforms accompanied by forced manual labour was to increase the national total production within a short period of time. Through mutual aid groups and commune systems, farmers were directed to build canals and dams and cultivate the wastelands. Irrigation systems were also improved. A good 1959 harvest was considered to be the result of these new techniques, namely the improved irrigation system and the hard work of labourers. Every commune member worked an average of 15 hours a day or more. The average work point - the State's measure for allocating payment to commune workers - earned annually by each member came to 3,500. Each work point earned about eight fen with 100 fen valued at 1 Yuan, so the annual income of each member was around 288 Yuan. By April 1960, over 186,000 hectares of land was distributed to 100,000 peasant households.[220]

219 - Wang Lixiong and Tsering Shakya, *The Struggle for Tibet* (London: Verso Books, 2009).

220 - Dawa Norbu, "Changes in Tibet Economy: 1959-76", *China Report* 24, no.3 (1988): 221-236.

Private ownership was still present during this mutual aid system. But in 1965, the Chinese authorities phased out the mutual aid team policy and introduced a commune system that subjected Tibetans to Mao's radical ideology of "eat less and produce more," bringing an end to the private ownership of land.[221] Before 1966, there were over 1,200 small retailers in Lhasa, but by 1975, only 67 remained. In Jalung County, 3,000 privately owned wool looms and spinning wheels were destroyed in the name of "cutting off the capitalist tails".[222] An intensive cultivation technique coupled with inappropriate crop choices led to the disastrous harvest of 1979.

Besides the so-called reforms, a number of infrastructure development projects were carried out, such as highway and road building. Projects connecting by road: Dartsedo and Lhasa, Chengdu and Ngaba, and Lhasa and Shigatse were part of the First Five-Year Plan of China. By the end of Mao's era, the PRC had constructed 91 highways totalling 15,800 km, and 300 permanent bridges in TAR alone.

Author Dawa Norbu argued that the fundamental objective of reforms and development initiated by the Chinese government was neither "liberation" nor "progress" but strategic development.[223] He further argued that the highways built in the 1950s and 1960s "although initially were built for transport and communications purposes, were equally valuable for the takeover and the long term liberation project."[224] Author June Teufel argues that the road and highway constructions were to ease the integration of the Tibetan area with Chinese.[225] Similarly, political scientist Elizabeth Freund Larus and scholar Allen Carlson argued that the above-mentioned

221 - Dawa Norbu, "Economic Policy and Practice in Contemporary Tibet", Barry Sautman and June Teufel Dreyer (eds.), *Contemporary Tibet: Politics, Development and Society in Disputed Region*, (Abington: Routledge, 2006) 157.

222 - Ibid., 66.

223 - Dawa Norbu, *China's Tibet Policy* (Hove: Psychology Press, 2001) 347.

224 - Ibid.

225 - June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition* (Harlow: Longman, 2005).

policies were aimed at integrating Tibet and reducing the obvious differences between Tibet and Mainland China.[226] With respect to state farms, most of which were directly under military control, Emily Yeh, in her ethnographic study argues that those were modes of state territorialisation and state incorporation.[227]

1979-1988: Economic reform and liberalization

The end of Mao's era saw a shift in China's development policies in Tibet. Following the First Tibet Work Forum in March 1980, coupled with Hu Yaobang's visit to Tibet, Beijing implemented the household responsibility system. This system divided up land and allotted it to households and also devolved basic production management away from central planners, first for agriculture and then for other sectors.[228] Although the liberalization of Tibet's economy began in 1980, it continued to remain under the tight control of the Chinese government and was seen as a major policy for further integrating Tibet with China.[229]

Two important policies implemented during this period were the "pairing-up-support" policy and the fostering of tourism. "Pairing-up-support" decreed that developed provinces and cities in the mainland were responsible for providing economic support to the less developed areas with which they were paired, including finance, skilled workers and projects.[230] Although introduced and imple-

226 - Elizabeth Freund Larus, *Politics and Society in Contemporary China* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012) 229.; Allen Carlson, *Beijng Tibet's Policy: Securing Sovereignty and Legitimacy* (Washington: East West Centre, 2004).

227 - Yeh Emily T., *Taming Tibet: Landscape Transformation and the Gift of Chinese Development* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2013).

228 - Ma Rong, *Population and Society in Contemporary Tibet* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011).

229 - Warren W. Smith Jr., *China's Tibet?: Autonomy or Assimilation* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

230 - Jin Wei, "Tibet as Recipient of Assistance and its Sustainable Development", China Policy Institute Policy Paper, no.9 (2015), https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/iaps/documents/cpi/policy-papers/cpi-policy-paper-2015-no-9-jin-wei-final-051015.pdf.

mented in 1960, this policy gained prominence in Tibet in 1980, when it featured both "population transfer" and "state financial assistance." According to the Chinese government, the key objective of this particular policy was to encourage skilled Chinese from other areas to help develop Tibet at a fast pace.[231]

In 1983, the Chinese government abolished the administrative restrictions on migration and getting work permit in Tibet and consequently, 50,000 Chinese workers migrated to TAR. In 1984, 10,000 Chinese households from neighbouring provinces settled in TAR's few urban areas, and in May alone of that year, about 60,000 "peddlers and craftsmen" from twenty Chinese provinces and cities arrived at Tibetan urban areas to work on new projects.[232]

As far as state subsidies were concerned, the Second Tibet Work Forum in 1984 approved 42 major construction projects with an investment of 0.48 billion yuan. In 1991, under the 8th Five Year Plan, rivers projects costs 2.189 billion yuan of state investment.[233] From 1980 onward, the central government increased total economic production through state subsidies, a continuation of earlier trends, such as the doubling of industrial and agriculture production in the 1960s caused by state subsidies.[234]

Beginning in the 1980s, tourism also played a major role in the PRC's approach to the development of Tibet. Lhasa was declared an open area for tourism in 1981, and in that year, 1,059 overseas tourists visited Tibet - four times higher than the total number of tourists in

231 - See various white papers published by the Chinese government, which gives same arguments relating to the policy.

232 - Dawa Norbu, "Economic Policy and Practice in Contemporary Tibet", *Contemporary Tibet: Politics, Development and Society in Disputed Region*, Barry Sautman and June Teufel Dreyer (eds), (Abington: Routledge, 2006) 157.

233 - Jin Wei (2015).

234 - June Teufel Dreyer (2005).

the twenty years from 1959-79. For political reasons, the number of tourists was limited to 1,500-2,000 people each year.[235]

In 1984, under the Second Tibet Work Forum, the Tourism Corporation of TAR was established as an economic entity, financially independent and responsible for its own profits and losses. In 1985, the General Affairs of the State-Council issued a report prepared by the State Tourism Administration and the government of TAR titled, "Report on the Tourism Development Program of Tibet," requesting all related departments to render support for tourism as another sector to boost Tibet's economy. After two years, in 1987, the tourism industry was formally included in the plan for economic and social development in Tibet, emphasizing its importance to the national economy as well. In 1986, the Tourism Corporation of TAR was renamed the Tibet Tourism Administration.

Statistics demonstrate that between 1985 and 1987, 88,902 overseas tourists visited Tibet, generating revenue of 96,807 million Yuan. In 1987, China earned 130 million Yuan from 43,000 tourists visiting Tibet.[236] Since the 1980s, the tourism industry in Tibet has remained an important sector of the economy, with its associated revenue-increasing manifold. The approach towards "ethnic sensibility" which was practiced during the initial period of Mao was displaced by a less conciliatory policy in which modernizing Tibet and creating a new breed of "modern" Tibetans took precedence.[237]

Those who support these policies argue that they were intended to improve Tibet's economy at the earliest possible date, so as to match

235 - Dreyer 2005, Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administraton, *Tibet Under Communist China: 50 Years* (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, 2001) 41.

236 - Luo Li, *The Economy of Tibet: Transformation from a Traditional to a Modern Economy* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2008).

237 - Huang, Yasheng, "China's Cadre Transfer Policy towards Tibet in the 1980s", *Modern China* 21, no. 2 (1995): 184-204.

other areas in China. In addition, they believe that the government's population transfer policy was not intended to create a huge influx of Chinese overtaking Tibetan business opportunities, but rather to help Tibet develop with the support of technicians and skilled workers.[238] However, others argue that the economic policies were intended to integrate and assimilate Tibet into Chinese chauvinism.[239] These scholars observe that allowing Chinese into Tibet without prohibitive rules will consequently turn Tibet into another Inner Mongolia or Xinjiang: minority areas which have been territorially and economically integrated into China. The impact of these policies continue today, when the number of Chinese in Tibet outnumbers the local population, and a large share of the benefits of the market economy is enjoyed by the Chinese immigrants.

1990-2000: Era of stability and development

The third major change in China's economic development policies came in the 1990s. A number of circumstances, including the 1987-1990 anti-China protests, China-Tibet negotiations, intensification of international campaigning for Tibet, and the growing popularity of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, all played a significant role in modifying China's economic development policies. In October 1989, the reconstituted Politburo Standing Committee of the communist party held a special meeting on Tibet affairs and the then Party Regional Committee Secretary, Hu Jintao released the minutes of the meeting. According to that document, the main task of the central government in Tibet was to maintain stability and develop the economy. However, the document maintained that the foundation of social stability was economic development,[240] implementing the twin pol-

238 - Ibid.

239 - Ma Rong, *Population and Society in Contemporary Tibet* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011).

240 - Bo Zhiyue, "China's Elite Politics: Governance and Democratisation", *The China Journal*, no. 68 (2012): 207-209.

icies of "stability and development"[241] and the public denunciation of the Dalai Lama that followed throughout the 1990s. In 1994, the Chinese government held the Third Tibet Work Forum, which further emphasized these two policies.

Economic development consisted of four key objectives: economic growth, safeguarding national unity, curbing separatism, and preserving social stability and the overall development of the Tibetan living standard.[242] It also included three key policies: providing state subsidies, population transfer, and infrastructure development.[243] The latter development included transportation facilities and communications, electricity, technology for agriculture, and animal husbandry, as well as mining, commerce, services, and education. As a result, the Chinese government provided 4.86 billion Yuan for the construction of 62 projects during that period (June Teufel Dyer, 2005, Jin Wei, 2015). Overall, the cornerstones of the central government's new policy was economic growth and modernization.[244]

Cumulative impacts of China's past economic policies

One of the most basic transformations in the Tibetan economy over the previous six decades was the drastic shift away from agriculture towards the service sector. Figures on Tibet in China's Statistical Yearbooks show a sharp decline in labour participation in the primary sector of the economy (comprised chiefly of agricultural and pastoral activities) that was previously the mainstay of Tibetan

241 - See B. Pitman Potter, *Law, Policy, and Practice on China's Periphery; Selective adaption and Institutional Capacity* (London: Routledge Contemporary China Series, 2011).; Robert Barnett, "Restrictions and Their Anomalies: The Third Forum and the Regulation of Religion in Tibet", *Current Chinese Affairs* 41, no. 4 (2012): 45-107.

242 - B. Pitman Potter (2011), 124.

243 - See June Teufel Dreyer (2005), B. Pitman Potter (2011), Robert Barnett (2012).

244 - Goldstein, 1997, *Dus Rabs Gsar par Skyod Pa'i Gser Zam* (A Golden Bridge Leading to a New Era). A document issued after the "Third Work Forum on Tibet" which was held in Beijing from 20-23 July 1994.

economy: in 1959, it accounted for 73.6 percent of the country's workforce and by 2008, it had fallen to 15.3 percent.[245] Conversely, the service-based sector rose sharply in the same period, from 15.8 percent of the workforce in 1959 to 55.5 percent by 2008.

On their own, these numbers could be seen as an indication of modernization, following in the development footsteps of other economies. However, in the Tibetan context these top-line statistics do not tell an accurate story. In the same time period, the crucial factor of economic marginalization of Tibetans by Chinese in Tibet - if not outright discrimination - has come into play. As noted above, the difficulty of carrying out economic research in Tibet makes hard data on such discrimination difficult to obtain, but Tibetans have had a far more difficult time taking advantage of this growth sector.

The primary reason for this disadvantage, setting aside any potential direct discrimination in hiring, is simply that of education. To sustain and to improve Tibetan participation in the burgeoning tertiary and secondary sector, Tibetans must acquire a certain level of education and skills. Literacy, often mandatory for participation in the service sector but also a development indicator in its own right, remains low in Tibet. The official illiteracy rate for residents of the TAR, measured only in terms of whether or not citizens can read Chinese characters, stands at 37.33 per cent as of 2015.[246] This is by far the worst in the PRC, more than double the next-highest Qinghai Province, which has a significant Tibetan population. Official illiteracy rates do not measure the level of Tibetan language illiteracy but circumstances, including the fact that schools in Tibet are increasingly becoming Chinese-medium, suggest that literacy in Tibetan is likely declining.

245 - See Fishcer (2001). In a detailed analysis of Tibetan participation in each sectors. It is worth- while looking into the same trend found in the secondary sector.

246 - National Bureau of Statistics of China, *China Statistical Yearbook 2016*, http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2016/indexeh.htm.

Part of the persistent illiteracy is because many Tibetans are not attending schools. According to China's census, the population of Tibetans in various parts of Tibet was 5.4 million in 2000 and rose to 6.3 million in 2010. Despite the population increase, the number of Tibetan students enrolled in schools actually declined. For example, in Ngaba, student enrolment in schools dropped from 98,984 in the year 2006 to 74,995 in 2014. In the TAR, 38 percent of Tibetan youth did not receive education as of 2000. According to the 2000 census, the population of Tibetans benefiting from the education system is far below the national average: 45.5 percent of the Tibetan population (6 years or older) did not receive any form of schooling compared to the national average of 7.7 percent. This is a remarkably high number.

One of the most significant factors underlying these statistics is the language itself. Discouraged by the receding value of Tibetan language in business and professional life, but also not wanting their children to learn primarily Mandarin instead of Tibetan, families may choose to not send their children to school. And if the most lucrative jobs require Mandarin, those who speak it fluently will necessarily have an advantage over those who grew up speaking Tibetan.

