

**A SURVEY OF
TIBETAN HISTORY**

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**THE INFORMATION OFFICE CENTRAL TIBETAN SECRETARIAT
GANGCHEN KYISHONG DHARAMSALA 176215**

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Preface

In his prophetic book, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, George Orwell portrays the kind of society he believed could evolve if man allowed the state to assume more power and permitted men in authority to establish and perpetuate totalitarian rule by a systematic distortion of the truth and continuous rewriting of history. The capacity to erase a people's collective consciousness is worse than mass killing. It means denying a people their past and their memory.

In Tibet the Chinese are engaged in exactly this kind of task. In the aftermath of the liberalisation in Tibet, the Chinese set up a Tibet Academy of Social Sciences. The name may inspire awe and reverence which is natural to any person standing before the gate of learning and wisdom. But the task which this newly-created institution with its pompous name is engaged in is nothing less than rewriting Tibet's ancient and illustrious history. The Academy has recently been producing a prodigious amount of books on Tibetan history and literature, all of which unabashedly present the Chinese version of Tibet's historical development. In China itself the Chinese have produced a number of books on Tibet in English. The most voluminous in this regard is *Tibet Transformed* by Israel Epstein, a Polish Jew who has become a naturalised Chinese. *The Story of the Dalai Lamas* by Ya Hanzhang, the director of the Institute of Nationalities which is under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, is a belated refutation of Tsepon W. Shakabpa's *A Political History of Tibet*, published by Yale University in 1967. Another new book is *Highlights of Tibetan History* by Wang Furen and Suo Wenging. All these books contain the entire Chinese justification, replete with numerous testimonies and extensive data, for China's rule in Tibet. Facts and events indicative of Tibet's independent historical existence are played down and Tibet's tenuous cultural links are interpreted as traditional Tibetan political subservience to imperial China.

Whatever the reasons, China is making every effort to convince the world public opinion of the historical justification for

its rule in Tibet. The need to convince international public opinion of the legality of the Chinese rule in Tibet has assumed such importance for the Chinese that they have produced two lengthy articles on Tibetan history in *Beijing Review* (issues number 24 and 26 of June, 1983). In 1982, *Beijing Review* (issues number 47 to 51) carried five extensive reports on Tibet.

A Survey of Tibetan History is an attempt by Tenzin P. Atisha to portray the history of Tibet as Tibetans themselves see it. It is our hope that this book will encourage other young educated Tibetans in taking an interest in Tibet's past and thus coming to a higher appreciation of what is precious and valuable in Tibet's rich cultural heritage.

All the books and articles on Tibet produced by the Chinese cleverly employ pinyin to transliterate Tibetan names. This ruse achieves in creating the impression that Tibetan names are similar to those of the Chinese. For example, according to the pinyin system, the common and simple Tibetan name *Tsering* becomes *Cering*. The use of the pinyin system of romanization of Tibetan names of places and persons is a minor example of the Chinese communist attempt to undermine Tibetan identity.

In *A Survey of Tibetan History* the author adopts the international and more commonsense system of romanization of Tibetan names. This is adopted in the hope that readers will have less difficulty with Tibetan names.

The Information Office
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September, 1984

Tibet : History and Anecdotes (I)

A Brief Survey : 127 B.C. to 1885 A.D.

A distorted and incomplete, "Tibet : History and Anecdotes (I)" specially designed to justify the Chinese contention that 'Tibet forms an inalienable part of China', appeared in the *Beijing Review*, vol. 26, No. 24; June 13, 1983.

The following summary of Tibet's historical survey is an attempt to put the record straight.

Great powers do not spring up overnight; Tibet's separate identity and independent historical development was the fruit of centuries of growth and consolidation.

The 'researchers' Lobsang and Jin Yun, have vaguely and reluctantly recognised the great Emperor Songtsen Gampo of Tibet. But deliberately, they failed to admit, that he was the 33rd king of Tibet. The first king of Tibet dated back to 127 B.C. when Nyatri Tsenpo meaning "Neck-enthroned king" was enthroned.¹ From here, the present official 'Royal Tibetan Year' of the modern Tibetan calendar is dated. He built the first Fort, popularly known as Yumbulagang.²

Discriminately, the article has left out 831 indispensable years of Tibet's history simply because it has nothing to do with the Chinese Empire or to their high claims.

The *Review* declares that the authors "offer a systematic run-down of Tibet's long history", but it miserably fails to do so although it is obvious. Having avoided (to comment on) the details of the multifaceted aspect of what a history constitutes. A brief survey; beginning from the period where the authors have started is given below.

At the time of Emperor Songtsen Gampo (617-649), marriage alliances between equal states were common in Asia. In addition to the Chinese princess Wen Cheng Kung-chu, the Emperor also married a Nepali princess, Bhrikuti Devi, daughter of king Amshuvarman.³ According to logic it can be easily stated that the Tibetan Emperor was also an admirer of Nepali civilisation as well; and that this marriage undoubtedly "cemented the close ties between the two countries" as argued by the authors.

Emperor Songtsen Gampo's statue was erected besides the tomb of Emperor T'ai-tsung (Chinese) as a gesture of the latter's gratitude to the former and not because of the titles, whatsoever, he held.

In 648 A.D. the Chinese Emperor sent a goodwill mission, commanded by Wang Yuan-t'se, to the court of the Indian Emperor, Harsha (606-47). Meanwhile, Harsha was succeeded by one of his ministers called Arjuna, and under his order, all the thirty escorts of Wang Yuan-t'se were slaughtered. Wang, however, was able to escape to Nepal, and, from there appealed for help to the Tibetan Emperor who readily rendered necessary assistance to the Chinese minister so that he could avenge the death of his escorts and the indignity done to him. The Chinese Emperor was so grateful for this help that he stipulated that upon his own death, a statue of the Tibetan Emperor should be erected beside his grave.⁴

The authors maintain that the princess Wen-cheng Kung-chu took with her many books in the 'Han Language' to Tibet in 641. The present Tibetan script was devised by the learned Thonmi Sambhota, with knowledge of Gupta script.⁵ Under such circumstances, if the "king is an admirer of the Tang civilisation" (as claimed by the authors) then why did he not adopt or introduce the 'Han language' in Tibet? Certainly, this is not a sign of 'admiration' for the Tang civilisation. On the contrary, the Chinese princess was given as a bride to appease the aggressive Tibetan Emperor after much fighting.⁶

The authors have skipped 59 years of Tibet's history from 641 to 710 A.D. during which events of great historical importance took place.

