A GENERAL SURVEY

TIBET
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Tibet, a beautiful land with rich resources, is located on China’s southwestern frontier. It is about 1.2 million square kilometers in area, one-eighth of all of China, 11 times the size of Zhejiang Province, 33 times Taiwan, 2 times France, 3 times Japan, or 4 times Britain proper. Averaging four thousand meters above sea level, Tibet occupies the highest plateau on the earth, otherwise known as the “roof of the world” or the “third polar region of the earth.” Of Tibet’s population, 94.1 percent are ethnic Tibetans, 1,780,000 in number; the rest belong to Han, Menba, Luoba, Hui, Mongolian, Nu, Drung, Naxi, and other nationalities. The total population of the region according to A Statistical Survey in 1986 (co-published by New World Press and China Statistical Information and Consultancy Service Center) is 1,990,000.

The Tibetan name for the region is Bod. The name Tibet is derived from the Mongolian Thubet, the Chinese Tufan, the Tai Thibet, and the Arabic Tubbat.

The Tibetans are a brave, wise, diligent, and honest people with a long history in China. They exploited the land and created a brilliant ancient culture. In the following pages, readers will get some glimpses of Tibet, its past and present, and its contributions to the creation and development of China.
Chapter I

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TIBETAN NATIONALITY

1. The Annexation of Tribal Groups and the Formation of the Tibetan Nationality on the Tibetan Plateau

According to classic Tibetan historical works, the Tibetan race is descended from the union of a macaque monkey and an ogress. The macaque had been sent down into the world by Avolokitesvara, an exalted deity known as the Goddess of Mercy.

In recent decades Chinese research workers in Tibet have made many archeological finds. Neolithic and paleolithic human bones and relics have been unearthed near Karo village in Qamdo (Chab-mdo) Prefecture in the northern suburb of Lhasa, in Ding-ri of the Gtsang region, at Heihe, and at the big bend of the Yarlung Zangpo River. They show that as early as three thousand to ten thousand years ago Tibet was populated by human beings.

The people on the Tibetan plateau developed a clan society, and were divided into various tribal groups. In the sixth century, these groups were scattered: the Sum-pa in the
north, the big and small Zhang-zhung tribes in the northwest and west, the Zi-li tribe in the southwest, the Sbrang, Dangxiang, and Fuguo tribes in the east, and the Bo tribe in the south in the Yarlung Zangpo River basin. These tribes fought one another, with the Bo tribe finally conquering and annexing all the other tribes. This led to the unification of various tribal groups and the formation of the Tibetan nationality, which has a long history in China.

2. Unification of Tibet by the Bo Tribe and the Establishment of the Bo Dynasty

The home seat of the Bo tribe was at Yarlung in Lho-kha. The Bo’s earliest leader was believed to be Gnya’-khri btsan-po, the forefather of the Tubo royal house. (During the reign of the twenty-eighth btsan-po descending from him, Lha tho-tho gnyan-btsan, a few Buddhist scriptures and musical instruments used in Buddhist rituals were brought into Tibet from Nepal and were treated with respect, although nobody could interpret the meaning of the scriptures. This was the Tibetans’ first contact with Buddhism, and is considered by Tibetan Buddhists to be the beginning of Buddhist diffusion into Tibet.)

The following is a review of the major reigns of the Bo dynasty:

Stag-po gnyan-gzig and Gnam-ri-blon-btsan—The Bo tribe gathered strength steadily during the reign of Stag-po gnyan-gzig, the thirty-first btsan-po. He first conquered the neighboring Dvags-po and Kong-po tribes, then led his expansion northward. On his way to conquer the Sum-pa,
the largest tribe in the north, the btsan-po died, and was succeeded by his son, Gnam-ri-blon-btsan, who carried out military expansion and occupied Phan-po in the area north of present-day Lhasa and the Gtsan region. During the sixth century, the Bo tribe annexed the major domains of other tribal groups. Not long after that, however, Gnam-ri-blon-btsan was poisoned, and Tibetan tribal groups one after another revolted against the Bo.

Srongo-btsan sgam-po, thirteen-year old son of Gnam-ri-blon-btsan, came to the throne in 628. He not only put down the revolts, but also continued his father’s military conquest. He conquered the Sum-pa and Zhang-zhung tribes, thus completing the geographical unification of Tibet and leading to the formation of the Tibetan nationality.

To consolidate the newly unified community, Srongo-btsan sgam-po established new institutions in military, political, legal, cultural, and religious affairs.

First, he divided the whole area into sixty-one stong-sde, each of which was both a military and an administrative unit. Thus, military power was merged with administrative power and both of the powers were held by the king himself. Then he laid down Six Legal Codes which legalized the stong-sde structure and set forth governmental posts, ranks, and symbols, as well as rewards and punishments of officials; it also set forth civil law, criminal law, and rules of morality.

To develop culture and language, he sent young nobles to study in Chang’an, the capital of the Tang dynasty, and had the Tibetan script created. Since then, this script has been used throughout the region. The king invited translators from Nepal and interior China to translate Buddhist
scriptures in Han and Sanskrit languages into Tibetan. All those scriptures belonged to Mahayana Buddhism and they led to the later diffusion of Mahayana in Tibet. The Tibetans at that time were having only preliminary contacts with Buddhism. It was not until a later time that Buddhism was established in Tibet as a religious institution, with temples and monasteries as well as monks to interpret Buddhist doctrines and engage in religious activities.

Srong-btsan sgam-po lived in an age when Emperor Tai Zong (reigned 627-649) of the Tang dynasty reunified the whole country and all nationalities pledged their allegiance to the “Heavenly Khan.” In accord with the political and military trends in the country during that time, Srong-btsan sgam-po with his newly unified Tibet (then called Tubo) offered his allegiance to the Tang dynasty. Five times during 634-640 he sent envoys with gifts of valuables to the Tang court to request alliance by marriage. In 641, the Tang emperor granted the Tibetan king’s request and promised him Princess Wen Cheng in marriage. Later, the Tang emperor promised Princess Jing Cheng in marriage to another btsan-po. The two marriages brought about the “nephew and uncle” relationship between Tubo and the Tang court which was acknowledged and confirmed by all successive btsan-pos.

In 641 Emperor Tai Zong ordered Prince Li Daozong, the king of Jiangxia, to accompany Princess Wen Cheng to Tibet. They were greeted on the way at Baihai by Srong-btsan sgam-po, who showed great courtesy as a son-in-law to Li Daozong. According to the Tang tradition, “to show courtesy as a son-in-law” meant to take the responsibility of “safeguarding the borders and serving as a hereditary vassal.” Chinese annals indicate that Srong-btsan sgam-po
fulfilled his duty with great loyalty. A letter he wrote to Zhangsun Wuji, the chief minister of the Tang court said:

At the time when the new emperor has just ascended the throne, if someone has the audacity to launch a rebellion, I will lead my armed forces to suppress it.

He stood by Emperor Tai Zong in the latter’s endeavors to unify the country, expressing his support at nearly every critical juncture and received many royal honors in recognition of his loyalty.

He died in 650, the year after Tai Zong. He not only achieved peace among the tribal groups on the Tibetan plateau and brought them into the Tubo (the Tibetan nationality), but also led the Tubo into the family of nationalities of China. For his brilliant contributions he has enjoyed not only the love and esteem of the Tibetan people for centuries, but also has a place of honor in the history of China.

Khri-srong-lde-btsan (reigned 755-797) was another famous btsan-po. His parents were Khri-lde-gtsug-btsan, the thirty-seventh btsan-po (reigned 704-755) and the Tang princess Jin Cheng, whose marriage helped strengthen the relationship between the Tang court and the Tubo people.

He sent emissaries to Chang’an, Wutai Mountain, and Nepal for Buddhist scriptures, and invited Santaraksita and Padmasambhava, two famous Indian panditas, from Nepal, and eminent monks from the Chinese hinterland to spread Buddhism in Tibet. Under the guidance of Santaraksita and Padmasambhava, the Bsam-yas Monastery was constructed in the Lho-kha region with a great hall combining Tibetan,
Chinese, and Indian architecture, symbolizing the way the efforts of monks from the three places combined to establish Buddhism in Tibet. With the building of this monastery, which was the first to have Tibetans tonsured for monkhood and which became a destination for sacred pilgrimages, began the organization of communities of monks and the spread of Buddhism throughout the land. Many scholars specializing in the history of Tibetan Buddhism consider that the diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet, in a strict sense, began in the middle of the eighth century.

After the 670s, the Tubo became one of the most powerful national minorities in China. It once expanded its control as far as Nanzhao and the whole northwestern area of China. Although the Tang court regained the four strategic towns in Anxi (modern Kuche, Yanqi, Kashi, and Hotan, all in Xinjiang, northwest China) in 692 and freed Nanzhao from the Tubo's control in 794, Khri-srong-lde-btsan still occupied areas west of the Yellow River and of Gansu.

*Mu-ne btsan-po* (reigned 797-798) succeeded his father, Khri-srong-lde-btsan, as btsan-po. He continued the policy of diffusing Buddhism in Tibet, and spared no effort to patronize Buddhists and gave them great amounts of alms. Such a policy resulted in a glaring discrepancy between the rich and the poor in the possession of property. In an attempt to remedy the situation, three times in twenty months Mu-ne btsan-po ordered the equalization of property among his subjects, but this did nothing to eliminate the differences. Subsequently, he was poisoned by his mother, who stood for the nobility's interests.

*Khri-lde-srong-btsan* (reigned 798-815) and his fourth son,
Ral-pa-chan (reigned 815-841), were the next two rulers. In their reigns they, especially Ral-pa-chan, intensified Mu-ne btsan-po’s efforts to foster Buddhism. They bestowed large areas of land for crop cultivation or cattle and sheep husbandry on monasteries, with the result that the former monks became manorial lords. All this inevitably increased the burden of the people and aroused strong opposition among the nobles whose estates were occupied by the monasteries. The nobles intrigued against Ral-pa-chan. Finally, in 841, Ral-pa-chan was murdered by his ministers, who placed on the throne his elder brother, Dar-ma. His opposition to the faith marked the end of a long period of development of Buddhism in Tibet.

Dar-ma (reigned 841-845) opposed Buddhism all his life. After he came to power in 841, he banned the Buddhist religion in Tibet and burned Buddhist scriptures. He was assassinated by an avenging monk in 845. Although anti-Buddhist Dar-ma reigned for only four years, his reign was followed by a long period of turmoil not favorable to religion, with the result that for 137 years thereafter there was no Buddhism in Tibet. Dar-ma was the last ruler of a united Tibet for almost four hundred years.

After Dar-ma’s death, his queen and concubines became rivals for the ruling power. The strong widowed queen insisted that her brother’s son be enthroned. The ministers were doubtful about the legality of the new btsan-po and called him in private Yum-brtan, which means “insistence by mother.” Blong Khung-re, a Tubo garrison commander controlling more than thirty thousand men, took the lead in revolt, which in turn led to strife within the royal house and ministers and cause them to split. Encouraged by the
political situation, large-scale uprisings of slaves broke out, and the Tubo dynasty fell.

It is interesting to note that, despite periods of war for the control of the “silk route” in the northwest of China during this long period, friendly contacts were always maintained between the Tang court and the Tubo. Even while at war with the Tang court the Tubo still honored the “nephew and uncle” relationship established with the Tang during the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po (628-650), and reverently called the Tang dynasty “uncle state” and the Tang emperor “uncle emperor” or “uncle.”

Also, missions were extraordinarily frequent between the Tang and the Tubo in those times. According to some estimates, during the years 634 to 842 one hundred missions traveled to Chang’an and fifty-two to Tibet, an average of one every sixteen months. In the hundred-odd years from 705 to 822, eight peace treaties were also concluded, although on one occasion the Tubos, irritated by the repeated detention and exile of their envoys, stormed Chang’an and briefly enthroned a nephew of Princess Jin Cheng as the Tang emperor to replace Dai Zong; they did not have sufficient forces to maintain the occupation, however. The treaty in 821 between Ral-pa-chan and the Tang emperor Mu Zong was marked by erection in Lhasa of the Tang-Tubo Peace Pledge Monument, also known as the “Maternal Uncle-Nephew Peace Pledge Monument,” which still stands before the Jokhang Monastery, a witness to the Tang-Tubo unity achieved through the marriages of Princess Wen Cheng and Princess Jin Cheng.

Following is a brief translation of the Tibetan text carved on the monument:
A. Since the divine lord Gnya'-khri btsan-po, great achievements have been made in civil and military affairs in the Tubo kingdom which enjoys the respect of its neighboring states—India, Persia and Huihe (Uygur).

B. In the east is the Tang dynasty, the kingdom where the sun rises. Unlike Nepal to the south of the Tubo, it has a good government. The first emperor of the Tang dynasty, Tai Zong, reigned for twenty-three years. During his reign, divine btsan-po Srong-btsan sgam-po and Emperor Tai Zong conferred together for the alliance of their governments. During Tai Zong's reign, Srong-btsan sgam-po married Princess Wen Cheng. Then divine lord Khri-lde-gtsug-btsan and Emperor Xuan Zong conferred together for the alliance of their governments. During the reign of Zhong Zong, Khri-lde-gtsug-btsan married Princess Jin Cheng. The king of the Tubo and the emperor of the Tang dynasty were in the relationship of nephew and uncle.

C. In a period of time, although there were border clashes between the two sides, the Tubo and the Tang still maintained the relationship of nephew and uncle, of friendship and mutual regard. The Tubo btsan-po extended his benevolence impartially over all, seeking alliance with neighboring kingdoms, and especially with his close relative and neighbor, the Tang court. Nephew and uncle had the same desire to restore the former friendship and seek the alliance of their governments.

D. Since then, in a period of one generation of the Tubo btsan-po and three generations of the Tang emperors, although the two governments have kept the old relationship of friendly neighborliness, envoys were treated with honor and respect by both sides, and gifts
were sent to each other, yet a peace-pledging conference was not held.

Later, due to the strife between the nephew and uncle, the two governments were on the verge of resorting to armed force. At this critical juncture when the relatives might become enemies, the Tubo btsan-po Khri-gtsug-lde-btsan and the Tang emperor Mu Zong conferred together for the alliance of their governments, and finally concluded the peace-pledging pact that would promote the unity and friendship between both sides.

The inscribed text on the tablet mentioned above can be described as summation of the historical events in two hundred years between the Tubo and the Tang. It is a proof of the relationship of nephew and uncle and alliance of the two governments between the Tubo and the Tang.

3. The Period of Division

In 869, not long after the Tubo dynasty was overthrown, Wang Xianzhi (?-878) and Huang Chao (?-884) raised a revolt against the Tang dynasty in the hinterland. In 907, the Tang fell, after which China went through a period of confusion and division which lasted for more than three hundred years. It saw the Five dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907-960), two Song dynasties (960-1279), the Liao dynasty (916-1125), Jin dynasty (1115-1234), Xixia dynasty (1038-1227), and others. (The reigns overlap because China was not unified during this period and the dynasties ruled different parts of the country.)

Influenced by the country's continuing state of disruption, Tibet also fell into a state of anarchy which lasted for almost
four hundred years. It was divided and ruled by eleven Rje-dpon (governors), each with his own domain, who fought endlessly with one another. Warfare reduced the people to a desperate state. This situation provided favorable conditions for the revival of Buddhism in Tibet. Besides, the political division inevitably led to the formation of various ideological schools. By the end of the tenth century, Buddhism had been revived in Tibet. The emergence and flowering of different Buddhist sects followed.

To expand its influence, each sect built its own monasteries and had its own adherents. They controlled the people not only ideologically but also economically, politically, and even militarily, and soon became independent local authorities more powerful than the Rje-dpon. This provided a social base from which various Buddhist sects took over political power one after another in a later time.

From the end of the tenth century until the twelfth century, four main Buddhist groups—Klu-med, Rha-tshogs, Rag-tshogs, and 'Bring-tshogs—came into being. They engaged in armed struggles among themselves for as long as thirty years in the Gtsang region. In a space of some 150 years, 1057-1206, there appeared successively the Bka'-gdam sect (1057), the Sa-skya sect (1073), and the Bka-brgyud sect (1121). This period is called by Tibetan Buddhists the years of “Buddhism’s revival.”

4. Sa-skya Sect Rules over Tibet by Order of the Yuan Dynasty

Genghis Khan (ruled China 1155-1227), after his
unification of the Mongolian tribes in 1189, began unifying China by force. He and later rulers succeeded in subjugating Xixia, Jin, and Southern Song, and thus unified the whole interior of China.

As history shows, the political state of the Chinese hinterland has had a direct influence on Tibet. In 1240, Genghis Khan’s grandson, the Mongol prince Go-dan, sent a military expedition into Tibet under the command of General Dor-rta nag-po, who gained domination over a great part of the area. In 1244 Go-dan invited Sa-pan Kundga rgyal-mtshan, a learned high priest of the Sa-skya sect and fourth abbot of the Sa-skya Monastery, to Liangzhou in Gansu for an interview. Shortly afterward Sa-pan sent an open letter to the Tibetan leaders to persuade them to submit to the Mongols.

*Kublai Khan* (ruled China 1260-1294), at his accession to the throne, put 'Phags-pa, the nephew of Sa-pan, in charge of the newly-established *Zongzhi* (General) Council, a body that handled both the religious affairs of the whole country and the administration of Tibetan areas. (In 1288, the *Zongzhi* Council was renamed the *Xuanzheng* [Political] Council.)

To tighten control over Tibet, the Yuan emperor sent officials to carry out censuses in Tibet. During the census-taking, the Yuan officials set up thirty-one post stations responsible for transmitting government papers, supplying horses for the post service, and providing board and lodging for traveling officials. These posts were the origin of Tibet’s *ula* system.

After the census, the Yuan court had the Dbus and Gtsang regions divided into thirteen *wan hu* (literally means
“ten thousand households”), with the hierarch of the Skya sect as the chief, and authorized him to appoint governors for each who would administer Tibetan affairs under the direct leadership of the Yuan court. Thus, the central government of the Yuan dynasty created an administrative system of the Tibetan feudal regime based on an amalgamation of temporal and spiritual government. This system continued through the Ming and Qing dynasties and until the democratic reform carried out in Tibet in 1959.