Party cadre employment is another trend that indicated economic disparity between Tibetans and Chinese in the recent past. In 2003, cadres employed in the Tibet Autonomous Region were paid an average annual wage of 26,931 Yuan, almost double the national average of 14,040 and surpassed only by Shanghai, where the figure stood at 27,304. These salaries entice cadres from other parts of China to transfer to Tibet. This cash-rich sector of state employment also witnessed a sudden shift in the representation of Tibetans: the number of Tibetan staff and workers employed within state-owned units fell significantly between 2001 and 2003,[247] whereas the proportion of Chinese employees rose considerably within the same period.

247 - Tibet Information Network, "Tibetans lose ground in public sector employment in the TAR: Streamlining Effectively Discriminates against Tibetans", January 22, 2005.

Moreover, this trend was not only restricted to state-owned enterprises, but was also seen in the appointment of Tibetans at the cadre level. Cadre-level appointments accounted for two-thirds of permanent state-sector employment in 2003 - the number of available positions having increased to 88,734 from 69,927 in 2000. However, the number of Tibetans employed at this level dropped from 50,039 (72 percent of the total number) in 2000 to just 44,069 three years later (around 50 percent). The disaggregation of minzu (ethnic) data on official staff and workers was rolled back in 2004, so it is impossible to get the exact numbers for more recent time periods.

Another major reason to look sceptically at the raw GDP figures published by the PRC is that they likely represent little real underlying growth, for Tibet's economy is fuelled almost entirely by subsidies from Beijing. According to its own figures, financial subsidies made by Beijing to Tibet between 1952 and 2013 totalled 542,343 billion yuan, constituting 91.45 percent of the region's total financial revenue. In terms of expenditure, the central government doled out around 92.36 per cent of Tibet's total expenses in financial subsidies to support the functioning of society and to regulate Tibetan affairs.[248]

Among regions in western or central China, Tibet receives by far the largest proportion of subsidies from the government. If the subsidies were evenly spread among the population in Tibet, as of 2010 each Tibetan would have received 17,105 yuan annually. Per capita subsidization across all provincial governments in the same year was only 2,481 Yuan. A 2013 study showed that subsidies from Beijing dwarfed the local economy, spending an amount in Tibet equivalent to 112 percent of the region's economic output. It is vital to note that these subsidies are not only in the form of vast infrastructure projects or even spending on security forces - they also encompass healthcare, housing, food, and other basic necessities. The subsidies from the

248 - Jin Wei (2015).

Chinese government are the lifeline of Tibet's economy. Without them, it is unlikely that it could stand on its own.

Main functional zoning: China's current economic development approach

In today's Tibet, one of the Chinese government's primary tools for implementing its economic policies is the Main Functional Zoning (MFZ). Put simply, MFZ is the designation of certain geographical areas for certain economic activity. It has played a significant role in Chinese state planning since 2006, when it was made a central part of the 11th Five-Year Plan.[249]

As stated in the 13th Five-Year Plan, the PRC's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) set forth its goals regarding poverty alleviation for Tibet:

> We will move forward with targeted measures to fight poverty across the board. We will support development and poverty reduction in contiguous poor areas. We will also boost support for alleviating poverty in border areas and areas with concentrations of ethnic minorities. We will continue to support the development of Xinjiang, Tibet, and the Tibetan ethnic areas in Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu, and Qinghai provinces, increasing central government support for these areas, and scaling up one-to-one assistance programs.[250]

249 - China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, "Strategy and Policies on Environment and Development in Western China", *Policy Research Report on Environment and Development: Regional Balance and Green Development*, 2012, https://www.iisd.org/pdf/2013/CCICED_annual_report.pdf.

250 - National Development And Reform Commission, Report on the Implementation of the 2015 Plan for National Economic and Social Development and on the 2016 Draft Plan for National Economic and Social Development, Delivered at the Fourth Session of the Twelfth National People's Congress on March 5, 2016, 41, http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/NPC2016_NDRC_English.pdf.

In terms of how to achieve these goals, relocating individuals was listed as one of their key programs:

> People living in inhospitable conditions who have registered for government poverty assistance will be relocated and provided with housing. We have set a target to relocate over two million people this year. In order to eradicate poverty in local areas, all resources available in poor regions will be utilized to support the development of industries, such as specialized farming and forestry, rural sightseeing, and solar power. This year we have set the target of lifting more than six million people out of poverty through industry-led initiatives.[251]

On the Tibetan plateau, these key objectives for official intervention in Tibetan lives and land management are to be achieved separately, in separate areas, on the basis of MFZ. An important part of the remapping of Tibet into functional zones is the objective of taking much of Tibet's pastoral landscapes out of production in the name of "closing pastures to grow more grass," the dominant official slogan since 2003. On this the NDRC is explicit and specific:

> We will launch a new round of efforts to return marginal cultivated land to forest or grassland, and intensify efforts to carry out the national afforestation project. We will move steadily forward with the establishment of a system of national parks. We will continue to advance the comprehensive governance of the water environment in key water basins and the environment in key areas, such as those at the source of dust storms affecting Beijing and Tianjin, areas afflicted by the spread of stony deserts, and areas where grazing land has been returned to grassland. A major biodiversity protection project will be launched. We will step up the ecological conservation of lakes and wetlands and establish ecological red lines for forests, grasslands, wetlands and the ocean.[252]

251 - Ibid.

252 - Ibid.

These four goals could be mutually interdependent and supportive of each other: to maintain or enhance food security also increases incomes of the poor; likewise, protection of fragile landscapes around the world enlists local populations as guardians, rangers, and stewards of programs of replanting and rehabilitation that enhance water supply and biodiversity conservation. But if all four key goals were to be achieved together, the human and animal populations would remain on the land, actively engaged in its restoration and productive use. The yaks would continue to graze, and the herders continue to herd while also employed to replant grass where there is degradation. There is much scientific evidence that this is the best strategy, not only for human livelihoods, but also for biodiversity.[253]

But China's central planners have separated territorially the attainment of these four key goals. Poverty alleviation is to be achieved explicitly by relocating people en masse, because in the official eyes, Tibetans remain poor because they live in Tibet, a land so frigid and harsh that poverty is inevitable, spatially contiguous, and ineradicable. It is not yet clear where they are to be moved to, whether to the urban fringes of towns and cities within Tibet or further away. Food security, insofar as it is an official concern in Tibet, is to be achieved by scaling up industrialized agriculture, again on urban fringes, in ranches and feedlots close to the urban market demand. As in all areas of China, MFZ will promote urbanization as the growth pole,

253 - Li Wenjun and Kongpo Tsering (Gongbozuren), "Pastoralism: The custodian of China's Grass-Lands", *International Institute of Environment & Development*, 2013, http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10042IIED.pdf.; Yanbo Li, Gongbuzeren and Wenjun Li, "A Review Of China's Rangeland Management Policies", *International Institute of Environment & Development,* 2014, http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10079IIED.pdf.; Julia A. Klein, John Harte, and Xin-Quan Zhao, "Experimental Warming, Not Grazing, Decreases Rangeland Quality On The Tibetan Plateau", *Ecological Applications* 17, no. 2 (2007): 541–557, https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1890/05-0685.; Julia A. Klein, John Harte and Xin-Quan Zhao, "Decline in Medicinal and Forage Species with Warming is Mediated by Plant Traits on the Tibetan Plateau", *Ecosystems* 11, no. 5(2008): 775–789.

with a ring around each town for industrialized food production and for poverty alleviation. As MFZ spreads further, it will leave the vast plateau as a hinterland designated as nature reserve and national park, in the name of climate mitigation and water supply. By area, MFZ has already apportioned the biggest area for *xibu da kaifa*, namely for "grass growing uninterrupted by grazing."

To implement these plans separately, in separate territories, may seem an expensive, inefficient, and clumsy way of achieving these four objectives of the party-state, but there is an internal logic operating here.

These policies all share certain characteristics. They all fragment the Tibetan population. After fragmenting the land under the household responsibility system for rural land users, implemented decades ago, they all reduce Tibetans to state welfare recipients who are supposed to be grateful for the benevolence of central leadership. All establish the party-state as fully in charge of the grasslands, as never before. All enable the state to dispense favours, such as allocating land tenure rights, employment, vocational training or access to urban markets.

In short, all of these policies will make Tibetans more visible, more legible to official scrutiny, more vulnerable: a new precariat under the constant surveillance of security grid management, seldom off camera. In these ways, what seems at first to be four policies, with four different rationales, all pulling in differing directions, in truth share a common basis.

China's MFZ is the fundamental premise driving these policies that depopulate rural Tibet and concentrate the Tibetan population on urban fringes, while in the name of security, grid management restrict their right to become fully urban. What unites all these policies, and earlier productivist policies now nullified by the rise of MFZ and the classification of most of Tibet as "fragile ecology," is the desire of the state to be manifestly in charge throughout Tibet.

Chengdu to Lhasa railway: A case study

When the single-track rail line across the permafrost of northern Tibet to Lhasa began operating in 2006, China congratulated itself for its engineering accomplishment.

The sky train across the roof of the world was a world first: the highest altitude train line in the world. Propaganda declared China as the conqueror of all natural obstacles, having gained mastery over the glacial peaks and the vast, empty northern plain - the Changtang - traversed by the new line, plied by 361 specially-designed carriages built by Canada's Bombardier.

In the decade since then, the trains have arrived daily, from Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and other major cities, bringing the bulk of the millions of domestic tourists on package tours of "China's Tibet," herded from one state-owned scenic site to the next by accredited tour guides. Then they go back, on the same air-conditioned, pressurized train, taking 48 hours to return to Beijing or Shanghai.

Not many take this route from Lanzhou, via Xining and Gormo to Lhasa. Limited freight traffic comes in (most come by road), given China has failed to develop Tibet's pastoral economy, and the copper mines to both west and east of Lhasa have largely failed to scale up to significant operations.

Since 2006, China has continued to invest mightily in rail, especially in high-speed routes, both north-south and east-west, creating deep linkages and economic stimulus. China understandably is proud of these accomplishments, even if they are achieved by borrowing heavily from future generations to finance staggering capital expenditures. But none of the recently constructed rail lines have been celebrated as much as the opening of the Lhasa line. The inauguration of a high-speed line across the northernmost mountains of the Tibetan plateau attracted little attention.

However, China has now announced, as part of the 13th Five-Year Plan to 2020, that it will fund and proceed with a highly ambitious rail line from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, to Lhasa via Nyingtri. This rail line, tunnelling and bridging its way through precipitous Kham, or eastern Tibet, and deep into central Tibet could take as much as three successive Five-Year Plans to build. For engineers, this is a greater challenge than the existing line across the alpine deserts of the Changtang. Xinhua announced that: "the new railway will be about 1,629 km long, and it will only take 15 hours for trains traveling between Lhasa and Chengdu." [254] The route is slightly shorter than the northern Tibetan desert route, and trains will average 108kmh.

The greatest beneficiary of this new rail line, rather obviously, is China's party-state. But less obviously, the benefit of the vast expenditure needed to construct the Chengdu to Lhasa rail is not economic. There is no economic justification for this line, no business case to be made, no cost or benefit analysis showing any return on investment. It may well accelerate the tourism boom, as China's mass domestic tourists find east coast China to Lhasa in 25 comfy train hours a unique selling proposition hard to resist. But though the party-state controls all major scenic sites, and controls their interpretation, mass tourism seldom returns substantial revenue to the State.

The other potential economic pay-off of a rail line across Kham is access to the biggest copper province of Tibet, around Jomda, between Derge and Chamdo, in a district usually called Yulong. Here the biggest deposits of copper, gold, silver and other valuable metals have been found and carefully evaluated by teams of geologists over decades. However, unless they can connect with markets and initially with smelters that can convert the concentrates produced on site into separate, pure metals, these will remain stranded assets. The size

254 - "China to Build Second Railway Linking Tibet with Inland", *XinhuaNet*, March 7, 2016, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-03/05/c_135157349.htm.

and scale of the Yulong deposits, and their remoteness, and China's acute reliance on imported copper and gold, all suggest the necessity for a rail line. Two highways link Chengdu to Kham and central Tibet. The more northerly route, highway G317, passes close to the copper deposits. The planned railway takes the more southerly of these two routes, along highway G318, 200 kms south of the copper deposits, in terrain so rugged there is barely a dirt road connecting the two highways.

There could be no greater evidence that there will be very little economic return on the capital invested to build the Chengdu to Lhasa line than the bypassing of the copper of Yulong. Yulong is just within TAR, on the west side of the Drichu (Yangtze), and thus potentially a contributor to the revenues of a government utterly reliant on subsidies from Beijing.

China's party-state says development is the answer to all Tibetan problems, and that economic growth across China remains its top priority. Yet, in Tibet, it is dependence on Beijing constantly grows, with no sign of effective economic take-off in central Tibet (TAR). As economist Andrew Fischer has convincingly shown, the dependence only deepens, while plans to integrate the actual Tibetan pastoral livestock economy along the new rail line, into China's economy, do not exist. Peking University sociology professor Ma Rong first characterized central Tibet as a dependent economy in 1993, and since then, dependence has only intensified.[255]

The pay-off, for the party-state, is dependence and control, inscribing the presence of the sovereign state across the land and in the lives of the Tibetans. Sociologist Ma Rong has long argued: The TAR has not been integrated into the 'core' economically. An entirely new economic and administrative formation was established; radically dif-

255 - Ma Rong, "Economic Patterns, Migration and Ethnic Relationships in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, China", *Population, Ethnicity and Nation-Building*, Calvin Goldscheider ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995).

ferent from the old [Tibetan] regime. This new setup was imported from outside and did not emerge from the native soil. Nor was it an attempt to add new elements that could be grafted onto the old foundation."[256]

The inscription of a railway, through Kardze and on to Lhasa, could in theory reverse this trend, strengthen the rural Tibetan economy, add value to pastoral livestock production, and open up access to urban markets, much as Inner Mongolia has become a major base for dairy production distributed throughout China.[257] But in reality, this railway, as with all major projects of the party-state in Tibet is intended only to manifest the presence of the State on the land, and in the lives of the populace, while providing the world with images of sleek, modern trains speeding through the Tibetan countryside.

This *chaglam*, Tibetan for railway (literally, iron path) could yet become a boost, lifting poor Tibetans out of remoteness and inability to access markets, if only Beijing would pay as much attention to the soft infrastructure of development: vocational training, micro-credit, agricultural extension, livestock insurance, logistics at a local and regional level. But Beijing remains fixated on hard infrastructure, on mega-projects, all of which establish state authority, where traditionally no state had authority. Such projects make local population visible and legible to the security state.