The grandson of Emperor Songtsen Gampo, Mangsong Mangtsen (649-76 A.D.); Khri-de-Songtsen (676-704 A.D.); and Kride Tsugtsn Me-Agtsom (704-55 A.D.) were all minors and a Regent as 'Great Minister' ruled on their behalf.⁷

In 665 A.D. Gar Tongtsen, acting as Regent to Mangsong-Mangtsen, conducted military campaigns against the state of 'T'u-yun-hun' (dependents of China) for eight years from 655 to 663 A.D. and ultimately emerged as the victor.⁸

In 663 A.D. the Tibetans totally destroyed T'u-yun-hun state, the Asha king, who bore the title of Maga Toghen-Khan, was accepted into the Tibetan kingdom on the same level as the

prince of Kongpo and Myang. Immediately after the fall of the Asha, the Tibetan armies invaded the Chinese protectorate in the Tarim basin (present-day East Turkestan) advancing on Kashgar in 662 and Khotan in 665 A.D.⁹ A Chinese relief army was defeated at Zi-ma-khol (in the Ta-fei Valley) and in 670 A.D. the Tibetans took the two remaining garrisons; Kucha and Karrashahr.¹⁰

In 688 A.D. a large military fortress was constructed at Dreme-khol, and in the following year, the T'u-yu-hun submitted an oath of loyalty to the Tibetan king Khri-de Songtsen.¹¹

Regarding the subjugation of Tarim basin, Christopher, who examined all the relevant document concludes that "the Tibetan conquest of the Tarim region at least was the result of a carefully planned and executed strategy, combined with diplomacy and a sufficiently fierce army."¹²

The Emperor Kao-Tsung (650-83) appointed Hsuch Jen-kuei as Commander-in-Chief of an army of 100,000 men to recapture the four garrisons in East Turkestan. The army was defeated at Ta-fei-chuan, and General Hsuch was degraded for his failure.¹³

Thus, Tibet laid the foundation of a Tibetan Empire in Central Asia. For instance, in the west, Tibetans occupied Hunza and may have penetrated as far as Swat, Farghana and Samarkand.¹⁴

In the north and north-east the Tibetans marched with the Uighurs and with the Western Turks (Tou-Kiue)¹⁵ who were based in the region stretching from present-day Uzbekistan.

In the south, Tibetans dominated the kingdom of Nepal and the hill tribes on the Indian side of the Himalayas. And here, Tibet's domination spread to upper Burma also.¹⁶

To the east, having the upperhand, Tibetans were a source of trouble to the Chinese.

In 671 A.D. another Chinese army with Chiang K'o as Commander-in-Chief was ordered by Emperor Tsung against the Tibetans. But he died en route, and the army returned to China.¹⁷

In 676 A.D. the Tibetans raided Shan-chou before returning to Tibet with their spoils. The Chinese Emperor immediately ordered the Prime Minister, Liu-Jen-kuei, with T'ao-ho soldiers, and another commander, Li-Yu, was sent to Liang-chou. Before

these armies could advance, the Tibetans raided the towns of T'ieh-chou, Mi-kung and Tan-ling in Kansu.¹⁸

In return, Li Ching-yuan, a new general, attacked the Tibetans at Longji and defeated them. He advanced to Kokonor, but here his troops were routed and had to retreat.¹⁹

In 710 A.D. Chinese princess Chin-Ch'eng Kung-chu was given to the 36th king of Tibet, Tride Tsugtsen (704-55) with the solemn hope that this gesture would end the hostility between Tibet and China. Once out of China, the princess was unhappy and wanted to escape. Through She Tahi Ko (one of the vassal's Minister) the Chinese Emperor was informed of her plans. The Emperor promptly advised her to remain in Tibet for her own sake as well as for the country's sake, which she did reluctantly.²⁰

The claim that "Her activities made important contributions to expanding the cultural exchange between the Tibetans on one hand and the Hans....." is debatable. Tibetan historians are of the opposite view. Since she was unhappy in Tibet it is illogical to assume that she would have involved herself in activities that contributed to the developments of relations between the two countries. Moreover, we know that according to the directions from her father, she indulged in anti-Tibetan activities and let out many valuable defence secrets to the Chinese.

Nevertheless, in 722 A.D. the Tibetans attacked 'Little Balur' (which is considered T'ang's western gate).²¹ In 732 A.D. both Arabs and Turkish envoys paid homage at the Tibetan Court.²²

On the other hand, the Emperor, Hsuan-tsung, increased military operations. At the same time China tried in vain to drive a wedge between Tibet and the rising power of the Arabs in the west and tried, in vain, to prevent the Tibetans from taking the strategically important country of Bru-zha (Gilgit in 737).²³

In 741 A.D. a Tibetan mission was sent to the Chinese court to demand for peace negotiations, as well as to carry the news of the death of princess Chin-Ch'eng Kung-chu. But the Chinese Emperor refused to have any negotiations. Soon after that a Tibetan army of 400,000 men advanced into China and attacked the town of Ch'eng-feng and then continued onwards. But they were stopped at the Ch'ang-ning bridge by General Sheng

Hsi-yeh. The Tibetans later seized the town of Shih-p'u, which was held until 748 A.D.²⁴

And throughout the later half of the eighth century, there was a constant state of border conflict between Tibet and China. Do the above facts suggest, as claimed by the authors, that princess Chin-Ch'eng's marriage "fortified the political ties between the Han and the Tibetans?"