The Sa-skya Monastery had a succession of nine abbots from Phags-pa to Ta-dben Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, and there were altogether twenty Sa-skya administrative governors in succession from Sha-kya bzung-po to Dbang-phyug brtson-grus. The Sa-skya sect ruled over Tibet for about ninety years (1264-1353). Finally, the Tibetan government established by the Sa-skya sect was taken over by the Phag-gru Bka’-brgyud sect.

5. Phag-gru Bka’-brgyud Sect Rules over Tibet by Authority of Yuan and Ming Dynasties

In 1281, the Bri-gung sect, a branch of the Bka’-brgyud sect, came into conflict with the Sa-skya sect over the appointment of the abbot of the Bri-gung Monastery. Until 1354, alliances and intrigues among the sects, with involvement of Yuan forces, kept Tibet in turmoil.

Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, a powerful leader of the Phag-gru Bka’-brgyud branch of the Bka’-brgyud sect, completed the conquest of the whole of Tibet in 1354, and sent tribute to Yuan emperor Shun Di (1333-1368). The emperor appointed Byang-chub Da Situ (cabinet minister).
recognized his rule over Tibet, and promised his post would be inheritable. A regime known as Phag-gru was set up, which was a merger of clerical and secular rule.

During his reign, Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan established thirteen rdzong (equivalent to counties in the main part of China), and worked out Fifteen Laws, which had a deep influence on the later Tibetan legal codes.

In 1368, Zhu Yuanzhang (reigned 1368-1398), the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), ascended the throne. The Ming court continued to recognize the administrative power of the Phag-gru Bka'-brgyud sect, and established the Mdo-khams commandery and Dbus-Gtsang commandery, whose jurisdiction covered the whole of Tibet and other areas inhabited by Tibetans. Thus, the Phag-gru regime was much strengthened and ruled for more than 150 years, though its strength was sapped by defections, revolts, and intrigues in the later years. The Phag-gru regime was finally overthrown in 1618 by Phuntshogs rnam-rgyal, ruler of the Gtsang region.

6. From the Reign of Rin-spungs-pa to Sde-srid Gtsang-pa

The collapse of the Phag-gru regime is considered to have had its roots in the strife between its sixth ruler, Grags-pa-'byung-gnas, and his father, Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan.

At that time a military commander in charge of the Rin-spungs district in the Gtsang region under the Phag-gru regime was Nor-bu bzang-po, who had inherited the position from his father, Nam-mkha’rgyal-po, an appointee of Emperor Yong Le. Nor-bu bzang-po took advantage of
the Phag-gru regime’s civil war to expand his sphere of influence and occupied Bsam-grub-rtse (modern Gzhis-kha-rtse, or Xigaze) and many other strategic locations. During the reign of Rin-chen rdo-rje, Nor-bu bzang-po’s second son, Kun-bzang-pa, third son, Don-grub rdo-rje, fourth son, Mtsho-rgyal rdo-rje, and a grandson, Don-yod rdo-rje, increased their military activity and seized greater power over the Gtsang region.

In 1481, Chos-grags ye-shes of the Karma Bka’-brgyud sect (or the Red Hat sect) instructed Kun-bzang-pa and his son Don-yod rdo-rje to lead an attack on the Dbus region. Before long, Mtsho-rgyal rdo-rje, Kun-bzang-pa’s brother, taking advantage of the fact that the legitimate ruler, Ngag-dbang bkra-shis grags-pa, was under age, made himself the acting ruler of the Phag-gru regime and seized all of the Phag-gru’s political power over Tibet. Thus commenced a period called in Tibetan annals the reign of Rin-spungs-pa.

In 1563, Zhing-gshags-pa Tshe-brtan rdo-rje, the rdzong-dpon (governor) of Bsam-grub-rtse under the Rin-spungs-pa’s jurisdiction, revolted and occupied the entire Gtsang region. After his death in 1611 his fourteen-year old son, Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal, succeeded him. He continued to wage war and gained control of the Mnga’-ris, Gtsang, and Dbus regions. The regime he established in Gzhis-kha-rtse in 1618 was called the Sde-srid Gtsang-pa regime, meaning the ruler was from the Gtsang region. The Karma Bka’-brgyud sect supported him. Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal died of smallpox in 1632 and was succeeded by his son, Karma bstan-skyong dbang-po.

The Sde-srid Gtsang-pa regime was ousted by the Mongol troops of Gu-shri Khan in 1641-1642, and Tibet entered a period during which the Dge-lugs sect was at the helm.
7. The Rise of the Yellow Sect and the Reign of the Qing Government over Tibet

In 1409, Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419) built the Dga’-ldan Monastery to the east of Lhasa as his base for spreading the doctrines of Buddhism. The religious sect he founded is called the Dge-lugs (Gelugpa) sect, and, as its monks wear yellow mitres, the pointed lama-caps, it is also called Yellow Hat sect or Yellow sect. The founder’s original name was Blo-bzang grags-pa; he was born at Tsong-kha (now Huangzhong County), not far from Xining City in Qinghai, so he was called Tsong-kha-pa.

Being erudite in all Buddhist literature, he absorbed some elements of the Bka’-gdam, the Sa-skya, and the Phag-gru sects, and combined the exoteric and esoteric doctrines into an organic whole. For years Tsong-kha-pa pursued activities in religious reformation. He demanded that the monks of his sect follow a step-by-step method in scripture studies, abide by commandments, and live a rigorous life befitting monkhood. His religious reformation was warmly welcomed by Tibetan society and he gained considerable fame. In 1408 and 1414, Emperor Yong Le sent emissaries to Tibet to invite him to Nanjing. He sent his disciple Shakya Ye-shes to pay his respects to the emperor for him. Emperor Yong Le conferred on the lama envoy the title of “Grand State Tutor.” He was further honored when he visited Beijing, the new Ming capital, later in life.

The rise of the Yellow sect naturally made other religious sects uneasy. After Tsong-kha-pa’s death, the Rin-spungs-pa and Gtsang-pa-khan adopted a policy of restriction and war against the Yellow sect.
Tsong-kha-pa’s disciples, Mkhas-grub-rje (1385-1438) and Dge-dun grub (1391-1474), were the most influential personages in the Yellow sect after his death. Mkhas-grub-rje was posthumously recognized as the first Panchen Lama* by the monkhood of the Yellow sect. Dge-dun grub built the Bkra-shis-lhun-po Monastery at Gzhis-kha-rtse and later was posthumously recognized as the first Dalai Lama.**

Dge-dun rgya-mtsho (1475-1542) succeeded to the post eleven years after the first Dalai Lama’s death. When he was twenty years old he went to the ’Bras-spung Monastery at Lhasa to study Buddhist sutras and assumed the post of abbot of that monastery. Later he became abbot of the Bkra-shis-lhun-po Monastery and head of the Yellow sect. After he died in 1542 the ’Bras-spung Monastery acknowledged as the soul boy of his reincarnation the four-year old Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588), who thus became the third Dalai Lama.

When Dge-dun rgya-mtsho was alive, many monks of the Yellow sect fell under the swords of other religious sects; when Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho became the hierarch, the

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*Panchen Lama is the title of the line of reincarnated lamas in Tibet who head the influential Bkra-shih-lhun-po (Tashilhunpo) Monastery and who until recent times were second only to Dalai Lamas in spiritual authority within the dominant Dge-lugs-pa sect. The title Panchen is the one traditionally given to heads who are chosen for their maturity and learning.

**Dalai Lama is the title of the head of the dominant Dge-lugs-pa order of Tibetan Buddhists and, both spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet until the 1959 reform. The holder of Dalai Lama is regarded as the embodiment of a spiritual emanation of the bodhisattva — Avolokitesvara. The succession is maintained by the discovery of a child, born soon after the death of a Dalai Lama, into whom the spirit of the deceased is believed to have entered.
Yellow sect was like a tree swaying in a raging storm. Under such circumstances Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho accepted the invitation of Al-than Khan, chieftain of the Tumet tribe of Mongols, and went to the Qinghai Lake region to establish contact with him.

Al-than Khan conferred on Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho the honorary title of "Omniscient Vajradhara Dalai Lama," *Dalai* being a Mongol word meaning "ocean-wide," and *Lama*, a Tibetan word meaning "supreme teacher"; the title therefore means, roughly, "Supreme Teacher of the World." Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho died in 1588 on his way to visit the Ming emperor in Beijing.

By the time of Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho, the fifth Dalai Lama, the Yellow sect's existence was being menaced by Gtsang-pa-khan of the 'Bras-spung Monastery. During 1641-1642, at the request of the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama, Gu-shri Khan, chief of the Hoshod Mongols, sent his troops into Tibet and removed Gtsang-pa-khan's regime. From then on, the Yellow sect controlled Tibetan government.

In 1641, the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) unified the whole country, established a new central government, and granted Gu-shri Khan the title of "Righteous and Wise Gu-shri Khan." In 1652, Emperor Shun Zhi (reigned 1643-1661) summoned the fifth Dalai Lama to his court in Beijing and conferred on him the title of "Dalai Lama, Overseer of the Buddhist Faith on the Earth Under the Great Benevolent Self-subsisting Buddha of West Paradise." Since then, all Dalai Lamas' titles have been given by the central government.

The fourth Panchen Lama, Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1567-1662), played a very important role in
defeating the Yellow sect's enemies and helping it control the government in Tibet. As tutor of the fourth and fifth Dalai Lamas, he enjoyed high prestige and commanded universal respect among Tibetans and Mongols for his great learning in Buddhist studies and his moral integrity. Gu-shri Khan honored him by giving him the title "Panchen Pokto" (Panchen means "great scholar" in Tibetan; pokto is a word of Mongolian origin meaning "sage"). It was he who suggested making contact with Gu-shri Khan and the Qing Emperor Tai Zong. After his death, his reincarnation soul boy, Blo-bzang ye-shes (1663-1737), became the fifth Panchen Lama. In 1713, Emperor Kang Xi (reigned 1661-1722) conferred on the fifth Panchen Lama the title of "Panchen Erdeni." (Erdeni means "brightness" in Manchu.) The Yellow sect believes that the Panchen Lama is the incarnation of the Buddha of Measureless Light. From then on, the status of all Panchen Lamas has been confirmed by the central government.

After the Yellow sect took control of the Tibetan government, the fifth Dalai Lama took the administration in his own hands for a time, but very soon let the sde-srid (chief minister of the government) of the time, and his successors, take charge of the routine duties of the government. In 1679, sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho took all governmental powers into his own hands for the next twenty-seven years. The fifth Dalai Lama died in 1682, but the sde-srid hid his death from the public for sixteen years. In 1697, the fifteen-year old Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho was enthroned as the sixth Dalai Lama.

In 1705 Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was killed by Lhabzang Khan, a descendent of Gu-shri Khan, who had military power in Tibet at the time. Before long, Lhabzang Khan
dethroned the sixth Dalai Lama and sent him to Beijing by way of the Kokonor region; he died in Inner Mongolia. Lhabzang Khan became the head of the Tibetan government from 1706. The Qing court granted him the courtesy title of "Obedient Khan."

In 1716 the Dzungar Mongols marched into Tibet from Xinjiang. They occupied Lhasa and killed Lhabzang Khan in the Potala Palace the following year.

In 1720 the Qing court sent troops into Tibet, inflicting a crushing defeat on the Dzungar Mongols and enthroning Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho (1708-1757) in the Potala Palace as the seventh Dalai Lama. At the same time, the Qing court appointed Khang-chen-nas, Nga-phod-pa, Lum-pa-nas, and, some time later, Pho-lha-nas and Sbyar-ra-nas as bka'-blon (ministers of council) and put them jointly in charge of Tibetan affairs. Very soon, however, they split into two groups and a bloody conflict followed, with each striving for political power.

In 1728 Emperor Yong Zheng (reigned 1722-1735) of the Qing dynasty put Pho-lha-nas in charge of the Tibetan government and granted him the title of "Prince." At the same time he sent two Amban (imperial representatives in Tibet) to Lhasa to take charge of the administration of Tibet for the central government. Pho-lha-nas was at the helm of the Tibetan government for twenty years.

After his death, the Qing court named his son 'Gyur-med rnam-rgyal his successor, to continue to rule over Tibet. But he was a tyrant. He put the Dalai Lama under house arrest, dismissed all his own father's old colleagues from the government, and hounded his own elder brother to death. Several times the Amban urged him to behave himself, but to no avail. In 1750, the Amban had him executed.
In 1751, the central government of the Qing dynasty decided to create *bka’-shag* (Kashag, Tibetan government), which consisted of four *bka’-blon* — one monk and three laymen — who jointly took charge of Tibetan affairs under the direct leadership of the seventh Dalai Lama and the *Amban*. The Tibetan polity based on the merging of religious and secular rule was formalized at last, with monk and lay officials jointly exercising political power. Tibet remained under this form of government until changes were instituted by the central government of the People’s Republic of China in 1959.

The overall role of the *Amban* was strengthened, however, in 1791, after Gurkha invaders were expelled from Tibet with help of the Qing court. Fukang’an, the Qing military leader, together with the eighth Dalai Lama and Tibetan officials, worked out the *Twenty-nine-Article Ordinance for the More Efficient Governing of Tibet*. The ordinance prescribed that the *Amban* had power to supervise Tibetan affairs and that his status was equal with the Dalai and Panchen; that the incarnation of the Dalai and the Panchen was subject to supervision and authorization by the *Amban*; that all the civilian and military officials of Tibetan government below the status of the *bka’-blon* would be nominated by the *Amban* jointly with the Dalai and appointed by the central government. The ordinance also included detailed regulations about foreign affairs, defense, taxes, corvée service, currency, etc., involving Tibet. Proclamation of the ordinance represented the height of the Qing administration’s influence in Tibet; it embodied the central government’s absolute rule over the region.

That rule was broken when the British invaded the southeastern coastal area of China in the 1840s, and
attempted to invade Tibet from India in 1888. All the people and officials, including Wen Shuo, the Amhan, expressed their determination to fight back. But the Qing court's foreign policy at that time was one of accommodation and capitulation, so it dismissed Wen Shuo and pressed the government of Tibet to compromise. In 1890 the Qing court concluded with Britain the first unequal treaty relating to Tibet, *The Convention of 1890 Between China and Great Britain Relating to Sikkim and Tibet*, thus making way for British entry into Tibet.

During 1903-1904 the British again attacked Tibet on a large scale. The thirteenth Dalai, ignoring the traitorous instructions of the Qing court, led the monks and laymen in a stubborn resistance. The Tibetan officials, lay and clerical, together with the other Tibetan people rose in counterattack in battles for Rgyal-rtse and other places. Their heroism will always be cherished in the memory of the Chinese people.

In 1906, the Qing government concluded with Britain the *Convention Between China and Great Britain Respecting Tibet*, and made the *Lhasa Treaty* its annex, thus confirming the illegal treaty forced upon the Tibetan government by the British.

The continued aggression of the British and the compromises and capitulations of the Qing court made the thirteenth Dalai Lama feel it necessary to find support elsewhere.

Czarist Russia, harboring expansionist ambitions, tried to establish a relationship with the Dalai, saying that it could support him in resisting the British aggressors. So, when the British troops came near Lhasa, he appointed as regent the abbot of the Dga’-Idan Monastery and left for the north, but he was stopped at Urga (now Ulan Bator) in Mongolia by
senior officials sent there by the Qing court. By then, Russia was busy with its war with Japan and was not in a position to oppose Britain, and the Dalai returned to Tibet. A visit to Beijing in 1906 was superficially successful, in that the Dalai received various honors, but did not change the Qing reluctance to oppose outside powers, and another unequal treaty, *Tibet Trade Regulations*, was concluded in 1908. The Dalai went into exile in Sikkim in 1910.

Following the Revolution of 1911 and establishment of the Republic of China, the Dalai returned to Tibet in 1912. Some outside authorities consider that Tibet became independent of China after the revolution, but in fact Zhao Bingjun, premier of the State Council announced in 1912 the restoration of the Dalai Lama's title, and the Dalai announced that Tibet was still under the jurisdiction of the Chinese government.

Britain continued its attempts to separate Tibet from China, and convened a conference at Simla, India, in 1913 at which it proposed dividing Tibet into an inner region, which would belong to China, and an outer region which would be autonomous (and which Britain hoped to dominate). Under strong protests from people throughout China, however, the Yuan Shikai government refused to sign the Simla Convention.

The parliamentary democracy which had been achieved in theory after the Revolution of 1911 began to collapse at about this same time, bringing on a period of warlordism in China which affected Tibet as well, and for a number of years Tibetan troops resisted Sichuan and Qinghai warlords. At the same time, the Tibetan people continued to stand up against imperialist aggression. In 1921 about twenty thousand monks from the three major monasteries in Lhasa
rioted, attempting to kill resident British officials. The riot was put down by Tibetan government troops.

From about 1920 until 1949 relations between Tibet and the central Chinese government followed a fairly normal course. In 1923 the ninth Panchen Lama left Tibet for the interior of China. In 1928 the thirteenth Dalai Lama sent a representative to Nanjing to strengthen relations with the Kuomintang government. In 1931 the Dalai’s representatives established a Tibetan affairs office in Nanjing to express his allegiance to the then central government, and other representatives took part in the national assembly in Nanjing, as did representatives of the Panchen Lama.

In December 1933 the thirteenth Dalai died; this was duly reported to Nanjing, which sent a representative to Tibet to pay homage to his memory. The Tibetan government in 1934 appointed Rva-sgreng Huthugthu as regent to take charge of the temporal and religious administration of Tibet and requested the central government’s approval, which was routinely given. The soul boy of the thirteenth Dalai Lama was discovered in the winter of 1938, and approval of his accession was given in a Kuomintang decree promulgated in 1940; his installation was presided over by Rva-sgreng Huthugthu and a representative of the central government in February 1940, following which Rva-sgreng resigned and was replaced by Stag-brag. The ninth Panchen Lama died in 1937, and the same routines were followed as in the case of the Dalai Lama.