If one looks at the official list of the 13th Five-Year Plan projects specifically targeting Tibet, one could argue that none, except for the railway, have much potential to become integral to the Tibetan economy, embedded in Tibet's pastoral production landscapes.

256 - Ma Rong, *Population and Society in Contemporary Tibet*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011): 180-183.

257 - Julia A. Klein, Maria E. Fernandez-Gimenez and Han Wei et al., "A Participatory Framework for Building Resilient Social-Ecological Pastoral Systems", *Restoring Community Connections to the Land: Building Resilience through Community-based Rangeland Management in China and Mongolia*, (Wallingford: CABI, 2012).

The five key projects of the 13th Plan that most directly impact Tibet are, in priority order, the Sichuan-Tibet railway; new hydro power plants with an aggregate capacity of 60,000 MW; big reservoirs in Tibet and other areas; urbanization of 100 million people in central and west China; and the ecological restoration of the Tibetan Plateau and other ecologically important areas. What is remarkable is that none strengthen the Tibetan economy; in fact, most require removal, relocation and displacement of Tibetan communities, in the names of ecological restoration, poverty alleviation, dam or railway building. Far from keeping folks on their land, enhancing their productivity and access to markets, all of these big projects, with their big budgets, and big immigrant construction workforce, further reduce Tibet to more extreme dependence, on the fringes of a modern economy superimposed onTibet.

Conclusion

The PRC's economic development policies in Tibet are curious only if looked at with an expectation for them to unambiguously improve the economic condition of Tibetans. That there is little done to foster self-sufficiency, broad-based improvement in education and wealth, or a diversified economy demonstrates the fact that the PRC's goal is not, first and foremost, the uplifting of Tibetans. Instead, there are three overarching themes that carry through the PRC's economic policies in Tibet: the propaganda value of economic development, the benefits of infrastructure development for Chinese state security, and the state security provided by economic dependence.

Since 1992, the Chinese government's State Council Information Office has published approximately 14 white papers on Tibet.[258] Each of

258 - Some of the most recent white papers on Tibet are: "Successful Practice of Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet (September, 2015)", "Tibet Path of Development Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide" (April, 2015) and "Development and Progress of Tibet" (2014), http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/.

these papers carry pages upon pages elaborating on the backwardness of the traditional Tibetan economy and the unprecedented growth it has seen following China's occupation. Complementing the official statistics, Chinese economists and academicians have also published a number of books on the subject of Tibetan economy, including, among others: *Tibet Past and Present* (2008) by Shuzhisheng, *Transformation of Tibet Economy from a Traditional to a Modern Economy* by Luo Li (2008), and *What do you know about Tibet: Question and Answer* by Foreign Language Press (2011). These books and white papers play a significant role in defining international discourse on Tibet and also in shaping the opinion of Chinese towards Tibet. Through these publications, the Chinese government, to a certain extent, has been able to legitimize their control over Tibet within China and also around the world. Since the 2008 mass protests in Tibet, most official white papers on Tibet have been directly related to the development of Tibet.

Additionally, many of the highways, railroads and airports in Tibet have played an important role in securing China's borders. Dawa Norbu argued that, for China, Tibet is its backdoor. It remains a gateway for all sorts of foreign influences and interventions into China. "Therefore, once the backdoor region was occupied, Communist China began to perceive Tibet, especially during the 1970s as China's 'south-west outpost against imperialism, revisionism and reactionism,' terms that are specific references to countries considered hostile to China - the then Soviet Union and India".[259] Hence, the geographic location of Tibet remains strategically significant for China as far as its national security is concerned.

The infrastructure also facilitates the transfer of Chinese migrants to Tibet. Beijing's reluctance to terminate this influx of Chinese

259 - Dawa Norbu, "Chinese Strategic Thinking on Tibet and the Himalayan Region", *Strategic Analysis* 12, no.4 (1988): 374.

migrants is, of course, politically and strategically motivated. The large numbers of non-Tibetans living and working in Tibet provide Beijing a new and formidable pro-China constituency that increases its security there.

Finally, the strong dependence of the Tibetan economy - as well as many individual Tibetans-on subsidies from the Chinese government, gives the party-state enormous leverage. It is a tool of control and has been used as such by the state to coerce Tibetans. Since 2012, the PRC has explicitly threatened Tibetans with the loss of subsidies and jobs if they attempt to travel to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Kalachakra teachings in Bodh Gaya, India. Such economic threats will remain a potent political tool as long as the Tibetan economy and many Tibetan families cannot survive without significant financial assistance from the PRC. Now subsistent largely on the PRC instead of their land or an independent local economy, Tibetans have lost yet another degree of autonomy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CHINA'S URBANISATION IN TIBET

Introduction

The Chinese government's push for urbanization has uprooted countless Tibetans from their customary ways of life and has inundated Tibet with Chinese migrant workers who gradually settle there. Because of these government policies, Tibetans lose their land to Chinese investors pursuing infrastructure development, and find themselves in rapidly changing cities. While the PRC claims that urbanization is a new development policy that will modernize and civilize ethnic minority areas, in fact, it is a policy that contributes to the gradual dismantling of Tibetan identity.

The State Council of China unveiled the National New Type Urbanization Plan (NUP) in 2014 to increase the percentage of urban residents in the total population of China from 52.6 percent in 2012 to 60 percent by 2020. The ratio of citizens with urban hukou (resident permits) will increase 35.3 percent to approximately 45 percent. After many decades of deliberations and a halt in reforms to

the strict urban hukou system, the Chinese government has finally loosened procedures for rural migrants to transfer their household registrations to urban areas. This new policy has a unique impact on Tibet, where urbanization has become a major burden. Chinese migrants from China's densely populated coastal provinces have started moving to Tibet, and the reformed hukou system has made it easier to transfer their household registration.

Many Tibetans in rural regions have lost their land through expropriation. As suggested by Emily T. Yeh in her book, *Taming Tibet*, this is part of China's state territorialisation of Tibet.[260] According to James Leibold, senior lecturer in Chinese politics and Asian studies at La Trobe University in Melbourne, the Chinese state, as part of its arsenal of responses, has intensified urbanization, hoping that economic development and cultural contact will lead to assimilation and stability. [261]

The policy is already taking effect, as seen in the growth of Tibetan cities. As of 2018, Lhasa, Shigatse, Chamdo, Nyingtri, Lhoka and Nagchu were recognized as prefecture-level cities in TAR. Other cities have also been created in regions outside of TAR with large Tibetan population: Gyalthang (Zhongdian, now known as Shangri-La or Xianggelila) in Yunnan province; Dartsedo (Kangding) in Sichuan; Tsoshar, Siling and Yushu in Qinghai; and Tsoe (Hezuo) in Gansu have each been "upgraded" in the past decade.[262]

Bawa Phuntsok Wangyal, a high-ranking communist cadre in Tibet, pointed out in his book that cities should be centres of China's regional autonomous areas.[263] Cities and towns of regional and

260 - Yeh Emily T. (2013).

261 - Gerald Roche, Ben Hillman and James Leibold, "Why are so Many Tibetans Moving to Chinese Cities", *China File*, June 26, 2017, http://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/viewpoint/why-are-so-many-tibetans-moving-chinese-cities.

262 - "New Developments in China's Tibet Policy as Communist Party's 19th Congress Begins", *International Campaign for Tibet*, October 17, 2017, https://www.savetibet.org/new-developments-in-chinas-tibet-policy-as-communist-partys-19th-congress-begins/.

263 - Wangyal Bawa Phuntsok, *National Issue and Working on Nationalities*, trans (Dharamshala: Khawa Karpo, 2013).

national autonomous areas should have the cultural, economic and political characteristics of people living in these areas. As a result of reforms and changes in these areas, in reality these characteristics have gradually disappeared, and national and regional autonomy remains in name only. The majority of people living in these cities and towns in Tibetan areas are Chinese migrants.

Population transfer of Chinese to Tibet

In 1952, three years after founding the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong said, "Tibet covers a large area but is thinly populated…Its population should be increased from the present two or three million to five or six million, and then to over ten million."[264] At that time, even though Tibet had been occupied by the Chinese communists only since 1951, Mao already had formed the idea to populate Tibet with Chinese migrants.

In 1955, Liu Shaoqi, the president of the newly formed Republic, told the late Panchen Lama that Tibet was a big unoccupied country and China had a big population which could be settled there.[265] In August 1957, Zhou Enlai, the Chinese Premier, gave a major speech on the incorporation of non-Chinese regions into the national plan, pointing to the shortage of land and underground natural resources in the Chinese-inhabited regions and the importance of developing natural resources in areas populated by the "fraternal minority nationalities"to support industrialization. Zhou said that natural resources in the minority regions had been left untapped because of the lack of labour power and technological expertise. "Without mutual assistance, especially assistance from the Chinese people," Zhou Enlai stated, "the minority people will find it difficult to make significant progress on their own."

264 - Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administraton, *Tibet Under Communist China: 50 Years* (Dharamshala: Department of Information and International Relations, 2001) 45.

265 - Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, International Commission of Jurists, *Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic*, (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1960).

The large transfers that increased the proportion of Chinese from around fifty percent to over sixty percent of the population in Amdo (Ch: Qinghai) and from six to over forty per cent in Xinjiang, took place entirely during the heyday of radical Maoism in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s.[266] Although most of the land area of Amdo is designated as Tibetan autonomous areas in one form or another, the majority of the provincial population is now Chinese, although the two do not necessarily overlap. The province is divided into eight prefectures, of which five are Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures (TAP) and one is a combined Tibetan-Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture (TMAP). These six account for 97.2 percent of the provincial land area.[267]

This influx of Chinese migrant workers increased the demand for commodities, and consequently, prices shot up. Pressure on the land and on the life of Tibetans became so apparent that a high-level Tibetan in "Tibet Autonomous Region" (TAR) remarked in 1992, "There is a little door and a big door. The little door opens to the outside world, and the big door opens to China ...The big door will outweigh the little door, and Tibet is more than ever in danger of being engulfed."[268]

Apart from government officials and military personnel who have transferred to Tibet, a huge influx of Chinese migrants has ensued, due to highly subsidized aid and investment in infrastructure development in Tibet. Chinese migrants, many of whom face a lack of employment opportunities in their home regions, are attracted to jobs and opportunities to start businesses in Tibet. The population transfer from China to Tibet is following the same policy imple-

266 - Qinghai Bureau of Statistics (QBS), *Qinghai Statistical Yearbook 2003* (Beijing: China Statis- tical Press, 2003), table 3-3.

267 - Goodman and David S. G., "Qinghai and the Emergence of the West: Nationalities, Communal Interaction and National Integration", *The China Quarterly*, no. 178 (2004): 379–99.

268 - Anders Højmark Andersen, *New Majority: Chinese Population Transfer into Tibet*, (London: Tibet Support Group, UK, 1995), 55.

mented in Chinese-occupied Mongolia (today's Inner Mongolia) during the Qing Dynasty, where Mongolians became a minority by the end of the 19th century. These transfers were largely agrarian-focused, leading more Chinese migrants to settle in the countryside, but eventually they became dominant in both rural and urban populations. Contemporary migration to Tibetan areas, however, have been almost entirely urban.[269]

In a 2004 working paper, Andrew Martin Fischer summarized the characteristics of urbanization in Tibet as follows:

> Interacting with these population dynamics, recent rapid economic growth in the Tibetan areas has been polarized, focusing excessively on urban administrative expansion and a handful of large-scale construction projects to an extent not seen elsewhere in China. In addition, the resuscitation of growth rates since the mid-1990s has taken place mainly through a phenomenal increase in subsidisation. As a result, urban-rural inequalities in the Tibetan areas are considerably higher than everywhere else in China, including the other western provinces. This has put pressure on the few rapidly developing urban areas to fulfil expectations of local rural migrants and the urban poor, even while such rapid development remains rather exclusive, i.e. concentrated in high-wage and high-skill labour, without any significant supporting secondary productive activities to absorb lower skilled labour. [270]

The Western Region Development (WRD) Office of the State Council has suggested that no government authorities should collect urban population surcharge fees or similar fees from people moving their hukous to Tibet.[271] This suggestion has further incentivized Chinese migrants to settle in Tibetan cities. In the coming decades, Tibet could witness a population growth of millions of Chinese migrants in various cities.

269 - Andrew Martin Fischer, "Urban Fault Lines in Shangri-La: Population and Economic Foundations of Inter-Ethnic Conflict in the Tibetan Areas of Western China", *Crisis States Programme Working Papers*, DESTIN Development Studies Institute (LSE), June 2004.

270 - Andrew Martin Fischer (2004).

271 - Circular of the State Council's General Office on the Distribution of Suggestions on the Implementation of Policies and Measures Pertaining to the Development of the Western Region. Submitted by the Western Region Development Office of the State Council, September 29, 2001.

Migration of rural Tibetans to cities and towns

Urbanization in Tibet has also encouraged many Tibetans living in rural areas to take up non-agricultural professions in Tibetan cities. As their ancestral lands are sold to land developers who build industries that further attract migrants to Tibet. As Straits Times reported recently, "Out of China's 31 provinces, regions, and municipalities, only the TAR still maintains a distinction between rural and urban residents."[272] Because of the rural/urban classification scheme, Chinese migrants coming from outside Tibet are particularly encouraged to resettle in Tibetan cities, where they will have access to social welfare schemes.

In addition to natural migration patterns, a greater number of Tibetans from rural areas are being moved to towns through the government's forced resettlement policy that moves pastoral Tibetans who live scattered with their herds in rural mountains and valleys into compact and fenced-in towns. This policy allows the government to control the movement of these rural residents in the name of social stability.

As Sophie Richardson, China director at the Human Rights Watch, pointed out, "Tibetans have no say in the design of [relocation] policies that are radically altering their way of life, and in an already highly repressive context, have no means to challenge them." Rights' violations during this process range from lack of consultation to failure to provide adequate compensation, both of which are required under international law for evictions to be legitimate. After the move, the sudden shift from nomadic life to cities has increased unemployment in Tibet.