In 763 A.D., under the order of king Trisong Detsen (755-97), Tibetan army captured Ho-hsi and Lungyu, the two westernmost provinces of T'ang China. In the same year, Tibetans marched towards the Chinese capital of Ch'ang-an where they set up Ch'eng-hung, prince of Kuang-wu, as an Emperor, who in turn selected Ta-she as the title of his reign. The new Emperor was presented with a turquoise seal written in turquoise letters.²⁵ Interestingly, whenever new Emperor was enthroned in China, it marked the beginning of a new year. Therefore, the Tibetans declared that a new year had begun, having established a new Emperor. After fifteen days, they withdrew from the Chinese Capital.²⁶ This memorable victory has been preserved for posterity in the Zhol Doring (Stone Pillar) in Lhasa to this day, and reads in part :

King Trisong Detsen, being a profound man, the breadth of his council was extensive and whatever he did for the kingdom was completely successful. He conquered and held under his way many districts and fortress of China. The Chinese Emperor, Hehu Ki'Wang, and his ministers were terrified. They offered a perpetual yearly tribute of 50,000 rolls of silk and China was obliged to pay this tribute.²⁷

The king also carried his campaign against Ta Tang west to Baltistan and Gilgit, and invaded the land south of the Himalayas to Bengal and Bihar in India.²⁸

At the same time the first Tibetan Buddhist Monastery Migyur-Lhungi Dubpai Tsukla-Khang (The temple which is unchangeable, perfect mass) or commonly referred to as Samye, was founded in 775 A.D., and in the same year Buddhism was proclaimed as Tibet's state religion.²⁹

Finally, in 783 A.D., peace negotiations between Tibet and China took place, resulting in the treaty of Ch'ing-shui, which

established the boundaries between the two countries.³⁰ Moreover the Chinese acknowledged Tibetan domination over the conquered Chinese territories, including the Tarim Basin (Tibetan domination of east Turkestan came to end in 692, became re-established in 790 and lasted until about 860).³¹ China was in no position to reconquer its lost territory due, among other things, to the disastrous rebellion of An-Lu-shan, which began in 755 A.D.³²

In the south, the Dharampala king of Bihar and Bengal became a vassal of the Tibetans; this is why, the Muslim writers call the Bay of Bengal the "Tibetan Sea".³³ The Tibetan army also advanced westward to the Pamirs (from 722-757 A.D.) and even reached the Oxus River. As a mark of their distance, a lake in the north of the River Oxus was named Al-Tubbat (Little Tibetan Lake).³⁴

During the time of Trisong Detsen, Tibet had entered into various military alliances; with Turkic Qarlugs, Sha-to, and other western Turks.³⁵

In 750 A.D. Kolofeng, son of Pilawko, became the king of Siam and during his reign, alliance was made with Tibet. Imosum, who succeeded Kolofeng as king of Siam, sought assistance from Tibet in 778 A.D., and Tibetans and Siamese troops fought side by side against the Chinese in Szechun. After staying for eight long years, when peace was concluded between the Chinese and Thailand, the Tibetan troops left Thailand.³⁶

A few years later, the Arabian Caliph, Harun Alrashif, allied himself for a short time with the Chinese against the Tibetans who were growing too powerful for his comfort.³⁷ In this connection Petech has stated :

the fact that nothing less than the coalition of the two most powerful empires of early Middle-Ages was necessary for checking the expansion of the Tibetan state, is a magnificent witness of political capabilities and military valour of those sturdy mountainer.³⁸

However, during the reign of Tride Songtsen (799-815) commonly referred as Sanaleg, the Tibetan army continued to harass the Arabs in the West. According to Ya'qubi, the Tibetans even

besieged the capital of Transoxania, Samarkand, Al-Ma'mun, the second son of Harun al-Rashid, came to an agreement with the Tibetan Governor of Turkestan, who presented al-Ma'mun with a statue made of gold and precious stones, which was later sent to the Kaaba in Mecca.³⁹

The 49th king, Nga-Dak Tri-Ral or, in short, Ralpachen; after assuming power, sent troops under the command of Hrangje Tsen towards the Chinese border. What the authors allege, "there was strong desire on both sides for friendship and peace" is not the case. The truth was that the exhaustion of the Chinese combatants led to the treaty of 821-22. This remarkable treaty was achieved only through the mediation of Buddhist followers of Tibetan lamas and the Chinese monks known as Harshangs.⁴⁰

The treaty confirmed Tibetan domination of eastern Turkestan, practically all of Kansu, and the western part of Sze-chwan. The treaty also reaffirmed the boundaries established by the 783 treaty of Ching-shui. In the Sino-Tibetan border area called Khungu Meru, the frontier was marked by a stone pillar and similar pillars were erected in front of the palace of the Chinese Emperor and in front of the Jokhang in Lhasa.⁴¹

During the oath ceremony an animal sacrifice was performed, and the participants smeared their lips with the blood of the animals. Only the Buddhist minister, Palgyi-Yonten, abstained from this archaic blood ceremony and took his oath by invocation of Buddha. Thus, the so-called 'Tang-Tibet Alliance' had nothing to do with Tibet's sovereignty. Anywhere and at any time sovereign countries are at their will to enter into alliances without altering the sovereign status of either country.⁴² It is rightly noted that this bilateral treaty, "terminated Tang-Tibet conflict", and since then the two countries lived in peace.

As maintained, "the mid 9th century saw the collapse of the Tibetan kingdom of Tibet", following the assassination of Lang Dharma (836-842), in 842 A.D. This marked the end of the early period of Tibetan history, which Tibetans regard as the 'age of the Chogyals' or the religious kings.⁴³

The authors allege, "Tibet officially became an integral part of China in the 13th Century". How and exactly when Tibet became part of China? The authors completely failed to

prove this unfounded theory. Otherwise, why the authors are silent on this crucial aspect? Now, let us examine the facts.

As noted, Tibet was separate, and ruled by 41 successive kings upto 842 A.D. During its disintegration period of 396 long years, China nowhere comes in the picture in the Tibetan affairs. Undoubtedly, this again shows Tibet's distinct identity which has nothing to do with China. Now, let us examine the facts from where the authors have started.