As the War of Liberation drew to a conclusion, moves attributed to Britain and the United States were made to detach Tibet from Chinese influence. In 1947 Rva-sgreng Huthugthu and the fourteenth Dalai Lama’s father were murdered by pro-British elements headed by Stag-brag. In
that same year, at the urging of the United States, the Tibetan government sent a so-called “trade mission” abroad to strengthen Tibet’s ties with the United States and Great Britain.

In July 1949, in order to prevent the Chinese People’s Liberation Army from liberating Tibet, the pro-imperialist element headed by Stag-brag, under the pretext of “guarding against the Communists’ penetrating into Tibet,” engineered a “Hans, go home!” incident, and forced all Kuomintang personnel and all businessmen and lamas of Han nationality to leave Tibet.

On September 2, 1949, China’s Xinhua News Agency published an editorial which reported the real intent and truth of the “Hans, go home!” incident and made clear the Chinese people’s determination to liberate Tibet. A few days later People’s Daily published a similar editorial, which issued a serious warning to foreign imperialism and its followers and at the same time called upon the Tibetan people to unite and make preparations for liberation by the People’s Liberation Army.

The founding of the People’s Republic of China was proclaimed on October 1, 1949. On the same day, the tenth Panchen Lama sent a telegram to Chairman Mao Zedong to give his support to the Central People’s Government and to express his hope that Tibet might be liberated at an early date. In consideration of the developments in Tibet and the long-cherished desires of the Tibetan people, the Central People’s Government in 1950 issued an order for the liberation of the region. However, it also formulated the policy of “peaceful liberation of Tibet,” and concurrently notified the Tibetan government to send a delegation to Beijing for talks on Tibet’s peaceful liberation.
The Tibetan ruling class headed by Stag-brag opposed the peaceful liberation, however. They deliberately delayed the journey of the Tibetan delegation which was supposed to attend the Beijing talks. And, at the same time, they assembled troops at Qamdo (Chab-mdo) in an attempt to block the PLA’s advance. In order to remove obstructions to Tibet’s liberation and punish the reactionaries for their crimes, the PLA troops crossed the Jinsha River, advanced on Qamdo, and conquered it on October 19, 1950, after wiping out a Tibetan main force of about five thousand men.

After the PLA’s resounding victory at Qamdo and the frustration of the reactionaries’ schemes and intrigues, regent Stag-brag stepped down and the fourteenth Dala Lama took over the reins of the Tibetan government. Shortly thereafter the Tibetan authorities sent a plenipotentiary delegation to Beijing for negotiations, and in about a month’s time, on May 23, 1951, the two sides signed the Agreement of the Central People’s Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet.

In accordance with the agreement, the PLA forces arrived at Lhasa on October 26, 1951, drove out the imperialist aggressive forces, and liberated Tibet. By the end of 1951, the tenth Panchen Lama left Qinghai for Tibet and returned to Gzhis-kha-rtse the following June.

Thus Tibet achieved internal unity.
Chapter II

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE

1. Buddhism in Tibet

Lamaism (Tibetan Buddhism) predominates among the Tibetan people. It is a blend of several Buddhist sects—Exoteric and Esoteric sects introduced from India in the ninth century, and Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) from Han territories—and Bon, the aboriginal belief in Tibet.

Buddhism in Tibet has undergone three periods of development: the "diffusion of Buddhism," a period from the spreading of Buddhism by Srong-btsan sgam-po (Songtsen Gampo) till the banning of it by King Dar-ma; the "prosecution of Buddhism," a period in the mid-ninth century when King Dar-ma banned it; and the "revival of Buddhism," a period of a hundred and fifty years (1057-1206) during which the Bka'-gdams (1057), Sa-skya (1073), and Bka'-brgyud (1121) sects developed.

In the early fifteenth century, Tsong-kha-pa established the Dge-lugs sect (meaning "doing good deeds") on the basis of the doctrines of the Bka'-gdams sect. The Dge-lugs sect was also called the "Yellow Hat sect" (or, popularly, just
"Yellow sect"), because Tsong-kha-pa regarded the yellow hats worn by members of the sect as the symbol of the "renovation of Buddhist disciplines."

The Yellow sect practiced the reincarnation of Living Buddhas. The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, the two leading Living Buddhas of different reincarnation systems, belonged to this sect. The Qing dynasty made it a rule that reincarnations must be authorized by the central government, and be legitimized through a formality called "drawing lots from the gold urn." From then on, the Dge-lugs sect became the dominant religious sect in Tibet, keeping both secular and spiritual government under its control.

In old Tibet, monks and nuns constituted more than 10 percent of the total population. Among monks, Living Buddhas were the highest rank, and among Living Buddhas the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were the highest. Living Buddhas and other high-ranking monks, many of whom were of upper-class origins, formed the upper religious circles.

The Yuan (1271-1368), Ming (1368-1644), and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties adopted a policy of patronizing the Tibetan belief in Lamaism, which proved to be beneficial to their rules.

Practiced in Tibet for over a thousand years, Buddhism has all-pervading influences on Tibet's political, economic, cultural, and social life. Nearly all Tibetans believe in Buddhism. They have private shrines at home, always carry prayer wheels and beads, and prostrate themselves to show their religious sincerity.

In Tibet proper and other areas inhabited by Tibetans, and in the Mongolian areas, there are a number of
lamaseries, of which the most eminent are 'Bras-spungs (Drepung) Monastery, Sera Monastery, Dga’-ldan (Ganden) Monastery, Jokhang (Zuglakang) Temple, and Ramoche Temple in Lhasa; Bkra-shis-lhun-po (Zhaxilhunbu) Monastery at Xigaze; Sku’-bum Monastery at Xining in Qinghai; Lhabrang Monastery in southern Gansu; the Xilinhot Monastery in the Xilin Gol League of Inner Mongolia; and the Yonghe Gong (means “Palace of Harmony”) Temple in Beijing.

Each lamasery had a strict and complete system of organization. Each religious sect possessed a number of lamaseries, among which there was a leading one for each sect. The monasteries of the Dge-lugs sect occupied the highest status. All lamaseries owned properties, practiced usury, engaged in trade, and made money through receiving donations, giving oracles, chanting scriptures, and other Buddhist activities. As one of the three major types of lordship in Tibet, lamaseries put the local people under their control through political organizations, thus constituting an organic part of the local regime.

The Communist Party of China has long stood for the policy of freedom of religious beliefs. Respecting and protecting normal religious activities is a long-term policy of the Chinese government. In the decree issued in November 1950 by the Southwest China Military and Administrative Commission, and in the agreement signed in 1951 on measures for the liberation of Tibet, it is stipulated that the religious beliefs, customs, and habits of the Tibetan people should be respected, and lamaseries be protected. During their march on Tibet, the People’s Liberation Army troops and administrative officials acted in line with the provisions of the agreement, and were highly praised and warmly
welcomed by the local people.

After the liberation of Tibet, the central government continued to pursue these policies toward nationalities, religions, and the united front (with non-Communist parties or personages). In April 1956, a central government mission led by Vice-premier Chen Yi went to Lhasa to celebrate the founding of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region. During his visit, Chen Yi had wide contact with religious personages, and gave gifts to lamaseries and donations to some two hundred thousand monks.

In July 1959, the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region made the decision to carry out democratic reform in Tibet. Thus, democratic reform against rebels, feudal power, and personal servitude was carried out inside as well as outside of lamaseries. The lamaseries' feudal ownership of land and forests, and the numerous taxes and usuries collected by them, were abolished, and feudal servitude and all its cruelties were outlawed. From the patriotic and law-abiding high-ranking monks, the land and means of production were purchased by the government.

After the reform, the lamaseries were freed from the control of the serf-owning class. Feudal oppression, exploitation, and privileges were replaced by democratic management. Masses of poor monks gained personal freedom and enjoyed the rights of citizens. Lamaseries and religious relics were put under protection. The monks and lay believers were free to pursue their normal religious activities.

But progress was not always smooth. After 1957, a mistaken “leftist” tendency gradually developed, which the
1959 session of the Preparatory Committee failed to correct. In the ten disastrous years of the “Cultural Revolution,” the Gang of Four misrepresented Marx’s theories on religion, neglected the Party’s religious policy and abolished religious work.

2. Coiling Incense Smoke in the “Minor Western Paradise” of the “Roof of the World”

A correspondent who visited Tibet in August 1985 on the eve of the twentieth anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region reported that when he arrived he was, first of all, impressed by the colorful flags painted with sutras and Buddha images covering buildings, tents, and walls. In the lamaseries, the most magnificent buildings in Tibet, incense smoke was coiling and butter lamps were burning day and night. Devout believers came and went endlessly. They prostrated themselves and prayed. In the streets they were often seen with prayer wheels and holy beads in hand, murmuring sutras. Buddhist shrines, holy water, butter lamps, and portraits or statues of the Buddha, he noted, were found in most Tibetan homes. This report bears witness to the religious atmosphere in Tibet.

Since the fall of the Gang of Four the Chinese government has affirmed anew the policy of freedom of religious belief. As a basic, long-held policy, it will not be abolished, and it is thought religions will die out naturally. The Constitution stipulates: “Citizens of the People’s Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief.” It means every citizen is free to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion or any sect thereof, and is free to become a religious believer, though he
was formerly a non-believer, or to become a non-believer, though he was a believer. Believers and non-believers are equal politically, and no state organ is allowed to interfere in a citizen's religious belief.

On the other hand, religious and feudal privileges and oppression may not be restored, and no religious activity is allowed to bring harm to the security, unity, and stability of the country.

As pointed out by the late Premier Zhou Enlai, toleration between religious believers and non-believers, and between believers of different sects, benefits the unity and cooperation of the various nationalities in China.

In recent years, measures have been taken to correct wrongdoings in religious work, and considerable achievements have been made in Tibet, such as:

(1) Correction of wrongdoings—The unjust charges suffered by 160 religious personages have been reversed. For the dead, memorial services have been held to restore their reputation.

(2) Restoration of religious bodies—A number of religious notables have been elected to the People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference at various levels. The Tibetan branch of the Chinese Buddhist Association resumed its activities in 1981. It has more than two hundred directors. The policy on the united front has been pursued in all religious circles, and thus the initiative of religious personnel has been brought into play. They have compiled a number of Tibetan historical and Buddhist materials, made preparations to set up the Academy of Tibetan Buddhism, and printed Buddhist sutras, among other things.

(3) Restoration of monasteries and temples—From 1980
to 1985, the government allocated more than twenty-seven million yuan for renovating lamaseries. All the important lamaseries have been or are being renovated. The work on 50 out of 170 lamaseries under repair has been completed. Another forty-three lamaseries are also open to the public while under repair. The Dga’-ldan Monastery, one of the three major lamaseries in Tibet, has its main hall and other chanting-sutra halls repaired. The twenty-six-meter high bronze statue of Buddha in the Bkra-shis-lhun-po Monastery has been reconstructed. All the rebuilt monasteries as well as some famous sacred hills and lakes are now open to tourists from abroad and from within China.

(4) Seeking for missing religious relics—Recently, great efforts have been made to locate the relics lost in the “Cultural Revolution.” In May 1984, bronze statues of Buddhas and other metal relics totaling three hundred tons in weight were returned to the temples and monasteries from which they came. Among them is a statue of Sakyamuni, which is said to have been brought to Tibet by Bkrituti Devi, a Nepalese princess, during her marriage to Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo. This gilded statue had been installed in the Ramoche Temple but was lost during the “Cultural Revolution” when the temple was destroyed. The government spared no effort to seek it, and found it in the hinterland. After being sent back to Tibet, it was first worshipped in the Jokhang Temple and then “invited” back (returned) to the Ramoche Temple when the latter had been renovated. The “invitation” presented an impressive scene. At the entrance of the Jokhang Temple, some twenty thousand believers lined up to wait for it. Some held flowers, burning incense, and khadag (white scarf) in their hands, and some prostrated themselves on the road leading to the
temple, all to show their sincerest piety to the Buddhist statue and their warmest welcome on its return.

(5) Training religious professionals — In order to enhance research work in Buddhist sutras and to train more Buddhist scholars, the Tibetan Academy of Buddhism was set up. Its president is the learned Geshe (Dge-bshes, a Buddhist equivalent of doctor of divinity) Sbo-mi byams-pa-blo-gros. It has enrolled 120 students, who are asked to complete in ten years the Buddhist courses which would have required twenty to thirty years to complete in old Tibet.

As of 1984, the three major lamaseries in Lhasa had enrolled some four hundred new monks. Now Tibet has about three thousand monks and nuns. The number is not enough, according to Panchen Erdeni, vice-chairman of the National People’s Congress Standing Committee. On the twentieth anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region, he pointed out that due to the aging of monks and nuns in Tibet and an insufficient body of successors, a number of patriotic, sincere, learned, and young Buddhists would be trained from among various Tibetan sects to carry on Tibetan Buddhist traditions, meet demands of new conditions, and satisfy the needs of believers.

(6) Practice of normal religious activities — Since 1980, pilgrims to Lhasa from Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and other places have amounted to a hundred thousand, a number much greater than the total before the “Cultural Revolution.” Why did they come from afar? Obviously the reason is not that their home places have no temples or monasteries. It is because Lhasa is a sacred place with famous sacred relics. For example, in the Jokhang Temple is worshipped a statue of the Buddha which was brought to Tibet by Princess Wen Cheng of the Tang dynasty some
thirteen hundred years ago. In 1982, more than seventy thousand people attended the Buddhist Sa-dga’-zla-ba Festival held in Lhasa.

In recent years, Tibetan religious circles have established relations with their counterparts abroad. Pilgrim groups from abroad have been received in Tibet, and Tibetan Buddhist missions and renowned Living Buddhas have visited Nepal at its invitation.

In 1985, the central government delegation led by Hu Qili to the celebrations marking the twentieth anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region in Lhasa made a donation to the local lamaseries. A ceremony to mark the occasion was held at the golden-roofed Jokhang Temple. The gifts included 5,000 souvenir badges, 10,000 meters of silk, 5,000 electronic clocks, and 5,000 large bags of tea. The donation came from the Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council, said then Vice-premier (acting Premier now) Li Peng, a deputy leader of the delegation, at the ceremony. He called on Tibetan clergy to continue to trust the Party’s policy on religion, do their Buddhist research work well, and protect religious relics, including temples and monasteries.

Surely, the “minor Western Paradise” on the “roof of the world,” with its deep, mysterious religious atmosphere, is now all the more attractive to Buddhists both at home and abroad.
Chapter III

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY OF TIBETAN NATIONALITY

In old China, due to ethnic oppression, the nationalities were not equal. The national minorities suffered so much discrimination and humiliation that many people dared not openly state their minority identity or wear their national costumes.

The Communist Party of China has long held that all nationalities, large or small, developed or underdeveloped, are equal, and that all national minorities, living in compact or mixed communities, should enjoy ethnic equality. Immediately after liberation, ethnic oppression was prohibited, and all Chinese nationalities began to live in equality and unity.

The Common Program of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference stipulates: “Acts involving discrimination, oppression, and splitting of the unity of the various nationalities shall be prohibited.” The seventeen-article agreement on measures for liberation of Tibet declares that the Tibetan people, in accordance with the policy towards nationalities laid down in the Common Program.
have the right of exercising regional autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People’s Government. Thus, the liberation of Tibet inaugurated a new era in which the Tibetan people began to take charge of Tibetan affairs.

Tibetan regional autonomy was achieved in three stages:

(1) In the first stage (1951-1965), preparations were made starting with the seventeen-article agreement signed in 1951 and ending with the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965. During the period, with the efforts of people in all walks of life in Tibet, imperialist aggressive powers were removed from Tibet and their colonial privileges were abolished; unity of Tibetan people, especially between the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, was achieved; the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region was established; democratic reform was carried out; serfdom was uprooted; the productive forces were liberated; and many Tibetan cadres were trained.

(2) In the second stage (1965-1979), things in Tibet did not proceed straightforwardly. Tibetan regional autonomy suffered disruption caused by the “leftist” line, especially the ten-year-long Cultural Revolution. Consequently, Tibet’s administrative work departed from the basic policies which had been proved to be efficient in all respects. Despite all the shifts, Tibet still advanced, thanks to the combined efforts of all the nationalities inhabiting it.

(3) The third stage (1979-present) saw rapid development of Tibet. It was after the Third Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China at the end of 1978 Tibet made unprecedented progress. In March and April of 1980, the Party’s Central Committee held
discussions on Tibet's work and approved the *Forum on Tibet*. In May, Hu Yaobang and Wan Li made an inspection tour of Tibet. In 1984, the Central Committee again held discussions on Tibet's work and made a series of important decisions, the major one being that the Tibet Autonomous Region should exercise fully its power of autonomy under the leadership of the central government.

Wrongdoings in Tibet's work have been corrected. Tibet has been able to exercise its autonomy. Tibetan affairs can indeed be handled by Tibetans themselves. The achievements are as follows:

(1) The exercise of regional autonomy has been further institutionalized and guaranteed. The organs of self-government of nationality areas have the decision-making power in implementing the state's policies according to local conditions.

So, the Tibet Autonomous Region has the right not to carry out, or to modify, enactments of the central government which are out of keeping with Tibet's actual conditions. It has also the power to draw up statutes governing the exercise of autonomy as well as separate regulations. It has decision-making power in administering economic construction in the region, under the guidance of the state plan. It may handle independently problems in education, science, culture, public health, and physical culture in Tibet. It can act on its own to protect Tibetan cultural relics and promote its splendid cultural tradition. In performing its functions, the government of the Tibet Autonomous Region may employ the Tibetan spoken and written language.
In August 1979, the Tibet Regional People’s Congress and its standing committee were established, as prescribed by law. In 1981, People’s Congresses and their standing committees at municipal and county levels were also set up. Tibetans and other ethnic minority members constitute 80 percent of the deputies on the people’s congresses at various levels.

Since 1983, seven nationality townships have been set up, as prescribed by the Constitution and Law on National Regional Autonomy.

Since 1979, the standing committee of the Tibet Regional People’s Congress has enacted 163 regional laws, such as Provisions of the Election of Delegates of People’s Congresses at Various Levels in Tibet Autonomous Region, and other rules and regulations suited to local conditions, such as Special Modifications of China’s Marriage Law, Special Modifications of China’s Civil Procedure Law, Provisions on Exempting Tibetan Farming and Stockbreeding from Taxes, etc. All these specific laws and provisions guarantee ethnic equality in Tibet and ensure success to Tibetan socialist construction.