A field study conducted by Tibetan researcher Gongbo Tashi (aka Gonpo Tashi) and Marc Foggin in 2009 shows the empirical impact of ecological resettlement in Lhoka prefecture. After interviewing

272 - "Beijing Reforms Hukou in Urbanisation Push", *The Straits Times*, September 22, 2016, https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/beijing-finally-adopts-hukou-reforms.

more than 300 individuals, the researchers found that forced resettlement deprived the residents of Dekyi village of their livestock, which was the main source of their livelihood. The new town where the villagers were resettled provided insufficient space to rear livestock. And though new farming training was supposed to be given to the resettled Tibetans to help them begin their new lives, most of the families complained about not receiving any training promised by the government before resettlement. As a result, the size of their livestock decreased dramatically, thereby making previously self-sufficient rural Tibetans heavily dependent on government subsidies.

The table below indicates the shrinking size of livestock populations in Dranang and Tsona Counties in TAR.[273]

Table No.1 Average livestock number, pre-and post-resettlement in Dranang and Tsona Counties. Source: *Gonpo Tashi, 2009 survey*

Original County	Yak and Cattle		Sheep and Goats		Donkeys and Horses	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Dranang County	1,320	255	876	107	267	0
Tsona County	2,457	126	1,260	32	253	0
n=42 households (over 300 individuals)						

In two settlements in Qinghai province from 2005-2009, residents were interviewed by Chinese researcher, Xu Jun, with a group of other researchers who spent one month each year in Yushul and Na-Gormo prefecture in Amdo. In his study of these prefectures where resettlement took place, Xu concluded that resettled nomads faced an intense sense of displacement:

> We saw first-hand their struggle to make a new life as they resettle in a new place, puzzling over their future. Some are disappointed. Some are shame-

273 - Tashi Nyima, "Development Discourses on the Tibetan Plateau: Urbanisation and Expropri- ation of Farmland in Dartsedo", *Himalaya* 30, no. 1(2011).

> ful, as they talked about their lives and having to rely on their relatives who remained in the grasslands. Some have to return to grassland to do some odd job to earn a living for their children. This five-year investigation showed that most of those resettled in or near cities during the period of the San Jiang Yun protection and rebuilding program have not been able to make a living without access to grassland resources. On the other hand, no clear data exists to prove that such immigration had been helpful to the grassland ecosystem, which was the stated motive behind the relocations.[274]

Since 2014, the Chinese government has intentionally lowered the price of livestock. Earlier, a castrated sheep could fetch 1,200 Yuan in the market, but the price has been lowered to 500 Yuan. This decrease was partially achieved by destroying the markets for selling and purchasing livestock. It could be surmised that, in order to implement the nomadic resettlement policy, the Chinese government has targeted traditional Tibetan nomadic markets by making them unprofitable and forcing the nomads to move to settlements, abandoning their traditional lives. Currently, there are Tibetan nomads in 56 counties and semi-nomadic Tibetans in 68 counties. The depreciation in livestock prices almost halved the average income for Tibetans in 124 counties, affecting 84.35 percent of Tibet's total population.

As a result of the influx of Chinese migrant workers in Tibet, the Chinese language has gained substantial prominence in the market. Even more significantly, the Chinese government has adopted the Chinese language as the official language of government offices in Tibet. Increasingly, the Chinese language plays a key role in people's daily lives and has become the language of commerce in many Tibetan towns due to their high number of Chinese migrant workers. Many government leaders and officials believe that learning Chinese is crucial for Tibetans to become more competitive in the market.[275]

274 - Xu Jun, "Challenges: Resettlement of Nomads in Qinghai Province", https://case.edu/affil/tibet/tibetanNomads/documents/Challenges-ResettlementofNomadsinQinghaiProvince.pdf. The detailed paper was presented at SLTP Conference, Leipzig, December 2-3, 2009.

275 - Shiyong Wang, "Towards a localized development approach in Tibetan areas of China", *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 28, (2013): 129-154.

Consequently, the use of Tibetan language, an intrinsic part of the Tibetan culture and identity, is in decline.

Despite the nominally altruistic aspirations of the urbanization program, the PRC's approach was destined to be of little benefit to rural Tibetans. Tashi Nyima captures the issue in an article in Himalaya:

> Top-down programs deprive villagers of their participation in planning. Villagers were portrayed as the 'development problem.' Ironically, the implementation had simultaneously depoliticized the project and portrayed it to be technically necessary for a number of reasons, particularly for political stability. The villagers, who the official discourse constructs as 'backward' and 'primitive', were supposed to be the focus of development. However, their own experiences of development hardly correspond to the glittering official representations. The attempt to redefine the project in their own terms had met with very little success due to existing power relations. The aforementioned goals and development ideology deployed within the official discourse have surprisingly little relevance to the actual wishes and desires of the villagers.[276]

Urbanization and social stability

Development in the Chinese government official discourse has primarily been defined by the goals of long-term social stability, regional development, and modernization of the "backward periphery."

In cities, unlike in remote areas of Tibet, people's movements and contacts can be more easily surveilled, particularly under the PRC's grid monitoring system. China carried out its first urban grid management experiment in Dongcheng district in Beijing in October 2004.[277] If China remains devoid of real democratic checks and balances, the continued development of grid management will only

276 - Tashi Nyima (2011).

277 - Wu Qiang, "Urban Grid Management and Police State in China: A Brief Overview," *China Change*, August 12, 2014, https://chinachange.org/2013/08/08/the-urban-grid-management-and-police-state-in-china-a-brief-overview/.

lead to a model for a modern police state in Tibet. For the PRC, this is a major benefit of their urbanization plan.[278]

Human Rights Watch released a comprehensive report in 2013 on how the urban grid management system in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, has proven to be efficient in monitoring the movement of residents.[279] In this new grassroots-level of urban administration, each "neighbourhood" or "community" in towns will be divided into three or more grid units. At least eight pilot units were set up in Lhasa in April 2012, and in September they were declared to have "achieved notable results." In October of the same year, the regional party secretary stated that because "the Lhasa practice has fully proved the effectiveness of implementing grid management to strengthen and innovate social management [i.e., controlling mass protests]," the system should be made universal in "the towns, rural areas, and temples" of TAR.

Gabriel Lafitte, speacializing in Tibet's environment, notes that the securitization of Tibet ultimately depends on urbanization:

> Even with the latest technologies, keeping an eye on millions of mobile pastoralists spread across a plateau pasture as big as Western Europe is not possible. It may be no accident that the party-state has long defined development as the long term answer to all Tibetan problems, and urbanization as the essence of development, the necessary prerequisite for delivery of all centralised services, from electricity to health, education and employment… Urbanized population concentrations are also more legible and accessible to the sovereign state.[280]

278 - Ibid.

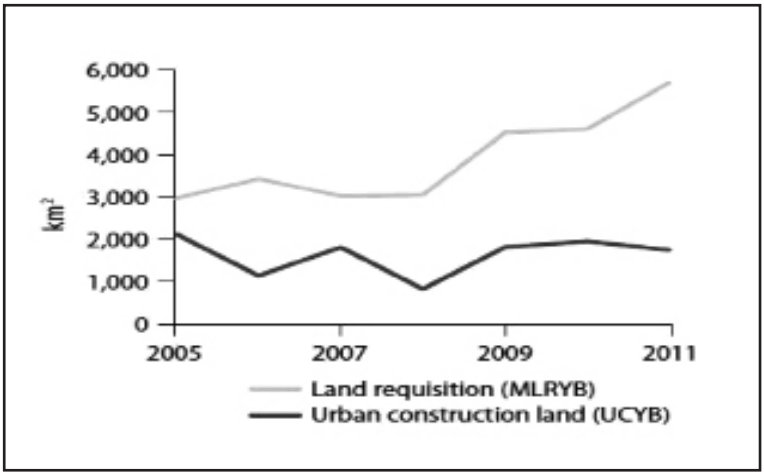
279 - Ibid.

280 - Gabriel Lafitte, "Making sincerity mandatory: The China dream of perfect surveillance and correction of all citizen behavior", July 15, 2017, http://rukor.org/making-sincerity-mandatory/.

Land expropriation

Nearby towns and remote villages in Tibet are now connected to extended cities. Land originally used for cultivation is increasingly seeing the construction of vast infrastructure projects as well as residential and commercial buildings. According to the World Bank, "rural land requisition and conversion for industrial use [in China] has been particularly inefficient because the decisions have been largely driven by administrative decisions rather than market demand."[281]

China's urbanization has consumed significant land resources as urban boundaries expand and the territorial jurisdictions of cities increase, primarily through the expropriation and integration of surrounding rural land.[282] As indicated in the graph below, the demand for urban requisition of land has soared over the past few years in China due to the urbanization project.



281 - "China: Alarming New Surveillance, Security in Tibet", *Human Rights Watch*, May 20, 2013, https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/03/20/china-alarming-new-surveillance-security-tibet.

282 - World Bank and the Development Research Center, the People's Republic of China, "China's Urbanization and Land: A Framework for Reform," *Urban China: Toward Efficient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Urbanization*, (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2014).

Between 2001 and 2011, the amount of land in China classified as urban construction land increased by 17,600 square kilometres (sq. km), reaching a total area of 41,805 sq. km in 2011, an increase of 58 percent over a decade. About 90 percent of demand for urban land was met through the expropriation of rural land, while only 10 percent was supplied from the existing stock of undeveloped urban construction land. Following this trend, as Tibetan cities grow, rural land in Tibet will be increasingly expropriated by the Chinese government.

The government has largely overlooked the effects of rapid urbanization on the millions of farmers or villagers who have been made landless (legally or illegally) over the years.[283] According to an official statistic, three million people become landless farmers every year in China. The total number is expected to double in 2020 because of the current pace of urbanization.[284]

The growth of cities has another consequence. In her book *Taming Tibet*, Emily T. Yeh stated that, according to China's Law of Regional National Autonomy (LRNA), when regions, prefectures, and counties are upgraded to cities, the autonomous status of these areas will be lost. Uradyn Bulag, an anthropologist who researches Inner Mongolia, advanced the argument that the benefits of an administrative promotion from county to city, particularly for local leaders, "checkmates ethnic sensitivity" about the loss of ethnic autonomous status.

Conclusion

China's urbanization in Tibet (and across the country) is aimed as a solution to China's slowing economy. It is a policy intended to bring millions of Chinese migrant workers to settle and enact business in Tibet. As part of this process, Tibet's cities have gone through demo-

283 - Tashi Nyima (2011), 79.

284 - World Bank and the Development Research Center, the People's Republic of China (2014).

graphic shifts, resulting in the strong influence of Chinese culture, often at the expense of Tibetan language and customs.

The projected rate of 30 percent urbanization in Tibet in the coming few decades will likely mean that all cities in Tibet will become majority Chinese. As a result, Tibetans will lose the language rights associated with autonomous status. Meanwhile, the mobility and communication of residents transplanted to urban areas will be monitored strictly whenever the government deems it necessary.

To feed the growth of cities, rural land is bought by state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and foreign companies. Land is the only asset that many rural Tibetans inherit from their ancestors. And not only do Tibetans from rural areas lose their land, but they must then look for unskilled, usually temporary work. If the current rate of urban land requisition by the Chinese government continues, the ownership of land in many areas in Tibet will be transferred to Chinese migrants, businesses, and the state.The continuous push for urbanization in Tibet, which has historically been predominantly rural, is a key mechanism of the government designed to meet economic objectives but with the political agenda of integrating Tibetans into the People's Republic of China, undermining "ethnic autonomy" and ensuring top-down control. The official media has announced there will be seven new cities in Qinghai (Tib: Amdo) by 2020 as the Chinese authorities seek to urbanize nearly half a million people and create a new network of transportation and communications infrastructure.[285]

Urbanization in Tibet, with the resulting damage to traditional ways of life, cannot win the hearts of Tibetans as explicitly called for by Xi Jinping at the last Work Forum held in Tibet.[286] Instead, Tibetan resistance will only grow stronger.

285 - "New Developments in China's Tibet Policy as Communist Party's 19th Congress Begins", *International Campaign for Tibet*, October 17, 2017, https://www.savetibet.org/new-developments-in-chinas-tibet-policy-as-communist-partys-19th-congress-begins/.

286 - B. Zhao, "How to address the problem of land-lost farmers?" *Renminwang*, December, 9, 2005, http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/40553/3929253.html.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CHINA'S MASTER PLAN FOR TIBET: RULE BY REINCARNATION

Introduction

Tibetan Buddhists believe that all sentient beings come to this present life from a previous existence and are reborn after death. This is the basis of the unique tradition of recognizing reincarnations of specific monks, known as tulkus, which began in the 13th century. There are four different schools of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet, and each has developed their own method for recognizing tulkus.

The Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama are the two most well-known tulku lines, currently in their 14th and 11th reincarnations, respectively. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was recognized by observing the visions manifested from the sacred lake Lhamo Lhatso. Some lamas are chosen after they reliably recall instances of their previous lives. Other incarnate lamas can recognize new incarnations of other lamas, as was the case with the 11th Panchen Lama being recognized by the 14th Dalai Lama.

There are many important ways to identify a lama's successor, including the will of the predecessor before they died. The successor should be able to give reliable anecdotes about his previous life, identify the possessions of his predecessor and recognize people who formerly served around him. Other methods include asking reliable spiritual masters for their divination and seeking predictions from oracles. So far, reincarnations have largely been male, with the recognition of Samding Dorje Phagmo being a rare exception.

The Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation system is made all the more important by the high levels of spiritual and political authority given to these reincarnated lamas, as demonstrated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The PRC, determined to leave no stone unturned in its bid for control over Tibet, has continually attempted to claim the authority to recognize the reincarnation of lamas. Setting aside how astonishing it is for any government to claim authority over the strictly religious matter of reincarnation, the PRC's actions and statements on the matter pose an opportunity to not only set the record straight, but convey the history and practice of this unique Tibetan tradition to a wider audience. With that aim in mind, this chapter will discuss the history of the Dalai Lama reincarnation system, particularly focused on the recognition of the current Dalai Lama, and its future prospects.

The beginning of the Dalai Lama lineage

The current tulku reincarnation system was originally practiced exclusively within the Tibetan Buddhist system and was later adopted by the Mongolians. No other Buddhist country, including China, follows this tradition. Even before the advent of Buddhism, Tibet's indigenous Bon religion believed in the concept of rebirth, and this belief became more established with the spread of Buddhism.