It is acknowledged that in 1207, Tibetans "pledged their allegiance to him (Genghis Khan)", therefore, his armies did not invade Tibet till 1240.⁴⁴

In 1244, at an invitation from Prince Godan, grandson of Genghis Khan, Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen (1182-1251) met him at Kokonor region in 1247. However, this written invitation was not "for a discussion on Tibet" nor any "political negotiations between the two leaders resulting in an agreement to annex Tibet into Mongolia" as alleged by the authors. Can the authors produce the text of the so-called agreement?

In fact, in the invitation letter, Godan wrote..... "that we need a Lama to advise my ignorant people how to conduct themselves morally and spiritually....." etc.⁴⁵ Eventually, Sakya Pandit instructed Godan in the teachings of the Buddha, and, in return Godan invested him with temporal authority over the thirteen myriarchies of Central Tibet.⁴⁶

In 1244, Pandit's two nephews, Phagpa Lodro Gyaltsen was ten years old and Chakna was six years old.⁴⁷ And yet, the authors claim that the two were sent for a "discussion on Tibet." At such a tender age, how the two young nephews could lead a discussion on Tibet is anybody's guess. In 1253, the so-called unification of Tibet by Mengkha Khan as alleged is also not true.

In 1253, Kublai became the new ruler of the Mongols. And in the following year he presented Sakya Phakpa the three provinces of Tibet to be ruled by him without interference by the Mongols.⁴⁸ In 1254, Kublai's letter granting Phagpa, a supreme authority over Tibet read: "this letter, then, is my present. I grant you authority over all Tibet...."⁴⁹ Thus, a unique Patron-Lama relationship was developed between the Sakya Phagpa of Tibet and the Kublai of the Mongols.⁵⁰ At the same time, China was under the Sung Dynasty and, intense fighting was going on

between the Mongols and the Chinese. However, Tibet remained neutral.

To the authors, “in 1271, Kublai Khan, the founding emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, unified China (which he called Yuan). Thereafter, the Yuan Dynasty’s central government adopted a series of important measures by which it shore up its administration of Tibet.”

If the intention of the authors is to imply that during the Mongol Dynasty Tibet was unified with China, the contention has no base at all. As we all know the Mongol Empire also included the northern part of Burma, the whole of Mongolia, Korea, Siberia (from Amur estuary to Irtysh), North Vietnam, Laos and portions of Annam.⁵² However, to Tibet, there was no change between the Kublai of 1253 and Kublai Khan of 1279. In this connection, Bell rightly states that: “Sakya Phagpa, converted the Emperor to Buddhism; and received in return the sovereignty of Tibet.”⁵²

To put in nutshell, the Mongols has swept from Central Asia down to the heart of Europe and established the greatest empire on earth, and sweeping administrative changes were made in all the countries. Starting from 1206, the Mongols were absolute foreigners not only to Romania, Poland, Hungary, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Tibet, Burma, Korea, Siberia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia but also to China.⁵³

The apparent question: why the “unification of China” thesis is not applied to above countries? Why are the Chinese feeling shy of claiming that all these other countries also become an integral part of China and that (as in their argument regarding Tibet) they had received the ‘mantle of power’ over these countries from the Mongols? Who is going to accept this “unification logic?”

China was ruled by 15 generation of Mongols, starting from Kublai Khan. Today, what will be the reaction of the Chinese if Mongolia claims that China is an integral part of it because 15 generations of Mongol ruled China? Will the Chinese succumb to such a claim by the Mongols? If the Chinese are going to recognise Mongolia’s claim, then the Tibetans will have no hesitation in accepting similar claims by the Chinese if they can prove that even one generation of Chinese had ruled over Tibet before 1949.

It is interesting to note that Michael Prawdin traces the Mongol royal lineage to that of Tibet.

Yesukai-Bagatur, indeed, Yesukai the strong, could trace his genealogy for eleven generations. His remotest ancestor, three-and-twenty generations back, had been Burte Chino, Grey Wof, a prince from the distant land of Tibet, whose wife had been named Maral Goa, or Radiant Doe.⁵⁴

Historically, if this thesis is proved, one wonders how the Chinese historians are going to stake their claim that Tibet forms a part of China because of the Mongols !

To guard the Tibetan border from the Mongol Dynasty, Tibetan military personnels were stationed at Cho-kor-tso.⁵⁵ This simple fact proves beyond doubt that during the Mongol rule of China, Tibet remained out of the Mongol Dynasty as an independent country.

In their thesis, “.....Kublai Khan established the Zongzhiyuan (later it was changed into Xuanzhengyuan), a government department in charge of the nation’s Buddhist affairs and Tibet’s military, government and religious affairs. Imperial Tutor Phagpa was put at the head of it.....The Yuan Emperor also put Tibet under the rule of the Sakya sect.....”

At that time, a fierce power struggle took place in Tibet. Finally, Jangchub Gyaltzen (1358-64) wrested political power from the Sakyapa Minister Wangtson.⁵⁶

According to their logic, the Mongol Dynasty should have intervened, and solved the Tibetan crisis in favour of Sakya. Nevertheless, this did not happen. Tibet was left alone because struggle for power was internal matter of the Tibetans and the Mongol Dynasty had nothing to do with it. This fact also nullifies their tall claim; the integration of Tibet into Mongol Dynasty.

The first time, when the state and religion was integrated in Tibet, was during the 37th king Trisong Detsen in 779 A.D.⁵⁷, and not during the Sakya reign as maintained by the authors.

Historically, Tibet was able to shake off the Mongol influence in 1358⁵⁸ and the Chinese in 1368.⁵⁹ If Tibet and China as one country was under the Mongol Dynasty, how is it that the former became independent of Mongols in 1358 while the latter in 1368, a decade later. For instance, Chu Yuen-chang (who later founded

the Ming Dynasty), issued a proclamation summoning the Chinese (Tibet excluded) to rise against the Mongols, read: "These barbarians are created to obey and not to command a civilised nation".⁶⁰ The Chinese responded with universal exultation. However, not a single Tibetan participated. Thus, the thesis that during the Mongol Dynasty Tibet became an integral part of China has no foundation.