(2) Great progress has been made in training Tibetan cadres. Training cadres of minority nationalities is a consistent policy of the Chinese Communist Party. The cadres that come from the local people, know their past and present, have a good command of their nationality language, and are familiar with their people’s feelings, needs, and customs. “Those paupers can’t even manage their tsampa (barley flour, the staple Tibetan food) bags,” Tibetan serf owners used to say of serfs, who are now masters of Tibet. Once the former serfs command scientific
knowledge, they plunge themselves into work with great enthusiasm and do it well.

Let us now meet two of these cadres.

Bianba Gyatso, 49 years old, was a secretary of the Communist Party Committee in Lhozhag County from 1979 to 1983, and went to and fro in the farming and pastoral areas in spite of the high mountains and deep valleys. During those years, he visited more than two thousand local peasant and herdsman households.

Cewang Jigmei, 39 years old, is now the president of the University of Tibet, the first comprehensive university in Tibet. He is the youngest university president in China. In 1970, he graduated from Beijing Normal University. In Beijing he fell in love with and married Zhang Tingfang, a classmate of his of Han origin. He was very capable and might have secured an assignment in Beijing, but he did not wish to do so. He thought: “There are not enough teachers in Tibet. I have been trained by the state, so I must go back.” Then he and his wife taught for several years in Tibet. He liked being an ordinary teacher and doing his bit in the building of a united and prosperous Tibet. He never thought that the heavy responsibilities of a university president would fall upon his shoulders.

The growing number of cadres of Tibetan nationality and other minorities has caused much change in ethnic composition of cadres in Tibet. Now, the majority of leading cadres at all levels of administration in the Tibet Autonomous Region are ethnic Tibetans. The chairman of the Tibet regional government, chairman of Tibet People’s Congress, and vice-chairman of Tibet People’s Political Consultative Conference all are ethnic Tibetans. In 1965, Tibet had 7,600 cadres who were ethnic Tibetans or of other
minorities, making up 33.3 percent of total cadres in Tibet. In 1984, the number rose to 31,900, or 62 percent. Their educational level and working capacity were higher, as well. Ethnic Tibetans constitute a growing proportion of the region’s specialized personnel, such as accountants, journalists, writers, artists, and others. Ethnic Tibetan cadres have become a decisive power in the reconstruction of Tibet.

(3) The principles of leadership and assistance by the superior state organs have been made clear and definite. These principles are: to take specific and flexible policies instead of vague and general directions; to provide Tibet with financial aid, material assistance, and technical know-how; to help Tibet develop education, train its cadres, and turn out qualified specialized personnel; and to help Tibet exploit its natural resources, considering the benefits to the state, local area, and local people.

(4) Harmonious national relationships are fostered. The relations between Tibetans and Hans and other nationalities, are based on considerations of unity, equality, and mutual assistance. These considerations are inseparable. All parties are expected to respect one another’s language, customs, religious beliefs, and democratic rights. It is necessary to combat mainly Han chauvinism, but also local-nationality chauvinism. Discrimination against, or oppression of, any nationality, and acts which undermine the unity of the nationalities, are prohibited.

(5) The Tibetan language is used on a wider scale. More importance has been attached to the Tibetan language in the exercise of Tibetan autonomy. Recently, the regional government has issued a series of documents on the study and use of the Tibetan language. It was stipulated by the Tibet Regional People’s Congress that the Tibetan language
should be a main language in judicial organs. In 1984, it was further emphasized that Tibetan language should be taught as a major subject in the primary and secondary schools. Both the Tibetan and Han languages are used in broadcasting and some newspapers. Twenty-one newspapers and magazines are published in Tibetan. From 1979 to 1983, 170 books and periodicals in Tibetan were issued in the region, over 77 percent of the total. The Bureau of Translation and Editing of the Autonomous Region, which was set up in 1985, fosters the use of the Tibetan language.

The Tibetan people, formerly called “beasts which can speak,” have become the masters of the country, and, like other nationalities in China, enjoy the rights of citizens stipulated by the Constitution.

The Panchen Lama has expressed his satisfaction with Tibet’s exercise of regional autonomy thus:

Direct elections of people’s deputies have been carried out in all cities, counties, and towns of Tibet. It is an epochmaking event. The highest leading personnel are all Tibetans. Ten local laws have been drawn up in accordance with actual conditions in Tibet by the standing committee of Tibet’s People’s Congress; among them, the *Provisions of Autonomy of Tibet Autonomous Region* is the most important. All these will greatly foster the exercise of Tibet’s regional autonomy.

In the past I was one of the biggest serf-owners in Tibet. I know that under the serfdom the Tibetan laboring people had not the least personal freedom, much less the rights to handle government affairs. Now they can elect the leaders of their government and their deputies. This is indeed an earthshaking change.
Chapter IV

A BRIEF RETROSPECT OF THE PAST THIRTY YEARS IN TIBET

In the past thirty-odd years since its liberation, Tibet, despite all its zigzags, has still advanced and changed for the better.

The progress is shown by the recollections of seventy-one year old Lha-lu tshe-dbang rdo-rje, a minister of council in charge of grain in the old Tibetan government. He is now a member of the Chinese National People’s Political Consultative Conference and vice-chairman of the Tibet Regional People’s Political Consultative Conference. Being familiar with Tibet’s past and present, he can make informed comparisons between the two.

According to Lha-lu, in the three hundred years from the founding of the Qing dynasty until liberation, Tibet’s economy and culture were declining, its population decreased by half, and its vast land (12 million square kilometers) was unable to support the Tibetan population, then about a million. Its industry, education, science, technology, and hygiene were especially backward. Even matches were imported; there were only ten schools, which
enrolled only children of aristocratic origin; and less than ten persons, except doctors of Tibetan traditional medicine, had a command of technical knowledge. A foreigner visiting Tibet then said that he had found nothing there on wheels except water wheels and prayer wheels. His words were somewhat extravagant, but to a certain extent reflected Tibet's backwardness.

After liberation, and especially after democratic reform, Tibet advanced by leaps and bounds. Though it suffered along with all of China from the disastrous ten years of the "Cultural Revolution," it still developed much faster than old Tibet. Brilliant achievements have been made in the last twenty years, and particularly since 1980, in these areas:

(1) Animal husbandry — Tibet, known as "one of China's five main pastures," has 12 million mu of pastureland (one mu is equal to 0.0667 hectares), a quarter of China's total and the largest such area in China. Animal husbandry has a long tradition, and without it the people would find it hard to provide themselves with clothes, food, housing, or means of travel. Its potential advantages are recognized through long experience, and the policy of "taking animal husbandry as the key economy" is followed in the whole region. Measures to combine animal husbandry and farming are also taken, where appropriate. The same policy applies to private, or household, livestock as applies to private plots in farming areas: all earnings from the private activities belong to the holders of the private plots or the owners of the animals, and the state promises that the policy will not change. As a result, animal husbandry is vitalized.

A comparison between 1965 and 1984 showed that the number of animals rose to about 22 million, an increase of 27.5 percent; beef and mutton doubled; wool increased by
8.7 percent and butter by 76 percent; and the total yield value of animal husbandry was over 95 percent. The regional pastoral yield value in the last twenty years reached 4,540 million yuan, 25 times more than state investment in the region in the same period.

With the development of livestock husbandry the net income of herdsmen increased and their living standard rose. For example, in Amdo County of Nagchu Prefecture, per capita income in 1984 increased by 183 yuan, as compared with 1983. At A-wang town of Gong-jue County in Qamdo (Chab-mdo) Prefecture, the family of Jo-rgan tshul-khrims has become rich and prosperous since 1980. His livestock has increased from 166 to 399; his property other than livestock has increased from 9,230 yuan to 53,660 yuan, more than five-fold; and the per capita net income of his family rose from 113 yuan to 2,220, nearly twenty-fold.

Lha-lu said, “In early 1985, I visited a former manor in the northern suburbs of Lhasa. Before the democratic reform there were only thirty-odd households of serfs there. Now there are more than two hundred households with more than eight hundred people. The former serfs are living in new houses and nearly all have watches on their wrists. Eighty percent of the families have bought TV sets and radio cassette recorders. Some have bought even automobiles and tractors.”

After liberation, there were many communicable diseases among Tibetan livestock, and the government sent several teams of veterinarians to Tibet to assist the people, resulting in a considerable improvement during the next few years. Now, the pestilence affecting yaks has been exterminated and many communicable diseases have been brought under control.
The development of Tibet’s stock-raising is closely linked to the development of Tibet’s scientific technology. Total mechanical power now available in animal husbandry has reached 100,000 horsepower. Machines have reached ten thousand in number. There are now about a thousand pastoral technicians (many of them Tibetans) and ten thousand “barefoot” technicians, and Tibet has been rewarded by the state with 150 prizes for good results in its pastoral scientific research work. A survey has been made of domestic animals and fowls. Animals found in Tibet identified and their distribution clarified. *Species of Tibetan Domestic Animals and Fowls*, compiled as part of *Species of Chinese Animals and Fowls*, provides a scientific guide to Tibetan pastoral improvement. A survey of animal diseases has also been made and utilized in prevention and control.

(2) Farming—Farming is an important part of the Tibetan economy. Farmers constitute about 60 percent of the total population. In old Tibet there was not a single farming machine, and farming depended on yaks and on heaven. Lha-lu had been a high-ranking official in charge of grain storehouses in the old Tibetan regional government, so he was deeply impressed by the agricultural development in new Tibet. He recollected:

Under serfdom, agriculture remained for ages the slash-and-burn type, and depended on wooden plows and yaks. In the first few years after Tibet’s liberation, the per *mu* grain yield was only 50 kilos, and the total yield in the best harvest year was only about 150 million kilos. In old Tibet, masses of serfs did not have sufficient clothes or food, and one-tenth of them went begging for a living.

In new Tibet, with the state’s concern and assistance, average per *mu* crop yield reached 200 kilos per year, and
the highest was 800 kilos. In 1984, total yield was as much as 494 million kilos, an increase of 70 percent over 1965, and the per capita income rose drastically to 317 yuan. The aged Tibetan said, "It took only a few decades for new Tibet to solve the problem of clothing and feeding the people, which could never be solved in old Tibet."

The Tibet Autonomous Region, since its founding, has employed many farming machines and made a big investment in agricultural production and construction of water conservancy facilities. In 1984, large and small tractors provided 290,000 horsepower, water conservancy facilities included 20 canals, each of which could irrigate 10,000 mu, and thousands of other canals, ponds, and wells, both large and small. In 1984, lands suitable for irrigation and lands ensured of irrigation were enlarged respectively by 30 percent and 23 percent above 1965.

With safeguards against natural disaster strengthened, yield of crops was raised. In 1983, a year of serious drought, the crop yield still increased by 28 percent over that of 1965, a normal year. The regional farming yield value in 1984 totaled 214 million yuan, an increase of 158 percent over 1965; the per mu crop yield increased by 62.4 kilos, a 57 percent increase for the same period; per capita consumable grain rose from 212 kilos to 257 kilos, and the total production of rapeseed amounted to about 13 million kilos, about 32 percent over 1965. During the last twenty years, Tibet has provided to the state more than 1,150 million kilos of commodity grains and 55 million kilos of commodity oil crops.

In recent years, Tibet's one-sided agricultural economy has become a diversified one. Agricultural sideline production, processing production, and reclamation have
all made progress. For example, in 1984 the regional sideline income totaled 70 million yuan, but before 1975 it was only 33.5 million. Lha-lu continued his comparison of the past and the present:

Formerly, Tibetan farmers’ houses looked like livestock sheds; now they are large and bright houses with glass windows, much better than those of rdzong-dpon (equal to the magistrate of a county in interior China) in old Tibet. Formerly, only the better-off peasants could manage to have even a single quilt for the whole family; now every peasant has several quilts, even with satin covers. Formerly, their grain bags were mostly empty; now they have storerooms for grain and beef and mutton. Formerly, there was almost no furniture in the peasant’s house; now Tibetan-style tables and wardrobes with dragon-phoenix decorations appear in every home. Formerly, the peasants always worried about their clothing and food; now they no longer worry about them.

The reason Tibet’s agriculture has advanced so rapidly is that the state’s policy on agriculture carried out in Tibet was appropriate to the actual conditions there. Since 1980 the policy has been to “put stock farming first; combine livestock husbandry, farming, and forestry; suit measures to local conditions; engage in diversified economy and promote an overall development”; and “rest and build up strength, give the benefits to the people, and take the household economy as the main factor in the economy.”

Obviously, the state policy on farming and stock-raising has become flexible, and the pattern of the people’s commune, large in size and collective in nature, has been broken. The policy of production responsibility proves to be effective. Tibetan farm products have been exempted from
the state’s compulsory purchases. All these measures aroused the Tibetan peasants’ productive enthusiasm and fostered Tibet’s agricultural development.

(3) Industry—In Tibet, nothing at all was made by machine before the mid-1950s. Lha-lu recollected: “In 1955, Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai granted me an interview and asked what I wished. After thinking for a little while, I said that I wished Parkhor Street in Lhasa were paved with bitumen and a flour mill built in Lhasa. Now the two wishes have come true. But in old Tibet they were hardly thinkable. From this you may imagine how backward old Tibet was.”

After liberation, Tibet began its industrial construction early in the 1950s. In 1953 its first modern factory, the carpet factory, was set up in Lhasa, and in 1954, when the Sichuan-Tibet and Qinghai-Tibet highways opened to traffic, the central government sent engineers, workers, and machinery to help Tibet in its industrial construction. By 1965, when the Tibet Autonomous Region was established, eighty factories, mines, and other enterprises had been set up. Tibet’s industry grew out of nothing, just like a beautiful picture which has been drawn on a blank paper.

But it did not develop smoothly. Influenced by extreme “leftism” in the “Cultural Revolution”, unrealistic rash advances were attempted in Tibet. Many industrial and mining enterprises were set up, but nearly all were not profitable. Thus Tibet’s industry suffered a setback. It was only in 1980, after the central government convened a forum on Tibet’s work, that Tibet’s industry was readjusted in accordance with reality. By the end of 1984, Tibet already had 290 enterprises, including power plants, mining enterprises, building material enterprises, wool textile mills,
matchbox mills, paper mills, print shops, leather factories, and others. These produced about eighty industrial products. In 1984, the output value of Tibetan industry totaled 168 million yuan, 4.8 times that of 1965; electric power amounted to 129,600 kilowatts, four times the amount of 1965; and 109 tons of Chinese medicinal herbs, 186,000 square meters of logs, and 57,000 tons of cement were produced. The quantity of products was increased and their quality was improved as well.

Now Tibet has stepped into a new stage of industrial development. All its enterprises are undergoing reform. The local government grants them more decision-making power to encourage their enthusiasm and potential, and makes them responsible for their profits and losses. The existing enterprises are raising their technical level and reforming their administration; meanwhile, a number of new enterprises conforming to local conditions are being set up. All this opens a new path for industrial development in Tibet.

Tibetan handicrafts, with their long tradition, excellent skills, and unique national styles, have long enjoyed good reputations in Tibetan areas and the neighboring South Asian areas. But in old Tibet, the equipment and installations were primitive and backward, and the handicraftsmen were low in social status, so production bogged down and some traditional arts were lost. After the democratic reform, the state policy of "rehabilitating and making steady progress" was carried out in Tibet for handicrafts. Consequently, in 1965 there were thirty-three branches of handicrafts with a steadily rising output value. During the "Cultural Revolution," however, Tibetan handicrafts fell into dire straits and were pushed to the verge
of collapse. Since 1980, in order to vitalize the industry, the state has instituted a series of special measures which allow artisans greater decision-making power in setting prices for and in selling their products. Additionally, Tibetan handicraft enterprises were exempted from all kinds of taxes for a period of time. State, collective, and individual handicraft enterprises were set up side by side. Handicraft enterprises were helped by the government to repair and upgrade equipment and installations, and in technical reform and personnel training. Since 1980, the state investment for Tibetan handicrafts has amounted to nearly 12 million yuan. There are 108 major collective handicraft businesses. Family handicraft shops have spread over towns and agricultural and pastoral areas. For example, Zharang County has 5,800 households, of which 4,300 households work at weaving phula (woolen cloth), aprons, and small carpets with 4,500 weaving machines.

The types of handicraft products increased from 830 in 1979 to 1,360 now, and of these 12 have won the state’s best-quality awards. The handicraft output value in 1984 increased by 2.8 times compared with that of 1965, and reached the highest level in Tibetan history. Handicraft output met the Sixth Five-Year Plan production target a year ahead of time, and overfulfilled it by 24 percent.

The Tibetan handicraft conference stipulated that the decision-making power of handicraft businesses be expanded to give each business sole responsibility for its management, its profits or losses, its selection of manager, its recruitment of workers, and the amount of its workers’ wages. Surely, this will improve management and boost workers’ initiative so that Tibetan handicrafts, the highland pearl, will be more attractive and useful than ever.
At a meeting in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Panchen Erdeni, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and deputy leader of the central government's delegation to Tibet, pointed out that attention should be paid to Tibetan traditional handicrafts, especially the production of carpets and phula, and to the traditional architectural industry, because they play a very important role in fostering the production of national goods and meeting the increasing demands of the people in their material and cultural life.

(4) Communications and foreign trade — The geography of Tibet has long made communications extremely difficult. For centuries, Tibetans longed for broad highways leading to other parts of China, but under Tibetan feudalism improving communications and transportation was nothing but a dream.

In 1950, the Central People's Government ordered the People's Liberation Army to march into Tibet and simultaneously build highways there. The PLA men and workers of Tibetan and Han nationalities began the construction of the Sichuan-Tibet and Qinghai-Tibet highways in April 1950 and May 1953 respectively. In December 1954, the two highways opened to traffic. They represented hitherto undreamed-of progress and put an end to Tibet's isolation.