The practice of recognizing tulkus began in the early 13th century, following the recognition of Karma Pakshi as the reincarnation of Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa. Since then, there have been 17 reincarnations of the Karmapas. Gendun Drub, the disciple of Je Tsonkhapa, the founder of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism, passed away in 1474 after establishing the monastery of Tashi Lhunpo. In 1476, a young boy named Sangay Choephel, born in Tsang Tanak, was recognized as the reincarnation of Gendun Drub after recollecting information about his past lives with unmistakable clarity. It was the third in this line of reincarnations, Sonam Gyatso, who received the title of Dalai Lama. From then on, the tradition continued of the labrang (personal residence) and the government of the Gaden Phodrang, the Office of the Dalai Lamas searching for and recognizing the reincarnations of successive Dalai Lamas.

Sino-Tibetan relations during the search for the 14th Dalai Lama

Following the death of the 13th Dalai Lama in 1933, the Tibetan government sent search parties to three places to look for his reincarnation. The team, led by Kewtsang Rinpoche, found a boy named Lhamo Thondup, born on the fifth day of the fifth month of the Tibetan lunar calendar (July 6, 1935), in Taktser, near Kumbum, in Amdo region. The boy matched the prophecies of the deities and lamas, as well as the visions seen at the sacred Lhamo Lhatso lake. However, to avoid meddling by the warlord Ma Bufeng, who controlled the area at that time, Kewtsang Rinpoche initially refused to disclose his recognition.

The Chinese government was keenly aware of these events in Tibet. We know this from a confidential telegram message from Shi An, director of the military committee of the nationalist government, and Jiang Dingwen, head of the regional military command, to Wu

Zhongxin, the director of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC). The telegram states:

> The Tibetan Lhasa government last year (1937) commissioned the high lama Kewtsang Lama and Kiheymey Sonam Wangude and others to search for the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama in Tsongon. After about half a year, they found the reincarnation near Kumbum in the Chinese family of Zhao. The reincarnation of the Dalai Lama was then verified without doubt as per the divination and prophecies from Lhasa and the investigation conducted by the Panchen Lama.

At the end of the message, Jiang Dingwen suggested that:

> As a strategy to secure the border areas of the central government, I propose that it is necessary to either take appropriate decisions regarding the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet or delegate an escort to help the responsible people to systematically discharge their functions. Or else the Tsongon government should be ordered to temporarily hold the Dalai Lama at the Kumbum monastery, awaiting further decisions on the onward journey or his continued stay there.[287]

287 - *A Collection of Documents on the 13th Dalai Lama's Prayer Service and the 14th Dalai Lama's Enthronement*, Chinese language, 134 (From here on A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement). Many of the references and quotes cited in this chapter come from the collections of the Chinese government backed China Tibetology Research Centre. It must be noted that the Centre frequently distorts its own materials. For example, Chinese officials have translated a compilation of the Tibetan government's documents prior to 1950, originally in Tibetan and including photographs, into Chinese and changed important terms to fit their agenda. For instance: "Chinese Government" appears as "Central Authority" and "the city of Lhasa, seat of the Tibetan Nation, Norling Kalsang Palace" reads as "Norbulingka Kalsang Palace, residence in Lhasa." These records are nevertheless a useful source given their firsthand insight into the time period, but this context must be taken into consideration before assigning high value to specific words or phrases.in Lhasa." These records are nevertheless a useful source given their firsthand insight into the time period, but this context must be taken into consideration before assigning high value to specific words or phrases.

Wu Zhongxin then sent a telegram to the Prime Minister's office on April, 26, 1936, stating:

> After inquiring the matters relating to the search of the Dalai Lama, it has been brought to our knowledge that, from Tibet, Kwetsang Rinpoche and others have been dispatched to Tsongon (Amdo province) to search for the reincarnation, and although it has been over a year, the search party has not reported to us via telegram any information regarding matters of the search process.[288]

As these communications demonstrate, the Tibetan search party conducted its own affairs strictly on Regent Reting Rinpoche's instructions, without consulting the Chinese government.

On August 14, Ma Bufeng responded to a secret telegram message from MTAC saying: "Kwetsang Rinpoche has sent a telegram to Reting Hutuktu seeking a decision regarding the three child candidates for the fourteenth Dalai Lama discovered from this region. No instructions have been received."[289] After receiving the information, the MTAC wrote to the Prime Minister's office on August 18, 1938 suggesting the need to provide the Golden Urn to the provincial government.[290] In another letter to the Prime Minister's office on October 8 of the same year, MTAC recommended three methods for recognizing the reincarnation. They were:

1. The Nationalist government would specially delegate high officials to visit Lhasa to administer the process of drawing lots from the Golden Urn, along with Reting Hutuktu.
2. The Nationalist government would specially delegate high officials to not only administer the process of drawing lots

288 - *A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement*, Chinese language, 135.
289 - Ibid., 140.
290 - Ibid.

from the Golden Urn along with Reting Hutuktu but also further depute representatives to closely manage the proceedings.

3. The Nationalist government would delegate the President of the MTAC to not only minister the process of drawing lots from the Golden Urn with Reting Hutuktu but the president should further depute envoys to closely manage the proceedings.

The letter also discusses the pros and cons of each method:

> The first method not only attaches the Nationalist Government's high regard for the reincarnation issue but also carries legal mandate. However, the delegation will cost the exchequer at least 20,000 to 30,000 Yuan. Additionally, there is a possibility of opposition to the delegation's entry to Tibet. The advent of such a situation will run the risk of stagnating our relations. The second method is foremost a cautious approach, which at the same time, is symbolic of safeguarding the legal system. The cost will be curtailed. The method leaves no basis for suspicion from the Tibetan side as the decision by the top leadership of the central government would have been taken before we are able to appoint the resident bureau officer in Tibet. If the delegated envoys collaborate, the expenditure will be further curtailed.[291]

However, noting that the issue was of utmost importance, the Prime Minister's office took a cautious stand and decided to consult the Tibetans first. MTAC then dispatched two telegrams to the resident Chinese government official in Lhasa, Chang Waibi, on October 25. One of the telegrams observed that of the three methods, "the first method being the most suitable, thorough discussions must be carried out. If the Tibetans don't agree, at least the second and third methods must be employed. The discussions with the Tibetan government must be reported via telegram."[292]

291 - Ibid., 146.

292 - Ibid., 150.

In the meantime, preoccupied with the preparation for the reincarnation's reception in Lhasa, the Tibetan side sent a telegram, on December 12, 1938, to the MTAC in Sikyong Regent's name, stating:

> On the issue of the central authorities delegating personnel, the Prime Minister and the Kashag held a joint discussion and decided that the delegated personnel can participate in the Golden Urn ceremony, which will be held in the presence of the three candidates, so that the trust of the general public can be gained and rumors avoided. However, with the Tibet representative of the central authority Chang Waibi already here, his presence should suffice. Or else another representative will have to be sent to Tibet. Discussion on which of these options is better will be held at an appropriate time and the response will be furnished. As per the divinations and prophesies of the deities and lamas, if the three candidates fail to reach Tibet, personal inauspicious signs for the Dalai Lama will manifest. This issue being of utmost importance, we cannot be liable of such an eventuality therefore we hope that as an initial move you will order the government in Tsongon to allow the candidate from Tsongon along with Kewtsang Rinpoche and his entourage to leave at the earliest for Tibet. Thank you.[293]

Six days later, on December 18, ambassador Ngawang Samten and others at the Tibetan embassy in Beijing, sent a telegram to MTAC, stating: "As per the third of the three methods suggested earlier concerning the Golden Urn ceremony of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan side, in good faith and for the steady progress of Sino-Tibet amity, accepts Chang Waibi as the envoy of the president of the MTAC to closely manage the proceedings."[294]

The Tibetans consented to the third method, as it appeared to be the least intrusive. The Tibetan government also accepted Chang Waibi, the Lhasa-based Chinese official, as the representative of the MTAC in order to prevent Wu Zhongxin's visit to Lhasa. However, efforts to bring the potential reincarnations were delayed, and to avoid further

293 - Ibid., 158-159.

294 - Ibid., 160.

problems, the Tibetan ambassador Ngawang Samten and others sent a telegram to MTAC stating: "As per a telegram from Lhasa, the Tibetan government as of now welcomes the visit of Wu Zhongxin to Lhasa. However, he must travel by sea, and before he leaves, the central authorities must send a telegram to Tsongon to arrange for Kewtsang Rinpoche's entourage to bring the prospective candidate to Tibet at the earliest possible. A telegram must be sent to Tibet as well before Wu Zhongxin leaves."[295]

As soon as the Tibetan government approved Wu Zhongxin's travel, the Chinese government began applying for visa from the British India government. The British India government demanded information on the date of travel and the size of the delegation. It also made clear that prior consent from the Tibetan government was required. Recognizing that acceptance of the British India position would seriously undermine its claim of sovereignty over Tibet and having no other possible option, the Chinese foreign ministry sent a secret telegram to its London embassy on May 22, 1939, stating:

> This visit of Wu Zhongxin, the president of MTAC, to Tibet via India is only to attend the Golden Urn ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama and carries no political significance. For the convenience of our colleague, and moreover as this visit amounts to just crossing the national borders, we don't see the necessity to provide the details demanded by the British foreign ministry. Send another telegram to the Indian Government requesting the crossing of the international borders.[296]

While the Chinese government representatives were waiting for consent from the Tibetans, Ma Bufeng in a telegram to the MTAC, finally confirmed: "The prospective candidate left today."[297]

295 - Ibid., 188.

296 - Foreign Ministry's Document Archives, Tibetan Section, Volume V, Taiwan, Chinese Language, 205.

297 - *A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement*, 213

It was very important for Wu Zhongxin and his delegation to be present at enthronement of the reincarnation, as his absence would imply that the Chinese government did not have any influence in Tibet. Therefore, they sent Gong Jingzong, the Tibetan section head of MTAC, to Tibet by land. The Tibetan ambassador Ngawang Samten and others, still uncertain of Kewtsang Rinpoche and the team's whereabouts, sent a telegram to the MTAC on July 27, stating:

> According to the telegram from Kashag: 1) The governor general of eastern Tibet has been ordered to take necessary steps to make security arrangements for Gong Jingzong's journey. 2) As we are yet to receive a telegram from Siling from Kewtsang Rinpoche confirming the prospective candidate's date of departure, truth remains shrouded in suspicion. We hope that the central government will pursue the matter with a strongly worded telegram and find out when, in reality, they will be departing.[298]

Soon after Kewtsang Rinpoche confirmed his departure from Tsongon, the Kashag of the Tibetan government sent a telegram on August 20 to Wu Zhongxin, putting strict restrictions on the size of the Chinese delegation. The telegram read:

> We are glad to receive information that, in the beginning of September, fourteen officials, including you, and five attendants will be leaving for Tibet and reach here via India by November. Regarding the size of the delegation, we request that, apart from the requisite members, please shun from bringing extra personnel. Failure in following this instruction will definitely give rise to suspicion among leaders of the monks and the laymen. I hope that you will look into my request.[299]

Although the visa process for Wu Zhongxin and his entourage was started in April 1939, the Tibetan government sent its letter of consent to the British India government only in September. On

298 - Ibid., 217.

299 - Ibid., 233- 234.

1st September, Sikyong Reting sent a telegram to Wu, stating: "be assured that the Kashag and I have sent a telegram to the British India government requesting all assistance to your delegation of 19 members, on your journey to Tibet via India."[300] The telegram was sent on August 31. The visas were eventually approved on October 5, and the delegation left Chongqing on October 21 for Tibet via Hong Kong, Burma and India. The delegation flew for the first leg of the journey and then travelled by road from India to Lhasa, reaching Lhasa on January 15, 1940. They were received by Reting Rinpoche's representatives but not by him personally. Wu Zhongxin made this entry in his journal: "On January 18, the weather was clear and at 11 am we went to seek audience with Reting Hutuktu. I offered him khata, and he also gave me one. My colleagues followed me in offering their respects."[301]

It must be noted here that if the relationship between China and Tibet were one of central and regional governments, the local authority (Sikyong Reting Rinpoche) should have received the representative of the central government at Wu's residence. This did not happen. Instead, Wu and his delegation had to come to call on Reting Rinpoche.

The selection of the 14th Dalai Lama

On June 28, 1939, the Earth-Rabbit year, the Tibetan National Assembly met in the Dalai Lama's private chambers at the Potala Dedenkhyi and declared Lhamo Thondup as the reincarnation of the previous Dalai Lama. Shakabpa Wangchuk Deden writes in *The Political History of Tibet*: "The boy Lhamo Thondup was born on the fifth day of the fifth month of the Wood-Pig year to father Chokyong Tsering and mother Sonam Tso (Dekyi Tsering) of a family

300 - Ibid., 238.

301 - *A Report on the Conclusion of Tibet Assignment*, Chinese language, 245.

called Chija in a small farming village called Taktser near Kumbum Monastery in Domey, Amdo. The Rinpoche and his entourage have left the great monastic seat of Kumbum and have now reached Tibetan land."[302]

This was the first official confirmation of the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama that was made public.

However, a white paper published by the PRC states: "On February 5, 1940, the central government of the Republic of China (1912-1949) issued edict No. 898 to approve the status of the five-year old boy Lhamo Thondup born in Qijachun, Huangzhong County, Qinghai, as the incarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama…" This statement is factually incorrect. In reality, the Tibetan government had secretly picked the candidate from Taktser as the true reincarnation even before his arrival in Lhasa. As such, in a secret telegram to MTAC on March 31, 1938, General Jiang Dingwen noted:

> The Tibetan Government last year commissioned Kewtsang Rinpoche to search for the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama in the Tsongon area. The search party found the reincarnation near Kumbum and after more than six months, following divination and prophecy and investigation by the late Panchen Lama, the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama was recognized.[303]

In the foreword of *The Dalai Lama's Biography*, author Ya Hanzhang writes: "In the interest of the struggle, the Party wanted me to write a book on the history of Tibet." This book, written in accordance with the stance of the Chinese government, claims: "Wu Zhongxin received a grand reception from the Kashag and the general public upon reaching Lhasa in December 1939. The change regarding the reincarnation issue that occurred after he reached Lhasa was that, out of the three prospective candidates earlier, only one remained."[304]

302 -Wangchuk Deden Shakabpa, *A Political History of Tibet*, Vol.2, Tibetan language, 360-361.

303 -*A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement*, Chinese language pg 134.