That the allegation of the Ming Dynasty having inherited claim to Tibet from the Mongol Dynasty is a total fabrication of facts and this is evident from the above.

The authors again contended that during the Ming Dynasty, the Mongolian type of administration remained "basically intact" in Tibet is contrary to facts.

In 1358, Situ Changchub Gyaltsen, (1358-64 reign) as Tibet's new independent ruler, altered the basic administrative structure of Tibet. Instead of the thirteen myriarchies (Trikor), he divided the country into 13 Dzongs (districts). Also in matters of law, unlike during the Sakya rule, investigations were carried out before sentences were passed. He devised thirteen kinds of punishment for the criminals.⁶¹

Moreover, during his reign, the land was divided equally among the agriculturists, and it was fixed that one-sixth of the crop was to be taken as tax by the administration. He sought to put an end to the system of inherited governorship.⁶² Above all, he posted officials and guards at various places along the border with China and concentrated troops at the important centres in Tibet. This great ruler also issued a book of instruction relating to defence, border, military strategy, tax collecting, etc.⁶³

As noted, it was only in 1368 that the Mongol rule came to an end in China. Before the founding of the Ming Dynasty Tibet was independent. And for eighty-six years from 1349-1435 A.D. Tibet was ruled by a succession of eleven lamas of Phagmo Drugpa lineage⁶⁴.

The Ming Dynasty, following the custom of the earlier Mongol court, invited a new spiritual teacher. But no ruling Lama of any standing would accept the invitation because the relationship between the two countries were different from that which Tibet had with the Mongols.

For instance, the Chinese Emperor, Yunglo (1403-24) invited

Tsongkapa (1357-1419), founder of the Gelugpa sect in 1409 to visit China. The invitation was declined four times and finally he sent one of his disciple, Jam Chen Choeje Shakya Yeshe. This clearly indicated that the Tibetan Lamas were not under anyway of the Ming court, as was the case when the Mongol rule was there in China.⁶⁵

In 1579, a delegation from the Ming Court invited the 3rd Dalai Lama to visit China. But He declined.....⁶⁶

Again in 1615, the fourth Dalai Lama was invited by Shen Tung Emperor, "for the express purpose of blessing the Buddhist temple at Nanking....for one or the other reason, the Dalai Lama refused the invitation."⁶⁷

The administration of Tibet at that time was carried out through contacts with local religious leaders and by conferring titles on them, the authors allege. If such was the case why did they fail to 'invite' Tsongkapa the most important among the local lamas leaving out the top-most ruling lama Phagmo Drugpa, the Dalai Lama etc. This single but vital instance proves beyond any doubt the absurdity of the Chinese claim.

On the other hand, the special treatment and offering of elegant titles bestowed even on minor lamas had nothing to do with the actual state of affairs in Tibet. For instance, Ming Emperor's official letter sent to the Tibetan king read :

.....Formerly, the Hu people (i.e. the Mongols) usurped authority in China. For over a hundred years caps and sandals were in reversed positions. Of all hearts, which did not give rise to anger.....In recent years the Hu rulers lost hold of the Government.....Your Tibetan state (emphasis added) is located in the western lands. China is now united but I am afraid that you have still not heard about this. Therefore this proclamation (is sent).....The subjects supported me as the lord of all under heaven (i.e. China). The state is called the Great Ming and the reign title of Hungwu has been established. I utilise the ways of our former kings and I employ peace.....⁶⁸

This unimpeachable document puts the record straight; the existing sovereign relationship between the Ming Dynasty and the Tibetan state.

The authors have rightly acknowledged that “..... Tibetan rulers who once ruled the greater part of Tibet, including Pagmo Zhuba (Phagmo Drugpa) of the Gagupa (Kargyupa) sect, Rinbungpa (Rinpongpa : four generations ruled from 1435 to 1565) of the Gama Gahuba (Kama Kargyupa) sect and leaders of the Kingxagba (Gelugpa) sect, were bestowed titles of honour by the Ming Dynasty”. But you failed to mention, the three Tsangpa kings who ruled Tibet from 1566 to 1641.⁶⁹

In 1578, the abbot of the great monastery of Drepung, Sonam Gyaltsso visited Altan Khan, one of the most powerful of the Mongol chiefs, who bestowed on him the title of “Dalai Lama”; “Dalai” is Mongolian for “Ocean” and connotes that the lama’s learning was as deep and broad as an ocean. That title was later applied retrospectively to his two predecessors.⁷⁰ From the Chinese author’s perspective, it would quite easily be stated that Tibet became an integral part of Mongolia, since Altan Khan bestowed titles to the Abbot of the greatest monastery of Tibet in the sixteenth century.

In 1642, Gushri Khan along with Sonam Chophal attacked Karma Tenkyong Wangpo and was defeated.⁷¹ Consequently, in the same year, the Great fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso assumed the spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet.⁷² The present form of Government popularly known as Gaden Phodrang was founded which—remain intact to this day. Moreover, the Dalai Lama revived the tradition of wearing the ancient customs of the early Tibetan kings known as *Rinchen Gyancha* (Precious Ornaments) which became a Tibetan new year custom right till 1950.

As a symbol of his new rule over all of Tibet, the fifth Dalai Lama began the construction of a new residence, the Potala Palace, on the same hill where during the imperial times, the Emperor Songtsen Gampo, himself an incarnation of Avalokiteshvara, had his Nepalese princess’ residence built in A.D. 1636. Lhasa was then declared the capital of Tibet. The Dalai Lama instructed to take the census of Tibet which was completed in 1648.⁷³

Just two years after the formation of Gaden Phodrang Government in Tibet the Manchu Government was founded (1644) in China.