After constant endeavor in the past thirty years, Tibet is now served by 15 trunk roads and 310 branch roads, stretching a total of 21,600 kilometers. Now all counties except Motog County are served by highways. A preliminary highway network with the Sichuan-Tibet road and Qinghai-Tibet road as its key lines and with Lhasa,
Qamdo (Chab-mdo), Xigaze, Nagchu, and other prefectures as hubs has been set up.

Most materials needed in Tibetan daily life and construction are provided from other parts of the country, so communications and transportation play a major role in economic development. Besides highways, aviation in Tibet has also made much progress. In 1956, the air route from Beijing to Lhasa was pioneered by the air force, thus opening the "forbidden zone" on the plateau; May of the same year saw the successful test flight of a civilian jumbo airliner along the air route from Chengdu to Lhasa. Regular civilian aviation from Lanzhou and Xi'an to Lhasa began in September 1975 and November 1979 respectively. A regional airline company is now being formed. It will soon provide new air routes between Shanghai and Guangzhou on one hand and Lhasa on the other. Tibet is now served by the Civil Aviation Administration of China. Tibet, with its innumerable snow-capped mountains, with its valleys, fields, and pastures dissected by silver lakes and streams, and with its distinctive style of buildings and unique popular customs, has great attractions as a place to visit. For centuries, however, with its backward communications and closed-door policy, it remained a mysterious land, inaccessible to all but a few visitors. Now the improvements in communications and the open-door policy have paved the way for tourism. From 1980 to 1984, Tibet received more than nine thousand foreign tourists, and the business income of the Tibet Regional Tourist Agency reached more than 10 million yuan.

Tibet's foreign trade is handled on its behalf by some trade ports in other parts of China and by its own trade ports such as Nyalam exporting and importing goods through friendly
neighboring countries.

Formerly, Tibet’s foreign trade was carried on by state-owned enterprises only. Now it may be carried on by civilian enterprises as well. Tibetan regional government has decision-making power in handling its foreign trade affairs to a certain extent. The regional trade bureau, acting as the government’s agency, manages regional foreign trade. Now Tibet’s import and export trade volume is 3 times that of 1965, and the foreign trade volume is 3.5 times that of 1965.

Frontier trade is an important part of Tibet’s foreign trade. Tibet has twenty-one border counties with long traditions of frontier trade. In recent years it has achieved progress. Through twenty-seven trade centers an increasing number of trade activities are conducted among the people on both sides of the border.

China is now carrying out the policies of opening to the outside world and enlivening the domestic economy, and the people are eager to expand economic cooperation as well as develop domestic production. All this contributes to the development of Tibet’s foreign trade.

(5) Education, science, and technology—Education in Tibet has developed rapidly since liberation. In old Tibet, there was no public education whatever for the people, and less than ten old-style private schools, which accepted pupils only from aristocratic and rich families. Now there are more than 2,500 schools. They include: 3 colleges with 24 specialties in literature, physics, agriculture, forestry, medicine, pedagogy, etc.; 13 special secondary schools with specialties in industry, animal husbandry, medicine, physical culture, arts, pedagogy, etc.; 55 middle schools; 2,400 primary schools; and schools for adult education and professional education. In 1984, the total enrollment
amounted to 147,000, more than double the enrollment of 1965.

Education in Tibet has its own characteristics. Priority is given to Tibetan language study. Since 1976, all textbooks for primary schools have been translated into Tibetan. Those for secondary schools are being translated. A department of Tibetan language is set up in every college. In addition to the nationwide unified textbooks, local textbooks in the Tibetan language have also been compiled. In order to train more high-level specialized personnel from among minorities, the Tibet Autonomous Region stipulates that Tibetans and other minorities should account for no less than 60 percent of the college enrollment.

In recent years, educational investment has been increased enormously. In 1974, about 21 million yuan were allocated for education, but in 1984 the figure was more than 65 million. Since September 1982, minority students have been exempted from tuition fees and given an allowance for books and other expenses. The schools also provide frontier students who live in border areas with food, housing, and all items of daily use free of charge. Each year the authorities allocate 3-5 million kilos of grain for the student grain subsidy. During the past ten years, twenty-eight hundred teachers have been sent from fourteen interior provinces and cities to teach in Tibet and help the Tibetan teachers in their teaching work. Teachers of ethnic Tibetans in the region number 9,800, making up about 73 percent of the teachers there. They are the main force in Tibetan educational development.

In spite of its brilliant ancient culture, Tibet was backward in scientific technology before liberation, because of serfdom and theocracy. The rapid development of its science
and technology began only after liberation.

After democratic reform, a number of scientific institutions were set up in Tibet to meet the demands of Tibetan society. They were the Agriculture Research Institute, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine Research Institute, Communications Research Institute, and others. Electronics, architecture, geology, forestry, water conservancy, and hygiene were also developed, providing a basis for Tibet's modern scientific development.

In 1981, it was stipulated that Tibet's scientific work should serve Tibet's construction, and be closely connected with Tibet's actual situation, so readjustment was carried out. Now Tibet has nineteen scientific institutions with 11,700 research staff members, of which Tibetans account for 6,400. The Tibet Autonomous Region now has institutions at various levels in charge of its scientific work.

In solar energy resources, Tibet ranks second in the world, next only to the Sahara Desert. Solar energy, wind energy, and terrestrial heat are exploited in Tibet. Experiments with solar energy in greenhouses, bathrooms, boilers, and home heating have achieved good results. Life was difficult in the days when many Tibetan villagers had to collect cow dung for cooking and heating.

In meteorology, the pattern of Tibet's climate has been studied and some sixty thousand copies of weather information are provided every year to the country and the world. Every year 300,000 copies of the Tibetan Calendar are issued. They are welcomed by the Tibetans and by other countries and areas in the South Asian subcontinent.

In geology, reserves of more than ten important mineral resources have been found; they include China's largest iron deposit and the second largest deposit of copper in Asia. The
varieties of wild plants have been cataloged, and it has been discovered that many are rare. In forestry, research workers have made an extremely accurate survey of Tibet’s forestry area, found out that Tibet’s forestry resources are the second greatest in China, and made experiments in introducing and improving fruit trees and tea plants.

Tibetan medical workers have achieved important results in the prevention and treatment of epidemic diseases and in the study of highland physiology and Tibetan traditional medicine. The regional hospital of Tibetan medicine compiled four books on Tibetan traditional medicine during 1974-1977. On the eve of the twentieth anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region, University of Tibet, the first comprehensive university set up in Tibet, established the Department of Tibetan Medicine to train high-level medical personnel. Tibetan medicine has been improved through scientific research, and has made excellent progress in curing high blood pressure, heart diseases, paralysis, rheumatism, stomach diseases, and diseases of the nervous system. By 1984, the number of hospitals in Tibet had increased fivefold over 1965, and beds by 1.8 times.

Popular scientific work is developing rapidly in Tibet. Newspapers and magazines are appearing in Tibetan society and help enlighten the people and foster society’s progress.

The Tibetan Academy of Sciences was founded in 1985. It has institutes on the study of nationalities, history, religion, philosophy, languages and literature, information, economy, etc. It has also set up the Press of Ancient Tibetan Literature and an organ for preserving and collating the vast Tibetan folk epic, Gesar.

(6) Tibetan literature and art — Tibet is well-known for its long-established and colorful culture and art. A large
contingent of well-trained professional writers and artists has emerged since democratic reform in 1959. The Association of Cultural Workers of the Tibet Autonomous Region was established in 1981, and now has 480 members, of whom 120 are also members of various national associations of literature and art. An art school was established in the region in 1979 and enrolled ninety-six students in the first year. The school offered many courses, including Tibetan opera, dance, vocal music, instrumental music, and general knowledge. From then on the region could offer its own regular arts education. The number of professional theatrical troupes has increased from six in 1965 to eleven. Among seven-hundred-odd professional in the field more than 90 percent are Tibetans or of other ethnic minorities.

Mass participation is a prominent feature of cultural work in Tibet. The region has about 150 rural amateur theatrical troupes. Xigaze alone has twenty-four amateur Tibetan opera troupes. More than twenty cultural centers have been established at various towns throughout the region, and a municipal cultural work committee has been set up at Lhasa to boost mass cultural activities.

Athletics are quite popular among the people. Tibetan mountaineers have won honor for China. The world’s sixth highest peak, Mount Cho Oyu, 8,200 meters above sea level, has recently been conquered by a Tibetan mountaineering team. The Tibetan football team has achieved great success in tournaments.

By the end of 1984, there were 71 cinemas in various towns of the region and 641 film projection teams working mainly in the agricultural and pastoral areas. There were 118,000 film showings in the whole region in 1984. In the same year,
twenty-four Tibetan-dubbed films were produced. Altogether, 191 dubbed films were produced during 1965-1984.

The Tibetan Publishing House has published five hundred books in the Tibetan language with a total of 43.5 million copies. The region now has its own radio station and television station.

Tibet has an ancient, unique legacy of history with a rich cultural and artistic heritage. To respect and protect traditional cultures of minority nationalities is the state's consistent policy. Many measures have been taken to salvage, pass on, and develop Tibetan literature and art, with remarkable success. Tibetan writers have produced some works with local flavor which display a distinctive and unique Tibetan style. For instance, the novel *Survivors* and the long poem *Storm over the Snow-Capped Mountains* have won awards as distinguished creations of minority nationality literature in the country.

The vast Tibetan folk epic *Gesar* is the world's longest epic poem. The story is known to almost every Tibetan household. Gesar is depicted as a hero with magical powers who wiped out monsters and evil-doers to protect the common people, and so was held in reverence and love by them. Since the eleventh century, hundreds of tales and legends have grown up around Gesar. Investigation reveals that there are 174 folk tales about Gesar, with about 20 million words. Since 1979, several Gesar research groups have been set up by relevant provincial and regional departments. Publishing houses have published some twenty books about Gesar in Tibetan and Han language translations. Sichuan Publishing House alone has published 270,000 copies of them. In order to collect, collate, and
preserve the whole work, efforts have been made to find all the storytellers who can recite the epic. An old bard named Grags-pa can recite twenty-two sections of it, and is praised as a “national treasure.” His recitation has been recorded and collated into 3.4 million words and published in four volumes in Tibetan.

Tibetology has a long history and is well established. A great number of Tibetan and Han documents and literary works reveal that the study of Tibetan history and culture may go back more than a thousand years. Since the liberation of Tibet, Tibetology has entered a new epoch. The Management Committee of Tibetan Cultural Relics and Historic Sites has been established. Its task is to preserve and manage all the cultural relics in the region. It has renovated a part of historic sites, collected and collated tens of thousands of precious historic relics and documentary records.

There are now twenty-three historical sites listed as national cultural relics under the state’s or region’s protection. Much stress has been put on the preservation of these historic relics. For instance, the Potala Palace, including all its Buddhist statues, scriptures, and other precious cultural relics, is one of the key historic relics under the state’s protection.

Much Tibetan folk music and many dances have been sought out and collated, and many Tibetan traditional dramas have been collated and revised. Large numbers of folk songs, fables, myths, and stories have been compiled into books. Five Buddhist courses have been set up to collate the vast and numerous Tibetan Buddhist scriptures.

After setting things right after the ultra-left turmoil of the “Cultural Revolution,” Tibetology has taken on an entirely new look. The Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences
has published some academic journals, including *Tibet Studies*, sponsored several academic symposia on Tibetan history, language, literature, philosophy, traditional medicine, calendrical calculation, and other branches of learning. It has also edited and published various kinds of academic books and a series titled *Anthology of Cultural and Historic Materials*. Many priceless Tibetan ancient books and other works of literature have been successfully printed for the first time.

Tibetan writers issue a literary tabloid newspaper, and have published thirteen books on folk literature, among which *Tibetan Folktales* (first volume) won the highest prize for national folk literature in 1983.

Eight traditional Tibetan dramas have already been collated and translated into the Han language. Three of them have been staged after revision.

The state has shown great concern for Tibetan traditional medicine, a great treasure accumulated by the Tibetan people. Although Tibet had a vast body of traditional medicine, in old Tibet the entire medical establishment consisted of only the *Montsi Khang* (an ancient institution administering both Tibetan medicine and the astronomical almanac) and a few clinics serving mainly the upper strata and the rich. Since liberation, public health has made much progress. The *Montsi Khang* at Lhasa has evolved into a Regional Hospital of Traditional Tibetan Medicine with over 400 medical workers, 12 out-patient departments, and 150 beds. Every county town has a hospital of Tibetan medicine or has a Tibetan medicine department attached to the people's hospital. There are now some eleven hundred doctors and private practitioners using traditional herbs, forming a network of Tibetan medicine throughout the
region. The Institute of Traditional Medicine was set up to
find out, sort, and study the principles of traditional Tibetan
medicine, an important step toward further development.

(7) Commerce and people’s life — During the twenty years
since the founding of the autonomous region, Tibet has seen
a series of significant changes, although it has followed a
tortuous path. The commercial departments have made
every effort to correct former mistakes and wipe out the
lingering ultra-left influences of the “Cultural Revolution”.
Compulsory state purchase of grain, meat, and other major
farm products from farmers has been replaced by a contract
system, which has greatly stimulated the initiative of the
farmers.

By the end of 1984, the number of state-owned,
collectively owned, and private shops had reached 22,500.
Total sales in 1984 were 4.6 times those of 1965. The
increased number of shops greatly helps the people. For
instance, in the past the villagers of the Lhakang village of
the Lozha County had to walk two days, crossing over a
4,000-meter high mountain, to do their shopping. Since the
network of trading establishments was set up, the salesmen
often deliver goods to the villages, a much more convenient
arrangement for the people.

Taking into consideration Tibet’s actual needs, the state
has made special allowances for Tibet and given it special
and flexible treatment to facilitate its development. During
the past twenty years, the state has spent 395 million yuan to
subsidize tea, salt, grain, and edible oil. This surely played an
important role in both stabilizing commodity prices and
meeting the needs of the people. But the shortcomings of
such a policy were also obvious: in the long term these
allowances undermined Tibetan commerce’s competitive-
ness.

Therefore, the outmoded economic policy must be reformed in order to:

- grant commercial enterprises more decision-making power;
- reform the wholesale system of the commercial departments;
- carry out a more flexible policy of purchasing and selling farm, animal, and sideline products;
- reform the price system and let prices be economic levers to regulate the economy and promote production;
- encourage collectively owned and private shops and farmers and herdsmen to engage in commercial activities;
- open and develop free markets where farmers and traders can market products freely without state control.

Under these reforms, Tibet’s markets would be open to goods from the entire country, and there would be no more administrative-area divisions or distinctions between public or private traders. All would be welcome to engage in commerce or services so as to stimulate competition in Tibet’s economy.

With rapid economic development, the living standard of urban and rural residents has greatly improved. In 1984, the average per capita income rose significantly; the amount of savings deposits in both urban and rural areas showed an increase of 8.5 times the 1965 amount. The vast majority of Tibetans now eat better, dress better, and live in better, more spacious homes.

The rising standard of living and the rapid expansion of medical and health facilities contributed to a rapid increase in the Tibetan population, which before the liberation of Tibet had been declining. At the end of 1959, the population
in Tibet was 1,220,000. It reached 1,990,000 in 1985. The total number of Tibetans in China as a whole has increased over one million since the founding of New China, while the Tibetan nationality population in the Tibet Autonomous Region has increased 50 percent. Although the state has put forward the policy of family planning, it is quite flexible in Tibet, especially in the remote and border areas where there is no control of births.

Tibet has seen tremendous changes and rapid improvement in many respects in the last three decades. It is now marching on the road of progress and prosperity. Panchen Erdeni, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, said:

To judge correctly the significance of the rapid improvement and progress in Tibet, you must keep in mind that Tibet abolished serfdom only two dozen years ago. If we compare today’s Tibet with Western advanced countries and consequently adopt an attitude of negating the tremendous changes and progress in Tibet it is as foolish as putting a university professor on the same footing as a school pupil.

(8) Special Policies for Tibet — In the spring of 1984 the central government decided on some special policies for Tibet in order to further correct the mistakes resulting from former ultra-left policies. These included plans and measures for developing the Tibetan economy.

Tibet’s economic policy is different from both that of interior China and the coastal special economic zones. The central government’s guidelines and specific economic policy in Tibet may be summarized as follows.

Tibet shall consolidate and develop the achievements of its rural economic reform and shall persistently carry out the
urban economic reform. Tibet shall shift from a closed type of economy to an open one. Its economy shall center on the law of value and the function of market force regulation, and it shall devote major efforts to developing the production and exchange of commodities.

In the rural and pastoral areas, while land, forests, and pasture remain publicly owned, agricultural production is contracted to individual households and animal products production has a market orientation. In the pastoral areas, animals are contracted to each household, individuals can own their cattle and manage independently their cattle raising and breeding; in the rural areas, land is used by individual households, which can manage their agricultural production independently. Private and collectively run industrial and commercial enterprises are encouraged to deal in all commodities and products with the exception of a few critical items which are still under state control. Tibet's market is open both to the outside world and to the other regions of China. Foreign trade and border trade should be promoted.

Ngapo Ngawang Jigmei, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress, said:

At present, the key task of Tibet is to boost economic construction and to make the masses of the people prosperous as soon as possible. To carry on economic construction, it is necessary to proceed from Tibet's actual conditions, to look into the actual situation, to get hold of the special pattern of Tibet's economic construction, and not to copy indiscriminately the experience and measures of the inland regions. Because of this, the central government has repeatedly stressed that officials working
in Tibet should pay great attention to and master Tibet's specific characteristics.

In order to boost Tibet's economy rapidly, Tibetan farmers have been and will still be exempted from agricultural and pastoral taxes until 1990, and the mandatory state purchase of agricultural and animal products has been ended. Within the next few years, private and collectively run enterprises dealing with daily necessities will be exempted from industrial and commercial taxes. More flexible measures will be taken to boost free markets. In order to increase regional government's income, every effort will be made to boost industry, mining, forestry, handicrafts, tourism, and the service industry. Special preferential treatment will be given to the remote and border areas. The aim of all these measures is to strengthen the people's economic power and improve their financial condition as soon as possible.