304 - Ya Hanzhang, *The Dalai Lama's Biography*, Tibetan Language, 876.

Secretary Zhu-shao Yi, a member of Wu Zhongxin's delegation, writes in his memoir, *An Eyewitness Account in Lhasa*:

> After frequent deliberations between the leaders from both sides, finally two preconditions were laid down for not using the Golden Urn. (One) Wu Zhongxin will first personally inspect the boy to check whether he really possesses clairvoyance. (Two) Reting Hotuktu will write a petition to the central authorities requesting exemption from the traditional practice of using the Golden Urn. Reting Hotuktu agreed to these two conditions.[305]

Wu Zhongxin's stay in Lhasa was not a pleasant one. This fact is clear from Wu's diary entries as well as the various telegram messages of that period. Wu distrusted the Tibetans and the Tibetans were resolutely opposed to using the Golden Urn in the reincarnation process. In order to save face for Wu and to avoid additional delay, the Tibetan government finally agreed to send a letter to the Chinese government saying that they would not use the Urn. So, on January 26, 1940, Sikyong Reting wrote a detailed letter regarding the selection of the young incarnate. The letter concludes:

> As the people are satisfied and have given their consent, there is no need for the use of the Golden Urn. Following the age-old tradition, the ceremony of cutting the hair on the crown of the tulku head has been conducted and the central authorities have been made aware of this. As per the prophesy of the Great Nechung Oracle, it has been decided that the enthronement ceremony will take place on the auspicious date of the fourteenth day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar of the Iron Dragon year. Do consider how to relay this information to the Chinese central authorities.[306]

It is apparent that the letter was intended to inform the Chinese government that the Tibetans made the enthronement decision on their own. It is also important to note that the original letter to Wu

305 - Ibid.

306 - *A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement*, 282- 286.

was written in Tibetan; it was translated into Chinese by Wu's junior staff. In the publication titled "A collection of Documents on the 13th Dalai Lama's Prayer Service and the 14th Dalai Lama's enthronement," the author's footnotes on some of the phrases in the Chinese version do not match the Tibetan original. For instance, "No need to use the Golden Urn" was translated as, "No need to conduct the divination employing the dough-ball method" (*Zenril dril go dhon meipa*). Wu was not happy with Reting's letter and on January 26, made the following note in his journal:

> Much delayed official letter reached only today. Surprisingly, the letter is not only disorderly but as an official letter, it is extremely slipshod. I was astounded when I saw it and at once retorted harshly to the letter bearer. It was completely insincere and disrespect to me personally. I was ready to pack my luggage and leave. As there was no way I could forward this letter to China, I sent my official Chang Waibi with the letter to add a proper reading and ending as well as Reting Rinpoche's seal.[307]

Nonetheless, on January 28, Wu sent a secret telegram to the central government, stating:

> I, Wu Zhongxin, have examined the special signs displaced by the prospective candidate and found all of them as true. Therefore, I request the central government to dispatch an official decree. Permission to appoint the boy Lhamo Thondup as the 14th Dalai will make it convenient for the timely preparation of the enthronement ceremony. As important matters should be taken seriously, this issue is raised.[308]

In order to demonstrate the success of his mission, Wu makes no mention of the decision not to use the Golden Urn. Wu also claims that he "examined the prospective candidate again." However, at that time, he was yet to meet the reincarnation.

307 - *A Report on the Conclusion of Tibet Assignment*, Chinese language, 247.

308 - *A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement*, 287.

Ya Hanzhang notes:

> The matter of examining the boy met with obstacles as Wu Zhongxin was not permitted entrance to the Norbulingka. When this was raised with the highest-ranking Chief Attendant, he not only said that Wu needs to come to seek audience during the Dalai Lama's enthronement at the Kalsang Palace but further pointed out that the decision to conduct the enthronement at the Kalsang Palace was taken by the Tibetan National Assembly and that it is a Tibetan traditional custom to seek audience then. He notified that no changes were permissible, as the National Assembly had made the decisions. What it meant was that Wu Zhongxin had no authority to examine the boy. When we reported to Mr Wu about our meeting with the Chief Attendant, he became extremely upset and summoned Kunchok Jugney. In a powerful voice, he spoke about the crucial issue telling him to immediately rush to Reting Hutuktu and explain that the earlier decision must be followed. He further said that in the event that they fail to do so, all the personnel from the central authorities would certainly leave Tibet without any regrets. Following this, Reting Hutuktu's demeanour became gentler straightaway and the next day he sent a leader to the residence to seek apology reasoning that the Chief Attendant misunderstood and was not aware of the actual situation. After Mr. Wu was asked to assign the date and venue for the audience, he decided to conduct the examination on February 1 at Norbulingka.

Ya Hanzhang further notes, "However, the examination was merely to show some semblance of loyalty to the Guomingtang Government, and in reality, they had no authority to reject."[309]

According to Zhu-shao Yi's book, *An Eyewitness Account in Lhasa*, the date of Wu's first audience or investigation was on February 1, while Wu, in his journal, claims it was January 31. Wu also notes that his audience lasted for no more than ten minutes. One has to wonder how much investigation was done in such a short span of time.

The above information comes from the China Tibetology Research Centre's chinese language archive. The late Ngabo Ngawang Jigme,

309 - Ya Hanzhang, *The Dalai Lama's Biography,* Tibetan Language, 877-878.

who studied the old documents, had misgivings about such documents from government-backed institutions. In one of his speeches, he remarked:

> The Guomingtang government had treated this copied letter as if it was some kind of a precious jewel and had preserved it in the archives with the care deserving of such an item. It turned out that the Guomingtang government had treated this copied letter as the actual letter from the local Tibetan government, reporting to it on how it was making progress in the work for the discovery of the reincarnation of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. But the truth was this copied document was neither an actual report nor is it written on a traditional Tibetan handmade paper. Not only that, the document is not even stamped, rendering it just a general kind of a copied letter. Regarding the claim that there are two other actual reports in connection with the same matter, I have already referred to these two letters above…These two documents state that a candidate for the recognition of the reincarnation of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had been discovered in the Tsongon region, that while the discovery team prepared to proceed back to Tibet with the reincarnate candidate, Ma Bufeng raised all kinds of objections and created numerous obstacles. In view of this, the team sought the Guomingtang government for help, keeping in view its concern for the relationship between the Tibetan and Chinese people.

All the required ceremonial rituals related to the reincarnation were decided and performed by the Tibetans. The Chinese had no part in them. Thus, Gong Jizong, in a telegram on November 26, 1939, to the MTAC, writes: "We reached Lhasa on the 25th…[On] the 24th the Tsongon reincarnation's ordination ceremony as a monk was conducted by the Tibetans. Reting had conducted the ceremony of cutting of the hair on the crown tulku's head. As we were late by one day, we could not attend."[310]

310 - *A Collection of Documents on Prayer Service and Enthronement*, 275- 276.

Wu Zhongxin and the Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony

Following its triumph over the Nationalists, the Chinese communist government invaded Tibet. Initially, the communist party called the Kuomintang regime a group of untruthful reactionaries. But, today, it credits the Kuomintang for upholding the Tibetan reincarnation system.

One obvious example of Kuomintang's distortion of the facts relates to a press release from MTAC to nine Chinese newspapers, four days before the enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama, informing the press that a grand ceremony would be held on February 22 to commemorate the enthronement. The newspapers were ordered to cover the event and provide extensive publicity. The written order came with three appendixes.

In he first appendix, "The core reason for commemorating the enthronement ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama" noted that, "The Nationalist government specifically delegated the President of the Mongolia and Tibetan Affairs Commission, Wu Zhongxin to preside over the ceremony along with Reting Hutuktu."

In the second appendix, "The process of recognizing the Dalai Lama's reincarnation" mentions, among other matters, "The specifically delegated President of the Mongolia and Tibetan Affairs Commission, Wu Zhongxin is required to officiate all the affairs concerning the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama along with Reting Hutuktu."

In the third appendix, "The Dalai Lama's reincarnation and the nation's future prospects and vision" states: "On this day of the creation of a new nation in this great century, after emerging victorious from the war of resistance against Japan, the 14th Dalai Lama was enthroned under the supervision of the central government."[311]

311 - Ibid., 156- 157.

Today, these press reports of the event, based solely on the official press releases, are made to appear equivalent to historical documents.

Wu Zhongxin did not preside over the enthronement ceremony, as is sometimes claimed by the Chinese government. In fact, this claim is contradicted by historical documents including Wu's personal journal entries as well as writings of Tibetan and Chinese officials present at the ceremony. Wu and his entourage were simply guests at the ceremony. Shakabpa Wangchuk Deden, who was present at the ceremony, states:

> On the thirteenth day of the first month of the Iron-Dragon year, 1940, a procession brought the Dalai Lama from Norbulingka to the Potala Palace according to tradition. On the fourteenth day (February 22, 1940), the day on which the Dalai Lama was installed in power, the supreme sovereign incarnation Rinpoche was set upon the exalted golden throne, which was raised up by the eight lords of the fearless Mahadeva in the Sizhi Phuntsok Reception Hall. At the same time, the monks of Namgyal Monastery recited prayers for good fortune. In agreement with the ritual, which precedes the installment, monks adorned with ornaments made offerings to the Dalai Lama of the eight auspicious signs, the eight auspicious substances, and the seven varieties of royal emblems. The religious service was performed and solemn prayers were recited. The Protector Regent Radreng gave an oral explanation of the mandala. After the articles of investiture were presented to the Dalai Lama, the regent, the prime minister, the tutors, the hothuktu, the cabinet, the general attendants, the lamas and incarnations from Ganden, Sera and Drepung monasteries, and the government officials received the Dalai Lama's blessing. Then gifts from the Chinese Nationalist government were presented by Wu Zhongxin, Jao Gundin, Gong Jingzong, Chang Waibi, and so forth. The text reciters, debaters, offering distributors, dancers, musicians, the public and others assembled for the official celebration as in the past.[312]

312 - Tsepon Wangchuk Deden Shakabpa, *One Hundred Thousand Moons – An Advanced Political History of Tibet* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988) 885-886.

Wu's journal entries of February 22, and Secretary Zhu-shao (one of the gift bearers) in his book *An Eyewitness Account in Lhasa*, provide complete details on the proceedings of the ceremony. They offer no indication that Wu presided over the ceremony. He had the opportunity to offer a khata, and nothing more. As protocol mandated, he had to follow the senior officials of the Tibetan government and the high-ranking lamas. Wu arrived ahead of the ceremony and, like other guests, sat on the allotted seat and waited for about half an hour. It was the Tibetans who installed the young tulku on the throne.

Another important and contested aspect of the ceremony relates to the seating arrangement. Wu, in his journal, writes: "I was seated facing the south along the left side of the Dalai Lama." Most of the Chinese documents specifically claim that Wu's seat was placed alongside that of the Dalai Lama. In response, Shakabpa Wangchuk Deden writes in *The Political History of Tibet*:

> Furthermore, Wu's assertion that he conducted the enthronement ceremony, that he himself placed the Dalai Lama on the throne, and that the Dalai Lama bowed in the direction of Beijing out of gratitude are false, and each is completely without foundation in truth. Although I was not a high official at that time, having the rank of Tsipa (a treasury official), I was among the officials who were adorned with ornaments and who held incense. Thus, when the Dalai Lama came from his chambers, I greeted him carrying incense. Throughout the ceremony, I had to remain sitting before the throne in the meeting hall. When the Dalai Lama came from the chambers, Cabinet Minister Lama Tenpa Jamyang and Chief Attendant Ngawang Tenzin held his hands. When he climbed the steps and sat upon the throne, Abbot Khyenrap Tendzin raised him up in his arms. Since Wu Zhongxin had been invited, he was allowed into the throne room. Beyond that, not only did he did not touch the Dalai Lama, but he was not permitted to even approach the throne. If anyone had attempted to come near the throne, they would definitely have been seen by everyone.[313]

313 - Ibid., 888-889.

Secretary Zhu-shao's account, in his *An Eyewitness Account in Lhasa*, deserves special scrutiny. He wrote:

> February 22, corresponding to the fourteenth day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar, was the day for the enthronement of the previously decided candidate tulku. As per the already discussed etiquettes and protocol concerning the enthronement ceremony between the representative of President Wu and Reting, both sides concurred on performing the ceremony according to ancient Tibetan tradition. However, there was a disagreement over the seating arrangement of Mr Wu. Initially, the Tibetan side had intended to place Mr Wu's seat opposite to Reting and make it of an equal height to that of the Prime Minister, but Wu wanted the seating arrangement to at least adhere to the precedent set by the Manchu Ambans, who resided in Tibet, and place his seat alongside the Dalai Lama's throne on the left facing south. As this event carried official precedence, his representative reasoned that Wu being the envoy of the Nationalist Government, shouldering the responsibility for the Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony and also the main person in charge and president of Tibet and Mongolia affairs, thus they couldn't concede. After repeated discussions, the Tibetan side agreed.[314]

But although the word "agreed" is mentioned as part of the discussion before the actual ceremony, there is no record to show this was actually done. Moreover, a diagram of the seating arrangement of the ceremony shows the throne of the tulku and the seat of Wu are not placed alongside each other. The diagram, drawn by Secretary Zhu-shao Yi, shows the throne of the tulku at the head of the assembly, flanked by seats of his personal tutors on the right and the seats of his parents on the left, facing south. Below the throne, to the right, led by Reting Rinpoche, are the high lamas whose predecessors were former regents. The abbots and tulkus of monasteries and monk officials below the fourth rank sat behind Reting Rinpoche. On the left side of the assembly are the 16 seats for Wu and his entourage, 11 seats for the Nepali delegation and 7 for the Bhutanese. The monk

314 - Zhu-Shao Yi, *An Eyewitness Account in Lhasa*, Chinese Language, 77.

attendants of the Dalai Lama sat in the center of the assembly hall. The kalons sat on the south side. Behind them are the lay officials below the fourth rank, followed by foreigners. The diagram painstakingly mentions the names of all the former regents.