In 1642, the kings of neighbouring kingdoms like Sikkim,

Nepal, Ladakh and Indian states sent their representatives to Lhasa to honour the inauguration of (of the new Government) Gaden Phodrang.⁷⁴ Sikkim history records that the Dalai Lama assured full assistance and support to Phuntsok Namgyal (1604-44), the first king of Sikkim when needed.⁷⁵

In 1646 Tibet and Bhutan entered into a new agreement under which the hitherto annual rice tribute (Lochak) earlier made to Tsangpa was to be sent to the new Government Gaden Phodrang, But peace did not last; fighting between the two countries broke-out again in which the Tibetans were humiliated.⁷⁶

At the same time, the Ladakh king Delek Namgyal agreed to send his triennial present (Lochak) to the Tibetan Government.⁷⁷ The new Sikkim ruler; Tensung Namgyal (1644-1670), visited Lhasa to personally convey his respect to the Dalai Lama and to seek advice in introducing the sixteen Tibetan code of law in Sikkim.⁷⁸

In 1661, Nepal in its own turn created problems on the Tibetan Nepal border. The Tibetan troops under the command of Tashi Tsepa, Gyandrogpa and Mechangpo marched to drive the Nepalese soldiers away.⁷⁹

Thus, China, the Manchus, nowhere comes in the picture in Tibet's external relations with its neighbours. The question of sovereign Tibet submitting to Manchu is far cry.

According to the authors, in 1652, the Great fifth Dalai Lama, "went to Beijing, where he paid homage to the King (Manchu) Dynasty 1644-1911)". However, the fact remains that between 1649 and 1651, the new Shun-chih Emperor of Manchu sent several diplomatic missions to the fifth Dalai Lama, inviting him to Peking, and to use his influence to keep at bay the Mongols who were harrassing the Manchus. The Dalai Lama finally accepted on the condition that he would not be requested to remain there long, because of heat and the small pox epidemic then raging in China.⁸⁰ Undoubtedly, his visit was that of a sovereign head of a state to another sovereign country.

If the question was 'homage' as maintained by the authors than sending of diplomatic mission to the Dalai Lama, inviting and requesting him to visit China simply does not arise.

The offering of titles to the Dalai Lama and had no relevance with his existing political status since he was already the supreme ruler of Tibet. Moreover, after his return to Tibet, the golden

seal was offered to Jowo Sakya Muni, in Jokhang, Central Cathedral, as a ritual object and was never used. Thus, it is evident that the title or the golden seal written in Manchu, Tibetan and Chinese, presented to the Dalai Lama carried no other significance.

As noted earlier, the offering of titles by one sovereign to another sovereign do not imply that the title recipient is under the sovereignty of title bestower. Had that been the case, then, Tibetans could claim that China is part of the Tibetan Empire, since, King Trisong Detsen offered a seal and title written in turquoise to the new Chinese emperor Cheng-hung. Who is going to accept such a claim? Thus, politically and legally the offering of titles or seals have no significance. For instance, the third Dalai Lama and the fifth Dalai Lama offered a seal to the Mongolian king 'Halahu'. More recently, in 1889, the 13th Dalai Lama presented a seal and a title to the Mongol king, when the latter sought the audience of the former in Tibet.⁸¹ Now, if Tibet claims sovereignty over Mongolia on this ground as the authors have made capital out of it, will the later accept it?

In 1653, it is true that the fifth Dalai Lama was at a place called Taka, the Manchu Emperor presented a golden seal. The point to be noted here is that the seal was presented on behalf of the Emperor by the receptionists, far from the capital. At the same time, the Dalai Lama also bestowed a title and a golden plate on which was inscribed the title in Manchu, Tibetan and Chinese.

If the offering of the titles is of paramount significance, why the presentation ceremony did not take place at their meeting? Did the Dalai Lama request the titles to be conferred upon? Certainly not.

Thus, their tall claim that ".....all Dalai Lamas and Bainqens (Panchen) to have their titles conferred on them by the Central Government" has no relevance to the existing state of affairs between the two countries.

Tibet, during the reign of fifth Dalai Lama, never considered the then Manchu Government in China as "the Central Government" as alleged by the authors. There is not a single document to prove it. Neither there exists any treaty between the Tibetan and the Manchus on this account. Nor the Tibetans pay any taxes to the Manchus. Since the founding of the Ming Dynasty,

Mongolia, Tibet and China were sovereign countries on an equal footing. For instance, in 1665, Emperor K'ang-hsi requested the Dalai Lama to mediate to bring a peaceful settlement with the Mongols. An agreement was reached with the mediation of the Tibetan representatives.⁸²

Again in 1674 the Manchu Emperor sensed an internal revolt and sent three officials to Tibet, asking for the help of Tibetan and Mongol troops. The Dalai Lama replied.

.....Your father, Sun-chih Emperor, was particularly kind and gracious to me when I visited China, and I have always prayed for the peace and prosperity of your country (emphasis added)I do not think they would be of much assistance to you and feel it would be unwise to send them to China.⁸³

The Manchu Emperor's request was turned down. The authors thesis of "Central Government" is shattered by the above unimpeachable document.

When the 'dissident', minister, Pice-chiang Wusmen, arrived in Tibet, the Dalai Lama told him that the dispute between the minister and the Emperor was an internal affair of China and that Tibet had nothing to do with it. At the same time, he declined to render military assistance.⁸⁴

Thus, from the above historical account, it is abundantly clear that Tibet was exercising her sovereign rights without any interference from the Manchus as well as from Gushri Khan.

After the death of the Dalai Lama in 1682, the Dzungar Mongol tribe of the Eastern Turkestan area invaded Tibet, and killed Lhasang Khan, the descendent of Gushri. Seizing the chance afforded by this episode, the Manchu Emperor sent a force, engaged and defeated the Dzungar Mongols in the Kokonor region. The Dzungars were driven out from Tibet, thus paving the way for Manchu interference in affairs of Tibet. However, the Emperor, never considered Tibet as part of his Empire. For instance, in 1708 Emperor K'anghai had decided to have his huge empire mapped out and had entrusted the task to the Jesuit missionaries in Peking, foremost among them was father J.B. Regius, Tibet was not included in their range of work.⁸⁵

From 1718 onwards, on the pretext of guarding the security of the persons of the seventh Dalai Lama, two thousand troops arrived in Lhasa. In 1720, the seventh Dalai Lama Kelsang Gyatso was installed in the Potala.⁸⁶

It was in 1728 that for the first time two Manchu representatives and 500 troops were stationed in Lhasa. The officials were known as Ambans, and were in charge of the garrison. However, they did not interfere, let alone help, with the administration of Tibet as maintained by the authors. The original intention and the continuing venture of the presence in Lhasa of those Amban was to function like the present-day diplomatic mission. In 1750, the Amban and his troops were completely slaughtered by the Tibetans⁸⁷ as they failed to behave properly.