Wu Jinghua, secretary of the Communist Party of China of the Tibet Autonomous Region, said with great confidence on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the region, "There are still fifteen years remaining before 2000. China is determined to achieve the goal of quadrupling her gross national product in those fifteen years. Those fifteen years will see the Chinese nation become stronger and more prosperous. History will afford eloquent proof that the Tibetan people and other nationalities in Tibet not only could create a brilliant ancient civilization, eliminate influences of aggressive imperialist forces in Tibet, and end serfdom, but also had the ability to create a modern civilization and to make great contributions to invigorating China and realizing the four modernizations."
Yangbajain Geothermal Power Station

Lhasa Hotel
Zedang Cultural Center in Shannan Prefecture

Lhasa Gymnasium

Central square before the Jokhang Temple
Lingka Festival
Shearing wool

Making Tibetan hats

Junior high school students having a class
Reciting sutras in the street

The statue of the Buddha brought to Tibet by Princess Wen Cheng

A ritual service in the Ramoche Temple
The place in the Zhaxilhunbo Monastery where Panchen met Amban

Mt. Zongshan, Rgyal-rtse, a battle ground against the British invaders
Chapter V

THE SECOND WAVE OF CONSTRUCTION IN TIBET

A reporter writing a story about the forty-three government-sponsored construction projects which began in Tibet in 1984 said enthusiastically: "The land on which we are standing is called 'the third pole of the world.' It has fallen asleep for a long, long time, but now, lashed by the waves of modernization, it is rising silently." This rising is regarded as the second wave of construction in Tibet.

How very long this renewal was in coming is shown by the fact that the first wave is considered to have occurred when the Potala Palace, one of the world's seven grand ancient buildings, was built some thirteen hundred years ago. The builder was King Srong-btsan sgam-po (Songtsan Gambo), and it was here that he and Princess Wen Cheng were married. It was built at about the same time as the Jokhang Temple and the Ramoche Temple, also part of the first wave of construction on the Tibetan plateau.

In March 1984, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held a conference on the work of Tibet. It decided that nine developed provinces and municipalities—Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shandong, Guangdong,
Sichuan, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Beijing—should help Tibet complete forty-three economic and cultural reconstruction projects, so as to improve the material and cultural life of the Tibetan people.

The provinces and municipalities in charge of the construction took responsibility for supplying all machinery and necessary accessories. Allotment of construction materials such as steel and iron, cement, and glass was given priority by the state. Timber and local construction materials were supplied by the Tibetan regional government. Altogether, about 400,000 tons of materials and 50,000 technicians, workers, and other personnel were sent to Tibet.

Most of these technicians and workers were sent into Tibet immediately and began work by the fall of 1984. After a year, i.e., by September 1985, thirty-seven of the forty projects which had officially started had been completed, although bad working conditions created construction problems, and the need to bring most materials over long distances created further difficulties.

Furthermore, these projects demanded high quality. Project contractors assumed the responsibility not only of designing and building the principal parts of a project, but also of providing all the interior finishing, furnishings, and training of management personnel. All were turnkey jobs.

The buildings completed in the year's time represented a very large percentage of the total floor space of the projects—254,000 square meters costing a total of 480 million yuan. The quality of most of the construction materials and accessories has come up to advanced domestic standards.

The forty-three projects are widely distributed in the five prefectures and one municipality of Tibet—22 in Lhasa, 6
in Xigaze (Gzhis-kha-rtse), 3 in Shannan (Lhokha) Prefecture, 3 in Qamdo (Chab-mdo) Prefecture, 4 in Nagchu Prefecture, and 3 in Ngari (Mnga'-ris) Prefecture; 2 highway projects cross more than one prefecture.

The projects can be divided into five groups:

(1) Nine projects for the tourist industry—These are Lhasa Hotel, Tibet Guest House, Lhasa Airport Hotel, Xigaze Hotel, Ngari Hotel, etc. The total floor space is 101,000 square meters, with 3,950 beds. These hotels are among the most modern buildings in Tibet, with up-to-date facilities. The biggest one is the Lhasa Hotel, a key project. It has three main buildings and two other buildings with a total floor space of some 40,000 square meters and 1,000 beds. It is the most luxurious hotel in Tibet, with spacious rooms, halls, and bathrooms, and a modern laundry. Air conditioning, supplemental oxygen devices, telephones, and television sets are also installed.

(2) Ten projects for cultural activities and education—These include Lhasa Theater, University of Tibet, Lhasa Audio-Visual Education Building, Tibet Recreation Center, Lhasa Children’s Activity Center, Xigaze Recreation Center, Qamdo Recreation Center, Nagchu Recreation Center, and Zedang (Rtsed-thang) Recreation Center. The Lhasa Theater is the key project, Tibet’s first modern theater. It occupied 140 designers and was built by workers from Tianjin in 232 days. It has a floor space of 8,000 square meters and 1,200 seats. The theater building is magnificent, and has all the necessary fittings.

(3) Ten projects for energy resources and transportation—They are: Lhasa Thermal Power Station, Choiseul Hydro-Power Station, Solar Stoves, Ngari Solar Heat Building, the Nagchu Wind Power Experimental Station.
Solar Energy Experimental Station at Xigaze, Yangbajain Geothermal Power Station, Yangbajain-Lhasa Power Transmission Project, Lhasa Bus Terminal with guest facilities, and resurfacing, fuel and repair stations for the Qinghai-Tibet Highway.

(4) Five projects for public health and sports — They are: the Tibet Gymnasium, the inpatient department of the Autonomous Region Hospital, the outpatient department of the Zedang Hospital, the outpatient department of the Xigaze Hospital, and the inpatient department of the Nagchu Hospital. The new hospital buildings cover a total floor space of 29,000 square meters, and have advanced medical equipment. The Tibet Gymnasium is one of the key projects. It is a medium-sized gymnasium with comparatively advanced equipment. With 8,000 square meters of floor space and 4,000 seats, it can accommodate all indoor sports. It is a first-class multi-purpose gymnasium, equipped with electronic scoreboards, electronic time-keepers, audio systems, and other advanced facilities. A movable stage allows movie shows and theatrical performances.

(5) Four construction projects each for industry and commerce, and one project for municipal administration.

The aid of the state—Tibet has a unique natural environment and occupies an important strategic position. Although Tibetans are a minority nationality in China as a whole, they are a 90 percent majority here. They have their unique traditions, customs, habits, and religious beliefs. The long-time seclusion from the outside world has resulted in weak economic development, feeble productive forces, and low productivity. Backwardness of communications and transport, underdeveloped commercial economy, and low
educational and technical levels have prevailed over the region. So, to effect a dramatic change in Tibet’s outlook is not only a long-cherished desire of the Tibetan people, but also a vital task for the state.

The central government, carrying out the policy of equality of nationalities, has attached great importance to Tibet’s development and construction. It has not only drawn up a series of specific policies in accordance with the reality of Tibet, but has given Tibet enormous financial aid. From 1952 to 1984 the state subsidized Tibet with 7,900 million yuan, not including investments of hundreds of millions of yuan in highways and capital construction and other forms of support. The results in many areas of the region’s life have already been described.

The state did not regard the financial aid to Tibet as a burden, but as a duty. Ngapo Ngawang Jigmei said, “Our country is a unified state, and our aim is to promote the development and prosperity of the whole country, not only of the better developed central China. With such an idea in our mind, we have never thought the financing of poorly developed areas a burden to the state. No, such a thought has never occurred to us.”

Tibet is moving upward. But this doesn’t mean there are no difficulties. On the contrary, there are many. The large size of the region and the very sparse population are basic conditions severely affecting economic construction. Even with the 20,000 kilometers of new highways built in 1979-1984, 20 percent of districts have no transport service, which makes it difficult to improve people’s living conditions. A third major problem is the severe shortage of scientists and technicians, and a fourth is a want of developed energy resources. Clearly, to attain the goal of an annual gross
regional product of 3 billion yuan by the year 2000, still greater efforts must be made to solve the multitude of problems the country continues to face.

We hope that this discussion of its history and present situation gives you a greater understanding of Tibet. If you tour the “roof of the world,” your personal experiences certainly will give you a more comprehensive impression than this pamphlet could.

The light of hope has risen over the Tibetan plateau. It inspires the Tibetan people and makes overseas Tibetans long to return to their homeland. We are sure that more and more overseas Tibetans will come back. Tibet is thriving and prospering day by day. Its tomorrow surely will be better than today.
1. Population and Administrative Divisions of Tibet

Situated in the southwestern part of the People’s Republic of China, Tibet is adjacent to Xingjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the north and Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan provinces in the east; it borders Burma, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Kashmir in the south and west.

The Tibetan nationality has a long history within the boundaries of China. Under the bondage of the feudal system of the Tibetan regime based on an amalgamation of temporal and spiritual government, the population of Tibet decreased in modern times. According to records, Tibet’s population of about 8 million in 1737 had decreased to 1.22 million by the time of democratic reform in 1959. Since then, the population of Tibet has increased rapidly. According to the census of 1982, the people of Tibetan nationality in Tibet numbered 1,786,500, compared with 1,220,000 in 1959, an increase of 566,500, an annual increase rate of 1.7 percent.

Tibet Autonomous Region has seven prefectures, one regional administrated municipality, and seventy-seven counties.

Several autonomous minority townships have been established since 1983 under the Law of National Regional Autonomy—five for the Menga people, one of Nahsi nationality, and one of the Lopa people.
### Administrative Headquarters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Division</th>
<th>Headquarters Location</th>
<th>Number of Counties</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nagchu Prefecture</td>
<td>Nagchu</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qamdo (Chab-mdo) Prefecture</td>
<td>Qamdo</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shannan Prefecture</td>
<td>Zedang (Rtsed-thang)</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xigaze Prefecture</td>
<td>Xigaze</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ngari Prefecture</td>
<td>Shiquanhe (Tashigong)</td>
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<td>Nyingchi Prefecture</td>
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<td>Gyanze Prefecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lhasa Municipality</td>
<td>Lhasa</td>
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</tbody>
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2. **Major Cities and Towns in Tibet**

_Lhasa_ (altitude 3,600 meters), capital of Tibet, on the northern bank of the Lhasa River, has a history of more than thirteen hundred years and is one of the world's famous highland cities. “Lhasa” is a Tibetan word meaning “holy place.” Famous historical and cultural relics include: the Potala Palace, the Norbu Linka, the Jokhang Temple, the Princess' Willow, the Tang-Tubo Peace Pledge Monument, the ‘Bras-spungs (Drepung) Monastery, the Se-ra Monastery, and the Dga’ldan (Gan-den) Monastery.

Much public construction, such as factories, roads, schools, hospitals, a cultural palace, exhibition halls, and
residential buildings, has been done in Lhasa since liberation. In the couple of years before the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region, several modern construction projects were carried out with aid from many other parts of China. Lhasa is the center of Tibetan political affairs, the economy, and culture and communications.

Xigaze (altitude 3,800 meters), southwest of the confluence of the Yarlung Tsangpo River and one of its tributaries, the Nyang River, is the second largest city in Tibet and has a history of some five hundred years. The Xigaze prefectural commissioner’s office is located here. Before democratic reform, it had only some handicraftsmen who produced carpets, boots, noodles made from potato starch, wooden bowls, and wine. Now there are medium- or small-sized power stations, a farm machinery plant, a motor repair shop, a brewery, a grain processing factory, and construction teams. In addition, there are also a hospital, secondary and primary schools, a song-and-dance ensemble, and a cinema. Xigaze is the communications and transportation center and the distribution center for agricultural and animal products in southern Tibet.

Gyanze (Rgyel-rtse; altitude 3,900 meters), on the bank of the Nyang River, has a history of more than six hundred years and is renowned for its carpets. Gyanze is a historic city where the Tibetan people mounted a massive counterattack against the invading troops in 1904. Notable sites include the Zongshan Fortress atop Zongshan Hill. The battle in defense of Zongshan was a triumph for the Tibetan defenders and a heavy blow to the British invaders.

Qamdo (Chab-mdo; altitude 3,280 meters), on the western bank of the Lancang River (upper Mekong) in eastern Tibet,
occupies a very important position in eastern Tibet as a hub of communications between Tibet, Sichuan, Qinghai, and Yunnan. The Sichuan-Tibet Highway goes by it to Lhasa.

*Nyingchi* (altitude 3,000 meters), by the Gyamda River, has mild temperatures and well-preserved primeval forests. Some local industrial enterprises have been set up since liberation. The Nyingchi Woolen Mill is renowned for its knitting wool, woolen blankets, and woolen cloth. Its products sell well in Tibet as well as in other provinces.

*Yadong* (altitude 3,000 meters), in southernmost Tibet, is adjacent to Bhutan and Sikkim. It was formerly the center for trade between Tibet and India.

*Nyalam* (altitude 2,400 meters), on the southern slope of the middle part of the Himalayas, has a very pleasant climate and is an important town on the road to Nepal. It is the starting point of the China-Nepal Friendship Highway.

*Nagchu* (altitude 4,500 meters), between the Tanggula Mountains and Nyenchen Tanggula Mountains, has a cold climate. It is on the vital communications line from Tibet to northwest China. The Qinghai-Tibet Highway runs past it to Lhasa.

*Shiquanhe* (Tashigong; altitude 4,300 meters), the terminal of the Xinjiang-Ngari Highway, is on the Sengge Tsangpo River (upper Indus), in western Tibet. The Ngari prefectural commissioner’s office is located here.

### 3. Towering Mountains

Tibet, the “roof of the world,” is the principal part of the Qinghai-Tibet plateau, with endless chains of mountains and snow-capped peaks including:
Kunlun Mountains run east-west across the northern Tibetan plateau.

Karakorum Mountains extend into Tibet from India. East of the Karakorums, the Tanggula Mountains run east-west between Qinghai Province and Tibet.

Gangdise Mountains lie across southwestern Tibet and are linked to the Nyenchen Tanggula Mountains. They are the watershed of different river systems.

Himalayan Mountains with their lofty peaks lie along the southern border of the Tibetan plateau. Mt. Qomolangma, or Mt. Everest, 8,848.13 meters above sea level, is part of this range. Mt. Xixiabangma (Gosainthan), 8,012 meters above sea level, is some 300 kilometers to the west of Qomolangma.

Hengduan Mountains in southeastern Tibet are exceptional for the region, in that they run in a north-south direction.

4. Rivers and Lakes in Tibet

Tibet has three different river systems:

(1) The Yarlung Tsangpo River in southern Tibet originates in the Jiemayangzhong glacier in Zhongba County at the northern foot of the Himalayas. Its upper reaches are called Maquanhe (Damqog Tsangpo). It runs eastward through Tibet for 2,057 kilometers before turning south and flowing into India. It is the largest river in Tibet and drains 240,080 square miles.

(2) Both the Langchen Tsangpo and Sengge Tsangpo in western Tibet are the river sources of the Indus.

(3) The Nujiang River (upper Salween), Lancangjiang River (upper Mekong), and Jinsha River (upper
Changjiang) are in the east of Tibet. All these rivers have enormous drops in elevation and their currents are swift, so they are excellent power sources.

On the northern Tibet plateau, rivers are small and short. Their waters come from snows and glaciers, and their lower reaches disappear into the desert or flow to the low-lying land to form lakes.

Tibet has more than fifteen hundred lakes scattered all over the Tibetan plateau like stars in the sky. The total area of the lakes is 23,800 square kilometers — 30 percent of the total area of lakes in China. These lakes, teeming with fish and surrounded by grassland, provide ideal areas for animal husbandry. The most famous lakes in Tibet are Nam Co in northern Tibet, Yanzho Yum Co (Lake of Jade and Grassland) in southern Tibet, and Bangong Co and Mapham Co in the west. (“Co,” in Tibetan, means “lake.”)

Nam Co, the second biggest saltwater lake in China, is about 4,700 meters above sea level. There are three islands in the lake. One can get a particularly beautiful view of the lake in late spring when numerous species of birds flock in to lay their eggs on the islands and on the banks of the lake. Yanzho Yum Co in Nagarze County has an area of some 800 square kilometers. Unlike most Tibetan lakes, whose waters usually have a very high saline content, the waters of Yanzho Yum Co are sweet. It is the largest freshwater lake at the northern foot of the Himalayas. The lake abounds with fish, and is called “Tibet’s storehouse of fish.” Many different kinds of waterfowl can be found here. With tall, lush grass around the lake, this is a place good for cattle-breeding as well as farming. The magnificent Sangding Monastery of the Bka’-brgyud sect is on the southern bank of the lake. It was the residence of Rdo-rje Phan-mo, the sole female Living
Buddha of Tibet.

Mapham Co, situated in Burang County, is another high-altitude fresh-water lake. Linked to Langak Co by the Anjia River, it has beautiful scenery and is a famous Buddhist holy spot. Every year many Buddhists make pilgrimages there.

Bangong Co, a beautiful long and narrow lake, is situated in Rutog County at 4,542 meters above sea level, but its western part is in Kashmir. It is 155 kilometers in length from west to east, but the distance is quite short from north to south. Its area is 5,937 square kilometers. The eastern part of it is fresh water while the western part is salt water! Bangong Co is abundant in various fish and waterfowl peculiar to Tibet. Florae flourish around the banks of the lake. This is a very suitable place to develop livestock breeding.

5. Peculiar Climate

The immensely high plateau of Tibet is surrounded by the world's highest mountains, with many rivers and lakes scattered across the plateau. The natural conditions are therefore very complex and make for violent changes in temperature.

Newcomers to Tibet usually experience breathing difficulty, dry lips, and flat fingernails, and are puzzled at phenomena such as snow falling in June and July, water boiling at 85-90 degrees centigrade, and no rainfall for several months in a row. All this is due to the lack of oxygen at this elevation, low atmospheric pressure, and other features of the unique climate of Tibet.

Climate varies greatly throughout the region because of
variations in geographical conditions. The climate is fiercely cold and dry in the northwest and warm and humid in the southeast. Days are long throughout the region and the sun is strong. Temperature varies greatly between day and night. Rain usually comes at night. Dry winds usually occur in winter and spring.