Furthermore, in a speech at the Tibet Autonomous Region's People's Congress in 1989, the late Ngabo Ngawang Jigme explained:

> In reality, there was no incident of any kind whereby it could be said that Wu Zhongxin presided over the ceremony for the enthronement of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Nevertheless, today, even some comrades of the Tibetan nationality, when writing about that period, have made claims about Wu Zhongxin having presided over the ceremony for the enthronement of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. It is impossible for anyone to write such a thing unless he knows absolutely nothing about Tibetan customs. Among those seated here today are many who have been aristocrats in old Tibet. As you all know, during the ceremony for the enthronement of the Dalai Lama, there is no one presiding over it. It was not like in the meetings of the Chinese people when someone is needed to preside over it…Last year, during the meeting of the Institute of Tibetology, I spoke about this matter and about my having looked up the relevant Guomindang archives on it. What reason is there for us communists to follow the footsteps of the Guomindang, to continue telling lies on this matter just like they did?

Wu's untruthful account of the seating arrangement clearly intended to protect the prestige of the Chinese government and prove that he was successful in fulfilling his official duties. But as much as the Chinese government tries to claim that Wu presided over the enthronement ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama, no historical evidence supports this claim. Rather, Wu was treated as another foreign dignitary, with no special privilege or authority.

The Golden Urn and methods for selecting tulkus' reincarnations

The PRC has assigned special importance to the use of the Golden Urn in the choosing of the Dalai Lamas. This is part of their effort to claim the power to choose the reincarnations of Tibetan lamas. As noted above, they point to the "exemption" from the use of the Golden Urn during the 14th Dalai Lama's selection as proof that this was an exception to the rule. But there is no truth to the claim that the system of the Golden Urn is an integral part of the Tibetan Buddhist ritual. In fact, the use of the Golden Urn is a foreign idea brought to Tibet by the Manchus under the twenty-nine article edit, or regulations of 1793 concerning Tibet (as discussed in the History Chapter of this report). Apart from the hereditary lineages - such as Sakya Gongmas, the Minling Trichens and the Taklung Shandrungs - the process of recognizing a reincarnate lama is as follows:

1) If the previous incarnation has left divinations, predictions and other instructions, then those are taken as the basis for choosing the reincarnation, and no other methods are required. This is how the Karmapas are recognized.

2) If there are no divinations, the guardian deities and lake Lhamo Lhatso are invoked to find the general direction and the location to which the search party should proceed. Recognition is bestowed if the candidate can reliably recall instances from the life of the previous incarnation and recognize objects belonging to his predecessor. No additional test is required. The recognition of the 14th Dalai Lama is an example of this method.

3) If the candidate displays only the attributes of the previous reincarnation, or there are several candidates, predictions from a charmed mirror, divination and consultation with an oracle are used. When the prophecies of the guardian deities and the divinations match satisfactorily, the reincarnation is recognized. This method was used to select the 13th Dalai Lama.

4) If there is trouble in confirming the reincarnation, then the dough-ball method of divination (*Zanril dril*) is used. This is different from the Manchu empire's drawing lots from the Golden Urn, which was an alien practice for Tibetans. The dough-ball and drawing lot methods do share some basic similarities, and the Tibetans have used both, on a few occasions, when the results of other methods were found to be inconclusive.

The 11th and 12th Dalai Lamas and 8th and 9th Panchen Lamas were selected using the Golden Urn method but this method was not used in the selection of any other Dalai Lamas. As a gesture of gratitude for its military assistance in fighting the Gorkha invasion in 1791-93, the Manchus were told that the Golden Urn was used in the selection of the 10th Dalai Lama but the selectors had not actually used it, since they did not believe in that process, and they simply said it to win favor.

Nonetheless, on July 18, 2007, under the aegis of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, the PRC issued the "Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism," also referred to as "Order No.5." This proclaimed that Tibetan tulkus must be recognized by drawing lots from the Golden Urn and must have the Chinese government's permission. This, of course, is a politically-motivated initiative to provide pretext for controlling the selection of the spiritual leaders of Tibetan Buddhism.

The PRC and His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

As an atheistic and anti-religious regime, the Chinese Communist government has no justifiable reason to interfere with the Tibetan Buddhism's tulku system. Equally preposterous is the Chinese government's insistence that the 14th Dalai Lama must reincarnate according to their terms. A reincarnation emanates in the form of

human body after the death of its predecessor; its sole purpose is to resume the noble activities of the Buddha dharma and serve the wellbeing of all sentient beings.

Chinese officials often portray His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the single greatest threat to the unity of the Chinese nation. They say the Dalai Lama has the "face of a man and a heart of beast, calling him a wolf in a monk's robe." They also claim that the Dalai Lama is a "leading separatist who is bent on destroying the unity of the motherland."

If the Chinese truly believe these depictions, what is the point of trying to force him to be reincarnated?

Nevertheless, the PRC has gone to extraordinary lengths to try to control the reincarnation process. The most dramatic example of this can be seen by its reaction to the 11th Panchen Lama, whom they kidnapped and replaced with a boy groomed to be pro-Beijing.

The PRC has spent decades attempting to build a semblance of the right to choose the reincarnation of the 14th Dalai Lama. In 1969, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that whether or not the reincarnation process should be continued should be decided by the Tibetan people. This statement was highly sensitive to the Chinese government. In recent years, the Chinese authorities have condemned His Holiness the Dalai Lama's remarks, saying the reincarnation process may end.

In 1992, the division of administrative regions of the Chinese government in Qinghai province passed a legal statute called "Conducting the search and recognition of tulkus of the Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation system in Qinghai." The fourth article of this statute states: "Although falling under the purview of the third article, recognition will not be given to a reincarnation who has escaped to a

foreign country and engages in activities hurting the interest of the motherland." This is obviously intended to challenge the religious authority of the 14th Dalai Lama and to control the 15th Dalai Lama.

Then, in 2007, the Chinese State Administration of Religious Affairs implemented the aforementioned "Order No. Five on the management for the reincarnation of living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism." The administration's Director, Ye Xiaowen, signed the order.

At a meeting on the sidelines of China's National People's Congress held in Beijing in March 2015, the Regional Governor of TAR, Padma Choling stated: "Whether the Dalai Lama wans to cease reincarnation or not, this decision is not up to him. When he became the 14th Dalai Lama, it was not his decision. He was chosen following a strict system dictated by religious rules and historical tradition and also with the approval of the central government. Can he decide when to stop reincarnating? That is impossible."[315]

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has long said that he would not be reborn in Chinese controlled Tibet because on that soil, he could not serve as a free champion of the Tibetan people. In response, in 2011, the Chinese government's State Administration for Religious Affairs enacted a law forbidding the Dalai Lama to be reborn anywhere but on Chinese-controlled soil. Even further beyond the bounds of human reason and understanding, a director at the Chinese Tibetology Research Center decreed, "The next Dalai Lama should be produced in the Dalai Lama's Qinghai province hometown on Chinese soil in accordance with historical customs and religious liturgy."

In addition to the outrageous attempt to control the process of reincarnation, the Chinese government launched the "Tibetan Buddhist tulku search engine," an online database containing information on

315 - Stephen McDonell, "China Accuses Dalai Lama of 'Profaning' Buddhism by Signalling End to Reincarnation", *ABC News*, March 10, 2015, http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-10/china-attacks-dalai-lama-over-bid-to-cease-reincarnation/6296420.

1,311 tulkus. All the names in the database have to be approved by the government. Notably, terms like "Dalai" or "Tenzin Gyatso" are blocked on www.tibet.cn, the government- backed website.

Statements of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama on his reincarnation

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has been very firm on the question of the next Dalai Lama: he has described the PRC's position as "quite nonsense" and said, "As far as my own birth is concerned, the final authority is my say, no one else's."

In September 2011, in a public statement, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said:

> When I am about 90, I will consult the high Lamas of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions, the Tibetan public and other concerned people who follow Tibetan Buddhism and re-evaluate whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. On that basis, we will take a decision. If it is decided that reincarnation of the Dalai Lama should continue and there is a need for the 15th Dalai Lama to be recognized, responsibility for doing so will primarily rest on the concerned officers of the Dalai Lama's Phodrang Trust. They should consult various heads of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions and the reliable oath-bound Dharma protectors who are linked inseparably to the lineage of the Dalai Lama. They should seek advice and direction from these concerned beings and carry out the procedures of search and recognition in accordance with tradition. I shall leave clear written instructions about this. Bear in mind that, apart from the reincarnation recognized through such legitimate methods, there will be no recognition or acceptance to a candidate chosen for political ends, including those in the CPC.[316]

Three years later, in September 2014, His Holiness the Dalai Lama further explained: "To find my successor, procedures related to the prophecies will not be used, because China could influence them. I

316 - Ranjit S. Kalha, "The Politics of Reincarnation Will Be the Next Crisis in Sino-Indian Relations", *The Wire*, April 14, 2017, https://thewire.in/external-affairs/dalai-lama-china-india-tibet.

think something more along the lines of a Conclave, similar to that used by the Catholic Church to elect the Pope, or written instructions to be read after my death."[317]

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has also said that he might be reincarnated as a woman, or that Tibetans might vote on whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue at all. His Holiness even said that he might select his own reincarnation while he is still alive - a theological twist known as *Madhey Tulku* - which would give him the chance to train a successor and avoid the gap in leadership that has always been a time of instability for Tibetans.[318]

Only one thing is certain, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has publicly said that his successor will be found outside the Chinese controlled Tibet.

Conclusion

The future of the institution of the Dalai Lama is widely debated in Tibetan and Chinese society. It is challenging for any one to consider the succession of their highest leader, particularly one whom they have relied on for many decades. For Tibetans, the issue is compounded by the aggressive intrusion of the PRC. Unsatisfied with holding the land and governance of Tibet, the PRC feels the need to control the region's spiritual traditions as well.

Fortunately, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's clarity on the issue, as well as the history of the tulku tradition, offers little room for confusion about who has the authority to choose reincarnated lamas. Since 1969, His Holiness has made it clear that the institution's future is in

317 - - "Dalai Lama Challenges CPC: Find Mao's Reincarnation and You Can Choose My Successor", *Asia News*, May 13, 2016, http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Dalai-Lama-challenges-CPC:-Find-Mao%E2%80%99s-reincarnation-and-you-can-choose-my-successor-37487.html.

318 - Dalai Lama, "Reincarnation", https://www.dalailama.com/the-dalai-lama/biography-and-daily-life/reincarnation.

the hands of the Tibetan people. No nation's government, whether that of China or another country, can claim to determine who the next Dalai Lama, or any other tulku will be. This sacred and unique Tibetan Buddhist tradition will be carried forward by the Tibetan Buddhist people and institutions, as it has been carried forward since its inception.

CHAPTER NINE

THE MIDDLE WAY APPROACH: THE WAY FORWARD

The Middle Way Approach (MWA), "*Umay-lam*" in Tibetan, a policy conceived by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, seeks genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people and engagement with the Chinese leadership for the benefit of both the Chinese and Tibetan people. The Middle Way Approach is grounded in Buddhist principles of avoiding extremes and instead, finding middle ground. Thus, it is an approach that straddles the middle path between the status quo and independence. It categorically rejects the present repressive and colonial policies of the Chinese government towards the Tibetan people but also does not seek independence from the People's Republic of China (PRC). Through negotiations, the MWA seeks to achieve a coexistence between the Tibetan and Chinese people where Tibetans enjoy genuine self-rule within the constitutional framework of the PRC and are able to restore and preserve the unique Tibetan language and cultural heritage as well their once-pristine environment.

Around 1968, after taking into consideration prevailing political trends around the world, particularly in China, His Holiness the Dalai Lama held a series of discussions with the decision-making

body at the time, the Kashag and Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the then Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. As a result, in 1974, a decision was made to pursue a policy of securing meaningful autonomy, instead of seeking complete independence, by engaging with the Chinese government to find a mutually acceptable solution. On the basis of this approach, formal contacts and dialogue with China began in 1979.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama formally announced the MWA with the presentation of the Five-Point Peace Plan at the U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus in 1987, and the Strasbourg Proposal at the European Parliament in 1988.

In an opinion poll held in 1997 among the Tibetans in exile, 64 percent of the respondents expressed support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's vision. At that time, a large majority of opinion sought from Tibetans inside Tibet also endorsed support for the Middle Way Approach. Reflecting this outcome, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile adopted a unanimous resolution to support the approach, and to this day, continues to pursue the Middle Way Policy as the most realistic and pragmatic course to peacefully resolve the situation of Tibet. Over the ensuing decades, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has repeatedly reaffirmed the Tibetan people's adherence to the policy.

The MWA is a win-win proposition and a pragmatic position that safeguards the vital interests of all concerned parties. For Tibetans, it offers the protection and preservation of their identity and dignity; for China, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the motherland.

Tibetans are seeking a form of self-governance that allows them to meet their basic needs but does not challenge the unity and stability of the People's Republic of China. They are asking to unite under a single administrative unit to more efficiently and effectively preserve

and promote the unique Tibetan characteristics. Currently, Tibetans are divided into the "Tibet Autonomous Region" and Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures and Counties in the neighbouring provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan, each of which are majority Chinese. Chinese authorities claim that it is the Tibetan leadership's intention to expel "all Chinese" from Tibetan areas but in fact, the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People,[319] presented to the PRC leadership during the 8th round of talks in October 2008 clearly articulates that this is not the case: "Our intention is not to expel non-Tibetans. Our concern is the induced mass movement of primarily Chinese, but also some other nationalities, into many Tibetan areas, which in turn marginalizes the native Tibetan population."

The Memorandum calls for Tibetan areas to have a Tibetan majority for the protection and promotion of the unique Tibetan identity and articulates eleven basic needs:

1. **Language**: Language is the most important attribute of the Tibetan people's identity. Tibetan language is the primary means of communication, the language in which literature, spiritual texts and historical and scientific works of Tibetans are written. The Constitution of the PRC, in Article 4, guarantees the freedom of all nationalities "to use and develop their own spoken and written languages …" In order to use and develop their own language, Tibetan must be respected as the spoken and written language of the region—it must be the principal language of the Tibetan autonomous areas. This principle is also broadly recognized in the Constitution

319 - Central Tibetan Administration, "Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People", http://tibet.net/important-issues/sino-tibetan-dialogue/memorandum-on-geniune-autonomy-for-the-tibetan-people/.

in Article 121, which states, "the organs of self-government of the national autonomous areas employ the spoken and written language or language in common use in the locality." Article 10 of the Law on Regional National Autonomy (LRNA) provides that these organs "shall guarantee the freedom of the nationalities in these areas to use and develop their own spoken and written languages…." Consistent with the principle of recognition of Tibetan as the main language in Tibetan areas, the LRNA (Article 36) also allows the autonomous government authorities to decide on "the language used in instruction and enrolment procedures" with regard to education. This implies recognition of the principle that the main medium of education should be Tibetan.