In 1751, the seventh Dalai Lama (1708-1757) assumed full spiritual and temporal power in Tibet. The Council of Minister, known as Kashag (Cabinet) was introduced for the first time, although the appointment of ministers was first introduced by the fifth Dalai Lama. The ministers were appointed directly by the Dalai Lama (the Amban had no part in it).

Yet, the authors distorted the facts and allege that “in 1751, it (Manchus) decided to set up the Gasha (Kashag), local Govt. under the leadership of the Dalai Lama and high Commissioner (Amban). Four Kalons, chosen by the consent of both the High Commissioner and the Dalai Lama, preside over day-to-day political and religious work. This type of local government existed until up to 1959”.

If the authors' assertion is fact; how then the Regent is appointed after the death of the Dalai Lama? Why was this crucial aspect of the Tibetan polity not highlighted? As history shows, the sixth, eighth, ninth, tenth and twelfth Dalai Lamas did not live long. How did the Tibetan government carried out in the absence of the Dalai Lamas?

To put the record straight, at such times when the Dala Lama was a minor or when he died, a Regent is appointed by the Tsongdu (Tibetan National Assembly) consisting of Kalons, the government staff, the delegates from other areas and the abbots of the monasteries. Ambans come to no where in the picture in the Assembly.

For instance, after the death of the seventh Dalai Lama in 1757, the Tibetan National Assembly appointed Demo

Nawang Jamphel Delek-Gyatso as a Regent. Again after his premature death in 1777, the Assembly appointed Tsadon Nawang Tsultrim as a Regent.

According to the authors' logic, after the death of the Dalai Lama, the Ambans were bound to rule since, "The High Commissioners, Dalai Lama and Bainqen held equal positions and handled local government affairs. . . . The High Commissioners exclusively handled diplomatic relations." But Ambans never ruled Tibet. The Ambans were even not allowed to take part in the proceedings of the National Assembly. How did the Ambans exercised their powers?

To the authors, the then Tibetan Government was "local government" naturally, the head of 'the local government' was supposed to be appointed by the Central Government. Neither the Dalai Lamas nor the Regent in his absence were ever appointed by the Manchu Government. Tibetan history is there to see it. Moreover, a Tibetan form of Government known as Gaden Phodrang was established a century ago (before the Manchu Dynasty) and there was no need for the Manchus to re-establish it in 1751.

In 1791 Nepal invaded Tibet. The authors maintain that "the Qing government lost no time in sending troops to defend the region (Tibet) and thereby maintained the unification of the motherland."

Indeed, if so, why the Manchu Government failed to 'maintain' the unification of the motherland when Tibet was invaded by Nepal in 1650⁸⁸ and 1788⁸⁹ respectively, and was defeated.

In 1650 in response to the threat to the trade routes further east, Kathmandu felt strong enough to demand a monopoly over the trans-Himalayan trade and invaded Tibet. After a decisive victory the Nepalese forced the Tibetans to sign a humiliating treaty—wherein Nepal gained absolute right to mint and supply coins for Tibet, with the Tibetans either directly supplying the silver or paying for the coins with gold.⁹⁰

Two decades later, while the trade route through Nepal was disrupted by the penetration of Ladakh, Garhwal and Kashmir in Tibet, Nepal invaded Tibet again to re-establish its monopoly in 1788. The following June, after conceding defeat the Tibetans signed a treaty agreeing to route trade through Nepal.⁹¹

In 1791, Nepal invaded Tibet because the latter set up its own mint in Lhasa for the first time.⁹² This violated the currency agreement which was signed with Nepal in 1650 and 1789 respectively. This time, “the Manchu Emperor supplied imperial troops as an ally of long standing”.⁹³ Moreover, this assistance was similar to the assistance sought by the Chinese from the USSR and the USA during their war with Japan. Furthermore, their intention was, to establish their own mint in Lhasa after expelling the Gurkhas which they did in 1972.⁹⁴

The Manchu government persuaded the Tibetan Government to close the Tibetan mint but in vain. Finally, in 1836, the Manchu mint was forced to shut down by the Tibetan government.⁹⁵

In retrospect, the Tibetan government permitted the usage of the Nepali currency in Tibet. A bare fact is that this time Tibet was yet to mint her own coin. On the other hand, the Manchu Dynasty had its own currency. Why was Manchu currency not in circulation in Tibet? Why did Tibet entered into a currency agreement with Nepal rather than Manchu Dynasty? Why the Manchu Government did not object to it? Finally, when Tibet, in 1890 printed her own paper currency in the name of Tibetan Government Gaden Phodrang—where did the authority of the Manchus or Ambans?

The above facts clearly indicates that the so-called 29 articles of Regulation concerning the administration of Tibet was never in operation in Tibet.

Analysis of “29 articles”

One of these ‘regulations’ claims that the Dalai Lama, Panchen Lama and the Amban held equal positions. There is no substance in it as noted before. The entire Tibetan history can be examined to prove the falsity of these baseless claims and their blatant disregard for truth.