North — The North Tibet Plateau is situated between the Kunlun Mountains, Tanggula Mountains, Gandise Mountains, and Nyenchen Tanggula Mountains. It is 2,400 kilometers from west to east and some 700 kilometers from north to south, occupying two-thirds of the total surface of the autonomous region, with an average altitude of over 4,500 meters. The ground surface is rather plain. The area is called “Chang Thang” in Tibetan, which means “the northern plateau.” The plateau contains extensive grassland, and is an ideal place for animal husbandry. On the North Tibet Plateau the mean annual temperature is below zero centigrade (i.e., below freezing). The freezing season is as long as six months. Even in July, the hottest month of the year, the average temperature is less than 10 degrees centigrade (or less than 50 degrees Fahrenheit). Even in the “summer,” the temperature varies greatly between day and night. At noon, the solar radiation is strong and the weather is comparatively hot and dry. At night, the temperature drops drastically and there is often frost. The Himalayas capture almost all the rainfall coming from the Indian Ocean, so rainfall in north Tibet is scarce, except in the summer months. The average annual precipitation is about 200 millimeters. Windstorms occur all the year round, accompanied by abrupt changes in temperature, hail, and snow.

West — Ngari district is at the western end of the North
Tibet Plateau. It differs from other places on the plateau only in that it has a higher altitude. The central and southern parts of Ngari are mountainous and crisscrossed by rivers. Excellent arable lands can be found along river valleys amid many beautiful snowy mountains. The district is one of Tibet’s famous pastoral areas.

_South_ — The Yarlung Tsangpo Valley in south Tibet has a series of valley plains of varied width. They have an average altitude of less than 4,000 meters. The valley of the Lhasa River, a tributary of the Yarlung Tsangpo, is the widest. The valleys in south Tibet are Tibet’s important agricultural districts, thanks to the mild climate and abundant rainfall. At the foot of mountains there are also large areas of good pastureland.

_East_ — The valleys in the eastern highlands of Tibet are situated among the Hengduan ranges along three great rivers — the Jinsha River (upper Changjiang), Lancangjiang (upper Mekong), and Nujiang (upper Salween). These rivers cut deep valleys as they flow through the western part of Tibet in a southeasterly direction. The tops of the mountains are snowcapped all year round. Dense forests cover the mountain slopes while fertile fields are at the foot of the mountains.

The monsoons from the Indian Ocean come over the lower ranges of the eastern Himalayas into Tibet, thus creating the warm and wet climate in the valleys of southern Tibet. Here the average annual temperature is about 8 degrees centigrade (a little less than 50 degrees Fahrenheit). The average temperature in July, the hottest month, is over 16 degrees centigrade (or over 60 degrees Fahrenheit). Rainfall from west to southeast in this area varies from 200 to 2,000 millimeters. So, the year is divided into two
distinctive seasons—the rainy season from May to September and the dry season in other months.

6. Abundant Products and Rich Resources

Tibet has not only its unique and magnificent landscapes, but also rich products and natural resources.

*Flora*—Tibet is an enormous plant kingdom of more than four thousand species. The grainlands of southern and eastern Tibet produce highland *qingke* barley, wheat, peas, and rapeseed. Rice, corn, millet, sorghum, and sesame grow in southern Tibet. The main species of vegetables are cabbage, potato, carrot, green vegetable, celery, onion, garlic, spinach, chives, kidney beans, lettuce, tomatoes, and squash. The abundant bright sunshine in Tibet is good for vegetable growing. It is not rare for a radish or cabbage to grow to a dozen kilograms, a potato to half or one kilogram. Fruit trees were introduced into Tibet during the last twenty years. Apples, chestnuts, and other fruits grow very well in Bomi, Nyingchi, Gyaca, and other counties.

The forests of Tibet are one of the largest woodland areas of the country. The woodlands in east Tibet are linked to the forest of the Yunnan-Guizhou Pleateau. In Zayu, Mainling, Medog, and Bomi counties, more than 90 percent of the area is densely wooded. The timber reserves of Tibet are third largest in the country, after those of the Lesser Hinggan Mountains and the southwest forests in Sichuan-Yunnan provinces.

Tibet also produces many kinds of medicinal herbs, such as safflower, fritillary (*Fritillaria thunbergii*), Chinese caterpillar fungus, Chinese angelica, red rooted salvia
(Salvia miltiorrhiza), dangshen (Codonopsis pilosula), etc.

**Fauna**—Animal husbandry has a long history in Tibet, and it is closely linked with the people’s life. The main domesticated animals are sheep, goat, yak, cow, dzo (the offspring of a cow and a yak), horse, donkey, mule, chicken, duck, rabbit, and dog. Stock raising has always been very important in Tibet’s economy. The vast grassland of northern Tibet is one of the five largest grazing areas of China. Its main livestock are sheep, goat, and yak. These animals provide not only meat for food, but also a great amount of fur and leather.

The enormous forests of Tibet are a boon to wildlife, including wild oxen, wild donkey, gazelle, antelope, musk deer, river deer, leopard, tiger, bear, wolf, lynx, otter, snow hog, snow cock, and yellow weasel. Forest animals supply not only meat for food, but also rare medicinal products such as bear’s gall, tiger’s bones, musk, pilose antler, and antelope’s horn.

**Mineral deposits**—It is known that there are rich deposits of more than forty kinds of minerals in Tibet such as coal, oil shale, iron, copper, uranium, lithium, borax, sulfur, barite, etc. The graphite of the Gyangkar area has a purity higher than 50 percent. The rock crystal in the Tanggula Mountains is valuable. The deposits of uranium and borax are the biggest in the world. The deposits of lithium constitute half the world’s supply. Generally speaking, Tibet’s mines have not yet been developed on a large scale, and Tibet remains a virgin soil and many treasures still lie waiting to be discovered and exploited.

**Energy**—Tibet is rich in natural energy resources—water power, terrestrial heat (geothermal) energy, solar energy, and wind power. Tibet is mountainous and much of
the terrain is very steep, so that many rivers have enormous drops in elevation. The potential hydro-electric power to be obtained from the Yarlung Tsangpo River, for example, is about 200 million kilowatts, much more than that from the gorges of the Changjiang (Yangtze River).

Terrestrial heat sources in Tibet are the largest in China. They are found all over Tibet, and there are already over six hundred indications of it. The Yangbajain Geothermal Field is a steam field that has potential power of 150,000 kilowatts. An experimental terrestrial heat power station is already in production, generating electricity on a small scale from steam.

Solar energy and wind power are also rich resources in the region. The solar energy resources of Tibet are second in the world. Most areas of Tibet receive an average of 3,100-3,400 hours of sunlight a year, with an average of about nine hours per day. Each square centimeter of surface receives about 190-200 kilocalories of heat a year from the sun.

Tibet is one of the windiest areas of China. Most counties have around two hundred days a year with wind velocity of at least 3 meters per second. In Nagchu and Ngari, in winter and spring the wind velocity is over force 8 ("fresh gale") on the Beaufort scale. When people use two wind-driven one-kilowatt generators for an hour, they can generate electricity to light thirty-eight 40-watt lamps for four hours.

7. Places of Historic Interest and Scenic Spots

THE POTALA PALACE is the biggest and most complete ancient building complex in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and is under the state’s protection. The earliest of this group of ancient structures dates from the
seventh century A.D. during the reign of the Tubo king Srong-btsan sgam-po. It has a history of more than thirteen hundred years. The main building of the palace has thirteen stories. It is 117 meters in height and about 400 meters in width, with a total area of 130,000 square meters and over 1,000 rooms of various sizes. The whole complex is of wood and stone construction. The palace walls are often as thick as three meters, with the thickest section more than five meters. The Potala stands magnificently at the top of the Red Hill in the city of Lhasa.

According to historical annals, when the Tubo dynasty split up in the ninth century A.D., the Potala was destroyed; only a shrine for Avalokitesvara, the Goddess of Mercy, survived. During the reign of the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) an effort was made to rebuild the Potala, and the construction was completed half a century later. Successive Dalai Lamas contributed to the expansion of the palace, and finally it became what it is now. The Potala is divided into two distinct sections, the White Palace, built by the fifth Dalai, and the Red Palace. At the top of the White Palace are two suites of Dalai’s chambers called the “Hall of Sunlight.” The main building of the Red Palace houses the stupas of Dalai Lamas and all kinds of shrines. There are eight stupas in the palace, the biggest and most valuable ones being the stupas of the fifth and thirteenth Dalai Lamas. The former is about 15 meters high, while the latter is 14 meters high. Thousands of taels of gold were used to cover each of these two stupas. All the decorative design were inlaid with diamonds, pearls, jade, and various precious stones. More than 200,000 pearls were used in the decoration of the pearl pagoda in the main hall.

The Potala reflects the artistic merits and unique styles of
Tibetan architecture, painting, and sculpture. Being the power center of Tibetan regional government, which was a merger of clerical and secular rule, the Potala Palace stored not only Buddhist statues and precious Buddhist sutras (including the Tibetan Tripitaka, the world famous series of Buddhist learning) but also the statues of the Tubo king Srong-btsan sgam-po and his wife, Princess Wen Cheng, the portraits and memorial tablets of the emperors of the Qing dynasty, the signboards personally written by the emperors, and the gold seal and gold diploma bestowed on the fifth Dalai by the Qing emperor Shun Zhi in 1653 at the time the emperor granted him the title “Dalai Lama.”

NORBU LINKA, the Dalai Lama’s summer palace ever since the reign of the seventh Dalai, is in the western suburbs of Lhasa. During the reigns of the seventh, eighth, thirteenth, and fourteenth Dalais it was repeatedly renovated and extended. The main buildings in Norbu Linka are three palaces—Skal-bzang Pho-brang, built by the seventh Dalai in 1751; Spyan-ser Pho-brang, extended by the thirteenth Dalai in 1922; and Rtag-gtan-mi-'gyur Pho-brang, built by the fourteenth Dalai in 1956. The last, also called the New Palace, was more magnificent, more restrained, and more tastefully laid out than the former two. Some modern facilities were installed in the palace, such as bulletproof and stained glass on the doors and windows, bathrooms, and toilets.

In Norbu Linka there are many kinds of trees and sixty-two kinds of beautiful flowers, such as peony, rose, and herbaceous peony, all of which make for appealing summer scenery. In the past, Norbu Linka was a place where the Dalai and regional government officials, clerical and lay, enjoyed themselves. Now it has become a public park.
THE SERA MONASTERY, built in 1419 and situated in the northern suburbs of Lhasa, is one of the four main monasteries of the Yellow sect of Lamaism. In the past it had a quota of 5,500 monks, but sometimes the number reached 7,000 to 8,000. The monastery houses a great number of historic relics such as the Tripitaka handwritten in gold, and a great many thang-ka (Tibetan scroll-paintings).

THE GANDEN (DGA’-LDAN) MONASTERY, situated in Dagze County, is one of the four main monasteries of Lamaism. It is believed to have been built by Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419), the founder of the Yellow sect, in 1409. It is the birthplace of the Yellow sect. In the past it had a quota of 3,300 monks, but sometimes the number reached 5,000 to 6,000. The monastery was destroyed in the “Cultural Revolution,” but now is being reconstructed using funds allotted by the state and donations offered by the people.

THE DREPUNG (’BRAS-SPUNGS) MONASTERY, at the foot of the Ganbei-Uzi Mountain on the outskirts of Lhasa, was built in 1416, and is the largest of the four main monasteries of the Yellow sect of Lamaism. The monastery houses many Buddhist sutras and precious cultural relics. After the fifth Dalai was appointed head of the Tibetan dual clerical-lay ruling body by Emperor Shun Zhi of the Qing dynasty in 1653, the Tibetan regional government was located there. The Qing emperor stipulated that the fixed number of monks in the monastery was to be 7,700, but sometimes the number reached 10,000.

THE TRASHILUNPGPO (BKRA-SHIS-LHUN-PO) MONASTERY, also one of the four main monasteries of the Yellow sect of Lamaism, is the largest monastery in the Gtsang region. It was built by the first Dalai Lama, Dge-
’dun grub, in 1447. Later it was renovated and extended by successive Panchens. The monastery was majestic, embodying the unique style of Tibetan architecture. The Qing emperor stipulated the number of monks at this monastery should be 4,400, but sometimes the number reached 6,000.

THE JOKHANG TEMPLE, one of the oldest buildings in Tibet, is at the center of Lhasa. Tradition has it that Princess Wen Cheng selected the construction site and designed the temple, and Bhrikuti Devi, the Nepalese princess, financed the project. It is a temple of the Yellow sect. The temple houses a statue of Sakyamuni which was brought to Lhasa from the Tang court by Princess Wen Cheng in the seventh century, and is the holiest place for the Tibetan people. A continuous stream of worshipers go on pilgrimages to the temple all the year around.

THE SA-SKYA MONASTERY, principal monastery of the Sa-skya sect of Lamaism, is in Sa’gya County, Xigaze Prefecture. The monastery consists of two parts—the Southern and the Northern Monasteries. The Southern Monastery is on the flatland on the southern bank of the Sa’gya River, while the Northern Monastery is under a cliff on the northern bank. The Northern Monastery was built in 1079, and at the time was rather small. After 'Phags-pa, the hierarch of the Sa-skya sect, was authorized by the central government of the Yuan dynasty in the middle of the thirteenth century to rule over both religious and secular affairs in Tibet, the monastery was renovated and expanded.

The Northern Monastery was destroyed in the “Cultural Revolution,” while the Southern Monastery, built in 1268, is preserved intact and houses many ancient Buddhist sutras and precious historical relics.
THE MATERNAL UNCLE-NEPHEW PEACE PLEDGE MONUMENT, also called Tang-Tubo Peace Pledge Monument, erected in 821 in front of the Jokhang Temple, is a witness to the Tang-Tubo unity. It is listed as a site of national historical importance.

TOMBS OF TUBO KINGS are found on Mt. Muri in Qonggyai County in the Shannan area. According to the Records of Tibetan Kings and Ministers, there are twenty-one graves.

YONGBU LAKHANG is on a hill at the eastern side of the Yarlung River in Nedong County in the Shannan area. Tradition has it that it was the first palace in Tibetan history, built in the second century B.C. According to legend, Princess Wen Cheng lived here in summer and at the Kyra-brug Temple in winter.

8. Customs and Habits of Tibetans

As Tibetans have always lived on a plateau more or less inaccessible to the outside world, they have developed unique customs and habits concerned with clothing, diet, houses, festivals, funeral and marriage ceremonies, and taboos. All these reflect the Tibetans' historical traditions, psychological tendencies, and national characteristics.

COSTUMES—The gown is worn by all. It has long sleeves and large girth, opens off-center on the right, and is tied around the waist with a colorful sash made of cloth or silk. A white, red, or green shirt may be worn under the gown by men. In warmer weather the right arm is usually kept free of the gown, the sleeve hanging on the right shoulder or pulled to the front. When it is hot, both arms are free from the gown, with sleeves tied around the waist.
The women's gown is made of *phula* (a woolen cloth). In summer women wear a sleeveless gown with a colorful blouse beneath it. With or without sleeves, the gown is worn with a colorful sash and an apron. In pastoral areas, people wear gowns made of sheepskin without a cloth cover. Bands of embroidery trim the sleeves, collar, belt, and hem of the gown.

In both agricultural and pastoral areas, people lift the front part of the gown a little upward before a sash or belt is tied around the waist, thus forming a bag at the waist in which the wearer can carry things. Tibetans like to decorate their costumes with jewelry, silver, gold, or jadeware.

**FOOD** — The main foods of the Tibetan people include butter, *tsampa* (flour made of roasted barley), and *qingke* barley beer.

Butter made from yak's or sheep's milk is an essential food for the Tibetans. It is an ingredient in buttered tea, and is kneaded with roasted flour made from *qingke* (highland barley) into cakes and eaten with buttered tea. Butter is also used to make deep-fried cakes.

Buttered tea is the Tibetans' everyday drink. They usually have a few cups of buttered tea in the morning before going to work. Guests are always served buttered tea. The tea is made by boiling brick tea until it is very thick, then pouring it into a long cylindrical wooden churn, with butter and salt, and churning it until the tea and butter are perfectly amalgamated. The tea is returned to the pot and heated, and is then ready to be served.

The Tibetans observe a set of rules when drinking tea. Usually, they sip a little at a time, and then add tea to the cup. They never empty a cup at one gulp. The guest's cup should always be full. If you don't want to drink, you may
leave it untouched. If you drink half a cup the host will surely fill your cup, so if you don’t want any you’d better leave the cup untouched. But you should empty the cup before leaving the host’s house. This is the way the Tibetans get along with people.

*Tsampa*, one of the Tibetans’ staple foods, is made of roasted highland *qingke* barley and peas ground into flour. Usually, some *tsampa* is put into a bowl with some buttered tea and mixed into a ball with the fingers of the right hand. Or it will be made into a kind of liquid food, boiling it in the water with some meat or vegetables.

*Qingke barley beer* is brewed from *qingke* barley, and has a bright color and a taste that is both sweet and a little sour. It is a favorite of all Tibetans, men and women, old and young, and is indispensable at festivals and propitious days. When you pay a visit to a Tibetan, you will surely be served a cup of *qingke* barley beer. After you have taken a sip of it the host will fill the cup again, and when you take another sip your cup is refilled; after three sips you are supposed to drink the cup to the last drop. After that you may or may not drink as you please.

**HOUSES**—In villages and towns, the Tibetans live in flat-roofed mud-and-stone dwellings. Comparatively well-off Tibetans used to live in two-story houses with the living rooms on the sunny upper floor and the kitchen and storerooms below. Aristocrats used to live in three- to five-story houses with the interior elegantly and beautifully decorated. In pastoral areas, people would live in yak-hide tents. Since liberation, housing conditions have changed a great deal for the better. The quality of the furnishings depends on the wealth of the family. Most Tibetan families have beautiful churns for making buttered tea, wooden
bowls with exquisite designs, jade of different colors, earthenware, goldwork, and silverware. Carpets and wooden furniture are also in common use.

TRADITIONAL METHODS OF COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT—In the past, there was no highway across the vast land of Tibet and few transport facilities. Since liberation, highways have been built and air lines opened. Although the communications and transport conditions have been greatly improved, traditional transport by horses, yaks, and donkeys still predominates.