2. Culture: The concept of national regional autonomy is primarily for the purpose of preserving the culture of minority nationalities. Consequently, the constitution of the PRC contains references to cultural preservation in Articles 22, 47 and 119 as well as in Article 38 of the LRNA. For Tibetans, Tibetan culture is closely connected to our religion, tradition, language and identity, which are facing threats at multiple levels. Since Tibetans live within the multinational state of the PRC, this distinct Tibetan cultural heritage needs protection through appropriate constitutional provisions.

3. Religion: Religion is fundamental to Tibetans, and Buddhism is inextricably linked to our identity. While recognizing the importance of the separation of church and state, this principle should not affect the freedom and practice of believers. It is impossible for Tibetans to imagine personal or community freedom without freedom to practice their belief, conscience and religion. The Constitution recognizes the importance of religion and protects the right to profess it. Article 36 guarantees all citizens the right to the freedom of religious belief. No one can compel another to believe in or not to believe in any religion, and discrimination on the basis of religion is forbidden.

An interpretation of this constitutional principle in light of international standards would also cover freedom of the manner of belief or worship and this includes the right of monasteries to be organized and run according to Buddhist monastic tradition; to engage in teachings and studies; and to enrol any number of monks and nuns of any age group in accordance with these rules. The normal practice of holding public teachings and empowerment ceremonies with large gatherings is covered by this freedom. Furthermore, the state should not interfere in religious practices and traditions such as the relationship between a teacher and his or her disciple, management of monastic institutions, and the recognition of reincarnations.

4. Education: The desire of Tibetans to develop and administer their own education system in cooperation and coordination with the PRC's central government's ministry of education is supported by the principles contained in the Constitution, as is the aspiration to engage in and contribute to the development of science and technology. Under Article 19 of the Constitution, the state takes on the overall responsibility to provide education for its citizens, but Article 119 recognizes the principle that "[T]he organs of self-government of the national autonomous areas independently administer educational …. affairs in their respective areas…" This principle is also reflected in Article 36 of the LRNA.

As for the aspiration to engage in and contribute to the development of scientific knowledge and technology, the Constitution (Article 119) and the LRNA (Article 39) clearly recognize the right of autonomous areas to do so. We note here the increasing recognition by the international scientific community of the contributions to numerous areas of modern science made by Buddhist psychology, metaphysics, understanding of the mind and cosmology

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5. Environmental Protection: Tibet is the prime source of Asia's great rivers. It also holds the earth's loftiest mountains, its most extensive and highest plateau, as well as abundant mineral resources, ancient forests, and deep valleys untouched by humans. Through the ages, protection of the region's environment has been enhanced by the Tibetan

people's traditional respect for all forms of life, and the prohibition against harming sentient beings, whether human or animal. Historically, Tibet was an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment. But today, Tibet's once-protected environment is suffering irreparable damage, especially grasslands, croplands, forests, water resources and wildlife, even though Articles 45 and 66 of the LNRA gives the Tibetan people the right to manage the environment and to follow traditional conservation practices

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6. Utilization of Natural Resources: With respect to the protection and management of the natural environment and the utilization of natural resources, the Constitution and the LRNA only acknowledge a limited role for the organs of self-government of the autonomous areas (see LRNA Articles 27, 28, 45, 66, and Article 118 of the Constitution, which pledges that the state "shall give due consideration to the interests of [the national autonomous areas]". The LRNA recognizes the importance of autonomous areas to protect and develop forests and grasslands (Article 27) and to "give priority to the rational exploitation and utilization of the natural resources that the local authorities are entitled to develop", but only within the limits of state plans and legal stipulations. In fact, the central role of the state in these matters is reflected in the Constitution (Article 9).

The development of the natural resources, taxes and revenues of an economy are based on the ownership of land

but principles of autonomy enunciated in the Constitution do not truly lead in this direction. Tibetans cannot become masters of their own destiny if they are not sufficiently involved in decision-making on utilization of natural resources such as mineral resources, waters, forests, mountains, grasslands, etc. It is essential that only the nationality of the autonomous region possess the legal authority to transfer or lease land, (except land owned by the state). In the same manner, the autonomous region must have the independent authority to formulate and implement development plans concurrent to those of the state.

7. Economic Development and Trade: The Chinese Constitution recognizes the principle that the autonomous authorities have an important role to play in the economic development of their areas, in view of local characteristics and needs (Article 118 of the Constitution; also reflected in LRNA Article 25). The Constitution also recognizes the principle of autonomy in the administration and management of finances (Article 117, and LRNA Article 32). At the same time, the Constitution recognizes the importance of providing state funding and assistance to the autonomous areas to accelerate development (Article 122, LRNA Article 22).
Similarly, Article 31 of the LRNA recognizes the competence of autonomous areas that border foreign countries, to conduct border trade as well as trade with foreign countries. The recognition of these principles is important to the Tibetan nation-

ality given its proximity to foreign countries with which the people have cultural, religious, ethnic and economic affinities. Tibet remains one of the most economically backward regions within the PRC, and welcomes economic development. But assistance rendered by the central government and other provinces has only temporary benefits and in the long run, it is harmful to Tibetans to become dependent on others. Clearly, economic self-reliance is a critical objective of Tibetan autonomy.

8. Public Health: The Chinese Constitution spells out the responsibility of the state to provide health and medical services (Article 21). Article 119 recognizes that this is an area of responsibility of the autonomous areas. Article 40 of the LRNA also recognises the right of organs of self-government of the autonomous areas to "make independent decisions on plans for developing local medical and health services and for advancing both modern and the traditional medicine of the nationalities." According to the principles of the above-mentioned laws, the regional autonomous organs need to have the competencies and resources to cover the health needs of the entire Tibetan population. They also require the competencies to promote traditional Tibetan medical and astrological system, strictly according to traditional practice. However, the existing healthcare system utterly fails to adequately cover the needs of the rural Tibetan population.

9. Public Security: Responsibility for the internal public order and security of the autonomous areas is vital to autonomy and self-government. The Constitution (Article 120) and LRNA (Article 24) recognize the importance of local involvement and authorize autonomous areas to organize their security within "the military system of the State and practical needs and with the approval of the State Council." But it is crucial that the majority of security personnel consist of members of the local nationality, for they are the ones who understand and respect local customs and traditions; in Tibetan areas, however, there is a total absence of decision-making authority in the hands of local Tibetan officials.

10. Regulation of Population Migration: The fundamental objective of national regional autonomy and self-government is to preserve the identity, culture, and language of the minority nationality and to ensure that it is the master of its own affairs. When applied to a particular territory in which the minority nationality lives in a concentrated community or communities, the very principle and purpose of national regional autonomy is undermined if large-scale migration and settlement of the majority Han nationality and other nationalities is not only allowed but encouraged. Major demographic changes that result from such mass migration will have the effect of assimilating rather than integrating the Tibetan nationality into the Han nationality – and in addition, the influx of large numbers of Han and other nationalities

into Tibetan areas will fundamentally change the conditions necessary to exercise regional autonomy: the constitutional criteria for the exercise of autonomy is that the minority nationality "live in compact communities" in a particular territory. If migrations, transfers, and settlements continue uncontrolled, Tibetans will no longer live in a compact community and consequently, no longer be entitled, under the Constitution, to national regional autonomy. This would effectively violate the very principles of the Constitution in its approach to the issue of nationalities.

There is precedent in the PRC for restriction on the movement or residence of citizens and only a very limited recognition of the right of autonomous areas to work out measures to control "the transient population." To ensure the realization of the principle of autonomy, it is vital to have the authority to regulate the residence, settlement, employment and economic activities of persons who wish to move to Tibetan areas from other parts of the PRC. This does not mean expulsion of the non-Tibetans permanently settled in Tibet, having grown up and lived there for a considerable time. Rather, we are concerned about the mass-movement of primarily Han, but also some other nationalities, into many areas of Tibet, upsetting existing communities, marginalizing the local Tibetan population and threatening the fragile natural environment.

11. Cultural, Educational and Religious Exchanges with Other Countries: The importance of exchanges and cooperation between the Tibetan nationality in autonomous areas and other nationalities, provinces, and regions of the PRC, as well as the power to conduct such exchanges with foreign countries in these areas, is recognized in the LRNA (Article 42). Both the National Regional Autonomy Law and the Constitution of the People's Republic of China assign significant respect to these needs for minorities in China.

Impact of and support for the Middle Way Policy

The adoption of the Middle Way Policy has enabled direct contact between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the PRC leadership. The first direct contact began in 1979, making it possible for His Holiness to send four fact-finding delegations, one after another, between 1979 and 1985—and for these delegations to travel extensively throughout Tibetan areas and meet with Chinese leadership in Beijing. More importantly, two exploratory talk missions were sent in 1982 and 1984 to meet with the PRC leadership in Beijing. Then, from 2002 to 2010, the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama held nine rounds of talks and one informal meeting with representatives of the Chinese leadership.

The fact-finding delegations, exploratory talk missions and the direct meetings with PRC leadership did not resolve the vexed issue of Tibet. However, these visits and meetings enabled us to see the real situation of the Tibetan people, better understand the Chinese position and clearly explain the position of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people, on how to resolve the pressing concerns of China's iron grip. If Chinese leaders truly had the will to resolve the

problems caused by their rule, they would clearly understand what His Holiness and the Tibetan people aspire to achieve.

The Middle Way Approach enjoys considerable support from leaders and intellectuals inside Tibet, Chinese communities both within and outside of China, and members of the international community.

Some of the prominent supporters inside Tibet include the 10th Panchen Lama, who openly expressed support for the Middle Way Approach, as well as senior leaders such as Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, Bapa Phuntsog Wangyal, Dorjee Tseten, Sangye Yeshi (Tian Bao), Tashi Tsering and Yangling Dorjee.

Both within and outside of China, support for the policy continues to grow, particularly among Chinese intellectuals and artists, such as Liu Xiaobo, the imprisoned and now-deceased Nobel Laureate, who co-authored an open letter in 2008 expressing support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's peace initiatives. Since then, more than 1,000 articles and opinion pieces have been written by Chinese scholars and writers expressing support for dialogue as the way forward to resolving the issue of Tibet. Support for the Middle Way Approach has also come from intellectuals such as Wang Lixiong, a well-known writer; Zhang Boshu of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and constitutional expert; Ran Yunfei of Sichuan Literary Periodical; Yu Haocheng, a senior member of the Communist Party and legal expert based in Beijing; Su Shaozhi, former economist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; and Yan Jiaqi, close aide of former CCP Secretary Zhao Ziyang. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have also called for the PRC leadership to review their policy for the Tibetans, and urged the start of negotiations. A report by a Beijing-based legal CSO, the Gongmeng Constitutional Initiative, described the grievances of the Tibetan people and called for a policy review by the PRC. In 2012, 82 Chinese CSOs based in 15 countries sent a petition to the United Nations, the European Union, and

various parliaments and governments, exhorting them to "urge the Chinese government to start negotiations as soon as possible."

In the broader international community, the Middle Way Approach has enabled many governments to support a solution-oriented approach and raise the issue of Tibet in their bilateral dialogue and dealings with the Chinese leadership. The strong international backing for the policy represents the belief held by many governments that it is the most viable option to address the current situation inside Tibet.

Successive Presidents of United States including Jimmy Carter, George H W Bush, Bill Clinton, George W Bush, and Barack Obama have all supported His Holiness' initiatives to reach out to the PRC leadership, to negotiate a resolution to the crisis in Tibet. After President Obama's meetings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the White House issued statements applauding His Holiness' commitment to nonviolence and dialogue with China, and his pursuit of the Middle Way Approach. President Obama encouraged the relevant parties to engage in "direct dialogue to resolve long-standing differences" and expressed support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach.

Many other prominent global leaders have in the past called for dialogue following the Middle Way Approach, including UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay; President of the European Council, Donald Tusk; High Representative for European Union Foreign Affairs/Security Policy/Vice-President of European Commission Lady Catherine Ashton; British Prime Minister Gordon Brown; French President Nicolas Sarkozy; German Chancellor Angela Merkel; Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper; Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott; Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd; and Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou.

Additionally, many parliaments and governments have officially stated their support for the Middle Way Approach, including the U.S., India, Britain, France, Germany, Australia and New Zealand. In the last few years alone, declarations, resolutions and motions of support for the Middle Way Approach have been passed in parliaments in the U.S., European Union, France, Italy, Japan, Australia, Brazil and Luxembourg, among others.

The Middle Way Approach has received support from a number of Nobel Peace Laureates, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, Elie Wiesel and Jody Williams of the U.S., Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, Lech Walesa of Poland, Shirin Ebadi of Iran, Rigoberta Menchú Tum of Guatemala, José Ramos Horta of East Timor, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel of Argentina, Mairead Corrigan Maguire of Ireland, and Betty Williams of the U.K.

In an open letter addressed to Chinese President Hu Jintao in the year 2012, the group of Nobel peace laureates wrote:

> The people of Tibet wish to be heard. They have long sought meaningful autonomy, and chosen negotiation and friendly help as their means of attaining it. The Chinese government should hear their voices, understand their grievances and find a non-violent solution. That solution is offered by our friend and brother His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who has never sought separatism, and has always chosen a peaceful path. We strongly urge the Chinese government to seize the opportunity he provides for a meaningful dialogue. Once formed, this channel should remain open, active and productive. It should address issues that are at the heart of the current tension, respecting the dignity of the Tibetan people and the integrity of China.

Therefore, given that Tibet was never a part of China, the Middle Way Approach remains the most viable solution to resolving the long-standing Sino-Tibet issue.

For Tibetans, information is a precious commodity. Severe restrictions on expression, accompanied by a relentless disinformation campaign engender facts, and knowledge to become priceless. This has long been the case with Tibet. But, regardless of how much the Chinese government attempts to cloud the world's view of Tibet, as long as Tibetans and their supporters continue to publish and promote information that reveals the truth of what goes on in the region, the push for the rights of Tibetans will continue.

This report marks Central Tibetan Administration's contribution to the effort.

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