Yaks are hardy beasts of burden, capable of long journeys through the mountains even in the worst conditions. In pastoral areas, caravans of dozens of yaks are often seen transporting salt, furs, skins, and other products, so yaks are called "the ships of the plateau." Modern roads and transport facilities are still scarce in remote areas, so goods are carried on their backs by men in mountainous areas where horses or yaks cannot go.

The yak is the usual beast of burden in Tibet. In addition, its hide is used to make boats, the skins being stretched over a frame of branches. A small boat can seat three to five passengers, a large one, up to a dozen. The yak-hide boat is small and extremely light. The boatman can carry it on his shoulders.

FESTIVALS—The Tibetans have many festivals, the most important being the New Year festival, Lingka festival, Muyu festival, Ong-kor festival, and Yaji festival.

The New Year festival is the most important event of the year. Men and women, young and old, wish each other a happy new year on the first day of the festival (i.e., the first day of the first lunar month). Children set off firecrackers. People drink qingke barley beer and buttered tea. Everybody
enjoys himself until the fifteenth of the first lunar month. According to custom, people should stay at home on New Year's day. From the second day they begin going out to greet relatives and friends. The visiting lasts from three to five days.

*The Lingka festival* falls on the fifteenth day of the fifth month. Families camp out in the lingka (woods) parks, or gardens near running water. Tents of different colors put up, relatives or friends are invited, all are dressed in their best clothes and the women wear their finest ornaments. The people have picnics in the shady gardens, drinking *qingke* barley beer and buttered tea, dancing and singing until evening.

*The Muyu (take a bath) festival* is a seven-day festival falling in the first ten-day period of the seventh month, when the rainy season on the highland has just ended. At this time of the year the weather is fine and the water in the river warm and clear. All the Tibetans, men and women, young and old, gather at rivers, lakes, and ponds, bathing themselves and washing clothes and bedding.

*The Ong-kor festival* is one which Tibetan peasants celebrate just before the harvest to anticipate a good harvest. “Ong-kor” means “walking around the fields.” By the end of July, the *qingke* barley and winter wheat are ripe for harvest in the valleys in southern Tibet, in Lhasa valley, and on the Gyangze plain. The villagers, holding pagodas made of *qingke* barley stalks and sheaves of wheat tied together with a *khata* (a ceremonial silk scarf), walk around the fields with gongs and drums to beg blessings from gods. The festival usually lasts for three to five days in the first ten-day period of August. As soon as the festival is over, the busy harvest time begins.
The Yaji (dbyar-skyid) festival is celebrated by Tibetan herdsmen in order to ensure good results in stock-raising. “Yaji” means “happy and lucky summer.”

NAMES—Newcomers to Tibet often ask their Tibetan friends, “What’s your family name?” and this often puts the Tibetans in an awkward position. Generally speaking, Tibetans have no family names. In the past, the people of great prestige and influence added the name of their mansion-houses, similar to a family name, to their personal names. Ordinary Tibetans have only a four-syllable personal name such as Bkra-shis-rdo-rje, Thsering dbang-’dus, Thub-bsod-nams, etc. But for convenience’s sake, in conversation only a two-syllable name, such as Rdo-rje, Dbang-’dus, Bkra-rdo, Tshe-dbhang, etc., is used. In order to show respect to a person, people usually add a “lha” to the name of the person addressed as, for example, Rdo-rje-lha, Tshe-dbhang-lha, etc. Tibetan names usually have some religious meaning: Bkra-shis means “good luck,” Thsering, “long life,” and so on.

KHATAG—To present khatag, a ceremonial silk scarf, is the commonest practice to show one’s respect and friendship. Khatag is presented at all important occasions—when a guest arrives, when paying a visit to an elder, or when one is seeing somebody off. Khatag is woven with raw silk, usually in white, a color symbolizing purity and honesty. A colored khatag is used in religious ceremonies. When you are presented with a khatag, bend your body a little forward and receive the khatag with both hands. To express your thanks, put it over your head and hang it on your shoulders.

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APPENDIX II

1. The Tubo Kings

Gnam-ri-blon-btsan (Late 6th century)
Srong-btsan sgam-po (? - 650)
Mang-srong mang-btsan (reigned 650-676)
‘Dus-srong mang-po-rje (reigned 676-704)
Khri-Ide-gtsug-btsan (reigned 704-755)
Khri-srong-Ide-btsan (reigned 755-797)
Mu-ne btsan-po (reigned 797-798)
Khri-Ide-srong-btsan (reigned 798-815)
Ral-pa-chan (reigned 815-841)
Dar-ma (reigned 841-845)

2. The Dalai Lamas

1. Dge-‘dun grub (1391-1474)
2. Dge-‘dun rgya-mtsho (1475-1542)
3. Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588)
4. Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (1589-1616)
5. Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682)
6. Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho (1683-1706)
7. Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho (1708-1757)
8. ’Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho (1758-1804)
9. Lung-rtogs rgya-mtsho (1805-1815)
10. Tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho (1816-1837)
11. Mkhas-grub rgya-mtsho (1838-1855)
12. ’Phrin-las rgya-mtsho (1856-1875)
13. Thub-bstan rgya-mtsho (1876-1933)
14. Bstan-‘dzin rgya-mtsho (1934-)
3. The Panchen Erdenis

1. Mkhas-grub-rje Dge-legs dpal-bzang  (1385-1438)
2. Bsod-nams phyogs-glang  (1439-1504)
3. Blo-bzang don-grub  (1505-1566)
4. Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan  (1567-1662)
5. Blo-bzang ye-shes  (1663-1737)
6. Blo-bzang dpal-Idan ye-shes  (1738-1780)
7. Bstan-pa’i nyi-ma  (1782-1853)
8. Bstan-pa’i dbang-phyug  (1854-1882)
9. Chos-kyi nyi-ma  (1883-1937)
10. Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan  (1938- )
Chronology of Important Events

628 Srong-btsan sgam-po came to throne.
641 Tang emperor promised Princess Wen Cheng in marriage to Srong-btsan sgam-po, and conferred on Mgar stong-btsan the title of “West Wing General.” Emperor Tai Zong ordered Prince Li Daozong to accompany Princess Wen Cheng to Tibet.
649 Emperor Tai Zong died and Gao Zong succeeded him.
650 Srong-btsan sgam-po died.
650 Khri-lde-gtsug-btsan sent emissaries to Chang’an to seek a matrimonial bond with the Tang court.
710 Marriage between Khri-lde-gtsug-btsan and Princess Jin Cheng was arranged.
755 Khri-srong-lde-btsan was enthroned after his father’s death.
797 Mu-ne btsan-po succeeded his father Khri-srong-lde-btsan as btsan-po.
798 Khri-lde-srong-btsan began his rule.
807 Tang fell.
815 Ral-pa-chan came to power.
821 Tang-Tubo Peace Pledge Monument or Maternal Uncle-Nephew Peace Pledge Monument was set up in Lhasa.
841 Ral-pa-chan was murdered and his brother Dar-ma was put on throne. Dar-ma opposed Buddhism.
845 Dar-ma was assassinated by Lha-lung dpal-gyi rdo-rje in front of the Jokhang Monastery in Lhasa.
869 Wang Xianzhi and Huang Chao uprisings against the Tang dynasty broke out in the hinterland.

1057 Bka'-gdams sect appeared.

1073 Sa-skya sect appeared.

1121 Bka'-brgyud sect appeared.

1189 Mongolian tribes unified by Genghis Khan.

1240 Mongol Prince Go-dan sent a military expedition under the command of General Dor-rta nag-po into Tibet.

1244 Go-dan invited Sa-pan Kun-dga rgyal-mtshan, the fourth abbot of the Sa-skya Monastery, to Liangzhou, Gansu, for an interview.

1260 Kublai Khan ascended the throne and granted 'Phags-pa the titles of “Imperial Tutor,” “State Tutor,” and “Great Treasure King of Dharma.”

1264 Sa-skya began its rule over Tibet.

1281 Bri-gung sect, a branch of the Bka'-brgyud sect, came into conflict with Sa-skya sect.

1285 Bri-gung sect invited Hulagu’s Mongol army to attack its enemy, the Sa-skya sect.

1349 Internal struggle broke out within the Sa-skya sect.

1353 Rule of the Sa-skya sect was taken over by the Phag-gru Bka'-brgyud sect.

1354 Yuan Emperor Shun Di Tohan Timur appointed Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan Da Situ (cabinet minister).

1368 Zhu Yuanzhang, founding emperor of the Ming dynasty, ascended the throne.

1372 Zhu Yuanzhang appointed Sha-kya rgyal-mtshan Da Situ, with the honorable titles of “Duke of Qingguo” and “State Tutor of Murddhabhichikta.”

1373 Grags-pa-byang-chub assumed the reins of Tibetan regional government.
1381 Bsod-nams grags-pa assumed the reins of Tibetan regional government
1385 Birth of the first Panchen Lama, Mkhas-grub-rje. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan became the ruler of Tibet.
1388 Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan was given the title of “State Tutor of Murddhabhichikta” by Zhu Yuanzhang.
1391 Birth of the first Dalai Lama, Dge-'dun grub.
1408 Emperor Yong Le invited Tsong-kha-pa to Nanjing.
1409 Emperor Yong Le granted Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan the title of “King of Expounding Buddhism.” Tsong-kha-pa built the Dga’-ldan Monastery as his base to spread Buddhism. He founded the Yellow sect, also called Dge-lugs (Gelupa) sect.
1414 Emperor Yong Le invited Tsong-kha-pa to Nanjing for the second time.
1416 Emperor Yong Le appointed Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po, father of Nor-bu bzang-po, military commander in charge of the Rin-spungs district in the Gtsang region.
1432 Grags-pa-'byung-gnas came to power and Emperor Ying Zong granted him the title of “King of Expounding Buddhism.”
1438 Death of the first Panchen Lama, Mkhas-grub-rje.
1445 Kun-dga'-legs-pa came to power and Emperor Ying Zong granted him the title of “King of Expounding Buddhism.”
1448 Rin-chen rdo-rje came to power and Emperor Ying Zong granted him the title of “King of Expounding Buddhism.”
1454 Ngag-gi dbang-po came to power and Emperor Xiao Zong granted him the title of “King of Expounding Buddhism.”
1474 First Dalai Lama, Dge-'dun grub, died.
1475 Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho became the second Dalai Lama.
1481 Chos-grags ye-shes of the Karma Bka'-brgyud sect instructed Kun-bzang-pa and his son, Don-yod rdo-rje, to attack the Dbus region.
1499 Ngag-dbang bkra-shis grags-pa, son of Ngag-gi dbang-po, assumed power when he came of age.
1512 Ngag-dbang bkra-shis grags-pa, was granted the title of “King of Expounding Buddhism” by Emperor Wu Zong.
1542 Second Dalai Lama died.
1543 Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho became the third Dalai Lama.
1563 Zhing-gshags-pa Tshe-brtan rdo-rje, the governor of Bsam-grub-rtse, occupied the entire Gtsang region.
1565 Emperor Shi Zong granted Zhing-gshags-pa Tshe-brtan rdo-rje the title of “State Tutor of Murddhabhichikta and “King of Dharma.”
1567 Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan became the fourth Panchen Lama.
1588 Third Dalai Lama died en route to Beijing.
1589 Yon-tan rgya-mtsho became the fourth Dalai Lama.
1611 Phun-tshog rnam-rgyal succeeded his father, Zhing-gshags-pa Tshe-brtan rdo-rje.
1616 Yon-tan rgya-mtsho received the title of “Master of Vajradhara” from Emperor Shen Zong. Yon-tan died of illness.
1617 Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho became the fifth Dalai Lama.
1618 Phun-tshog rnam-rgyal established the Sde-srid Gtsang-pa regime. The Phag-gru regime was overthrown by Sde-srid Gtsang-pa Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal, ruler of the Gtsang region.
1632 Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal and his wife died of smallpox. Their son Karma bstan-skyong dbang-po succeeded
his father as the ruler.

1641-
1642 Gu-shri Khan eliminated Sde-srid Gtsang-po regime. The Dge-lugs sect came into power. Qing dynasty unified China.

1652 Emperor Shun Zhi summoned the fifth Dalai Lama to his court in Beijing and granted him the title of “Dalai Lama, Overseer of the Buddhist Faith on Earth Under the Great Benevolent Self-subsisting Buddha of Western Paradise.”

1662 Fourth Panchen Lama died.
1663 Blo-bzang ye-shes became the fifth Panchen Lama.
1682 Fifth Dalai Lama died.
1697 Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho was enthroned as the sixth Dalai Lama.
1705 Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was killed by Lhabzang Khan, who dethroned the sixth Dalai Lama.
1706 Lhabzang Khan assumed the reins of Tibetan regional government.
1713 Fifth Panchen Lama was granted the title of “Panchen Erdeni” by Emperor Kang Xi.
1716 Dzungar Mongols marched into Tibet from Xinjiang.
1717 Dzungar Mongols killed Lhabzang Khan in the Potala Palace.
1720 Qing court sent troops into Tibet, defeated the Dzungar Mongols, and enthroned Bskal-bdzang rgya-mtsho as the seventh Dalai Lama.
1728 Emperor Yong Zheng put Pho-lha-nas in charge of the Tibetan regional government and granted him the title of “Prince.”
1750 Amban had 'Gyur-med rnam-rgyal executed at Khrom-gzigs-sgang.
1751 Qing government decided to create bka'-shag (Kashag), Tibetan regional government.
1757 Seventh Dalai Lama died.
1784 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho became the eighth Dalai Lama.
1791 Gurkhas invaded Tibet. Emperor Qian Long sent Fukang'an to drive all the Gurkha invaders out of Chinese territory. The Twenty-nine Article Ordinance for the More Efficient Governing of Tibet was worked out.
1804 Eighth Dalai Lama died.
1805 Ninth Dalai Lama, Lung-rto gs rgya-mtsho, was born.
1810 Stag-tsha Blo-bzang ye-shes, who was in charge of Tibetan regional government for the Dalai Lama, died.
1815 Ninth Dalai Lama died.
1816 Tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho became the tenth Dalai Lama.
1830 Census of the population was carried out in the entire Tibetan region.
1837 Tenth Dalai Lama died.
1838 M khas-grub rgua-mtsho became the eleventh Dalai Lama.
1842 Amban sent Tibetan soldiers under the command of bka'-blon Tshe-btsan rdo-rje to fight the Sing-pa.
1844 Qing court authorized the seventh Panchen Lama to take charge of Tibetan regional government.
1855 Emperor Xian Feng authorized the eleventh Dalai Lama to assume the reins of Tibetan regional government.
1856 Twelfth Dalai Lama, 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho, was born.
1875 Qing court authorized the twelfth Dalai Lama to assume the reins of the regional government. The
twelfth Dalai Lama died.

1876 Thirteenth Dalai Lama Thub-bstan rgya-mtsho was born.

1888 British launched their first war against Tibet.

1890 Qing court concluded with Britain the first unequal treaty relating to Tibet, the *Convention of 1890 Between China and Great Britain Relating to Sikkim and Tibet.*

1893 *Regulations to be Appended to the Convention of 1890 Between China and Great Britain of 1890, Relating to Sikkim and Tibet* were promulgated.

1895 Qing government authorized the thirteenth Dalai Lama to assume the reins of the regional government.

1903 British launched war against Tibet on a large scale.

1905 Qing government concluded with Britain the *Convention Between China and Great Britain Respecting Tibet,* and made the *Lhasa Treaty* an annex.

1906 Thirteenth Dalai Lama left Urga in April on the instruction of the Qing court and arrived in Xining in September.

1908 Thirteenth Dalai Lama set off for Beijing where Empress Dowager Ci Xi and Emperor Guang Xu granted him several interviews and conferred on him the title of “Loyal and Submissive Great Benevolent Self-subsisting Buddha of Western Paradise.” Qing government concluded an unequal treaty, *Tibet Trade Regulations,* with Britain:

1910 General Zhong Yin led Sichuan troops to Tibet and the Dalai Lama exiled himself to Sikkim.

1912 Founding of the Republic of China. Thirteenth Dalai Lama returned to Tibet. Zhao Bingjun, Premier of the
State Council, announced the restoration of Dalai Lama’s title.
1913 Simla Convention.
1921 Monks in Lhasa rioted, attempting to kill resident British officials.
1923 Ninth Panchen Lama Chos-kyi nyi-ma left Tibet for interior China.
1928 Thirteenth Dalai Lama strengthened relations with the Kuomintang government.
1931 Dalai Lama sent Tshul-khrims bstan-'dzin to establish a Tibetan affairs office in Nanjing. Dalai and Panchen sent delegations to attend the national assembly held in Nanjing.
1933 Thirteenth Dalai Lama died.
1937 Ninth Panchen Lama died.
1938 Bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho became the fourteenth Dalai Lama.
1941 Cho-kyi rgyal-mtshan became the tenth Panchen Lama.
1947 Rva-sgreng Huthugthu, sutra-teacher of Stag-brag, and the fourteenth Dalai Lama’s father, Chos-skyong tshe-ring, were murdered by the pro-British elements headed by Stag-brag. Tibetan trade mission went abroad to strengthen ties with the United States and Great Britain.
1949 “Hans. go home!” incident.
1950 Order for the liberation of Tibet by the Central People’s Government. Qamdo (Chob-mdo) battle on October 19.
1951 Agreement of the Central People’s Government and the Regional Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet was signed on May 23.
PLA forces arrived at Lhasa on October 26.
1952 Panchen Lama returned to Tibet in June.
1956 Marshal Chen Yi left for Lhasa to celebrate the founding of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region. Air route from Beijing to Lhasa was opened by the air force.
1959 Democratic reform.
1965 Establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region.
1975 Regular civilian flights from Lanzhou to Lhasa began.
1978 Tibet Regional People’s Congress and its Standing Committee established.
1979 Third Session of the Eleventh Chinese Communist Party’s Congress.
1980 *Forum on Tibet* was approved. Hu Yaobang and Wan Li took an inspection tour of Tibet.
1985 Central delegation led by Hu Qili to the twentieth anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region in Lhasa made a donation to the local lamaseries. The Bureau of Translation and Editing of the autonomous region was set up.
西藏概览

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