That the very freedom of movement of the Amban was strictly controlled by the government of Tibet is sufficient to prove that the Ambans were no more than mere representatives. The handling of diplomatic relations, the budget, the size of Tibetan army etc. etc., by the Amban were only their imagination. To illustrate an instance, during the reign of the eight Dalai Lama

(1758-1804), in 1771, conflict took place between Bhutan and British India. In 1774 peace was restored by the Tibetan representative. Bengal's Governor-General W. Hasting dispatched George Bogle and D. Alexander Hamilton to thank Tibet. Before entering Tibet, they spent three months in Bhutan waiting for the Tibetan Government's permission and not from the Amban.⁹⁶

Secondly, the Manchu Emperor 'Cheng-Lung' invited Panchen Lobsang Yeshe to China. Accordingly he sought the travel permit from the Tibetan government and eventually left to China. If the so-called 29 articles concerning the Administration of Tibet were in existence in Tibet, Panchen Rinpoche seeking permission from the Tibetan Govt. to a invitation from the Manchu Emperor did not arise.

It is possible that, with dubious motives, the Manchu Emperor invented the so-called 29 articles with the intention of 'ruling Tibet' but this was something which existed only on paper if at all it ever existed. Whatever the case, this so-called 29 articles was never in operation in Tibet.

One of the articles maintain that "the reincarnation of the Dalai, Bainqen and of one living Buddhas should be decided by drawing lots from a golden urn under the supervision of the High Commissioner". In Tibet there were hundreds of living Buddhas. How the Ambans 'supervise' such a magnitude of living Buddhas is anybody's guess. As to the selection of the Dalai Lama the Amban had no part. This is evident from the fact that, "if, indeed, the Chinese ruler really had the power to appoint the Dalai Lamas, the question of using urn does not arise for the ruler himself could well have selected one of the candidates. Therefore, the very fact that a urn was used and the Almighty invoked to depose the truth to reveal the real incarnation clearly shows that the Chinese did not have any sort of influence over the appointment of the Dalai Lamas".⁹⁷

The researchers have chosen to lose track of Tibet's history from 1793 to 1885 amounting to 92 crucial years. What is the reason for this? Simple ignorance? Perhaps but for the benefit of the Review, I will fill the vacuum by narrating briefly, this 'lost' period of Tibet's history, with emphasis to its relations with the southern and western neighbours.

During the Gurkha war of 1814 with the British, the Nepalese

king, Girvan Yuddha Vikrama Sha, appealed to the Tibetan Government for assistance. Tibet morally sided with the Nepalese by offering prayers for their success.⁹⁸

In 1841, Wazir Zorawar Singh of Maharaja Gulab Singh, Kashmir, supported by Ladakhi troops attacked Tibet. A fierce battle was fought in Ngari Korsum. The Tibetan army under the command of Dapon (General) Shatra and Dapon Surkhang, were defeated. The Tibetan government lost no time in sending reinforcement under Kalon Palon Palhun. In the next battle the fighting lasted for 5 days and Zorawar Singh's troops were defeated.⁹⁹

In 1842, Maharaja Gulab Singh sent reinforcement into Ladakh under the command of Dewan Hari Chand and Wazir Ratan. At this Dogra War, Tibetans were defeated and this resulted in the treaty between Ladakh and Tibet, in the same year. Again in 1853 a trade agreement with Ladakh was drawn up between local border officials of Tibet and Ladakh.¹⁰⁰

In 1885, Gurkhas attacked Tibet on the pretext of trade violations and occupied the districts of Nyanang, Rongsher, Dzongkha and Purang. Tibetans failed to recover these territories until 1856. But Tibet signed the 1856 treaty with Nepal on an equal footing as an independent state, albeit as the defeated party.¹⁰¹ Clause II of the treaty states :

The country of Tibet is merely the shrine or place of worship of lama, for which reason the Gurkha Government will in future give all the assistance that may be in its power to the Government of Tibet, if the troops of any other 'Raja' (including the Raja of Peking) invade that country.....¹⁰²

In 1883, a quarrel broke out between the Nepalese shopkeepers and two Tibetans women. The Tibetan Government settled the case with Nepali representative in Lhasa.¹⁰³

In 1885, civil disturbance broke out in Bhutan. Representatives of the rival parties, Alu Dorjee and Gonzin Tandim, were sent to Lhasa to request the Dalai Lama's mediation. Accordingly, Kalon (Minister) Rampa was sent to Paro in Bhutan. Tibetan mediation succeeded in ending the civil dispute and Bhutanese emissaries were sent to Lhasa to express the Bhutanese gratitude and appreciation.¹⁰⁴

In 1889, the Mongol king 'Thargo' sought the audience of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa and was bestowed a title and seal.¹⁰⁵

In 1894, the ecclesiastical officials petitioned the Regent Chokyi Gyaltzen Kundiling, regarding the composition of the Kashag, which they claimed was based almost entirely on hereditary principles of succession. Its members had been predominantly lay officials of noble families; while monks and men of learning and achievement were not considered for appointment. The petition was put before a meeting of the Kashag, Tsondu (Tibetan National Assembly) and the Regent, and it was decided that henceforth one monk official would serve as a Kashag Kalon (Minister). It was also agreed that heredity would not be necessary determining factor in the selection of Kashag ministers; later officials who had a record of achievement and learning would be eligible for appointment as Kalon.¹⁰⁶

In 1896, His Holiness sent his representatives Ven. Nawang Lobsang along with Mongol monk Dorjee to Tsar Nicholass II so as to improve Tibeto-Russian relations.¹⁰⁷

PART I

Notes

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Tibet : History and Anecdotes (II)

A Brief Survey : 1885 A.D. to 1959 A.D.

Distortion of history by hegemonists the world over to support their illegal claim over a territory has always been the tactic and China is no exception. However, the two-series article by Lobsang and Jin Yun far surpasses this in trying to legitimise China's invasion of independent Tibet; *Beijing Review*, vol. 26, No. 26; June 13, 1983.

Thus the authors allege, "After the mid-19th century, China was repeatedly invaded by imperialist. Tibet, China's south-west gate was not spared". But was Tibet really China's 'south-west gate'? Let facts speak. It is true that the so-called imperialist did invade Tibet and China but then they were separate. When China was invaded, Tibet was not and vice-versa. Also the invasion of the two countries were caused by different reasons and happened at different times.

The authors say Britain interfered in Tibetan affairs and that it instigated and aided the 'separatist' group. First of all there was no need for Britain to aid the so-called separatists because Tibet was indeed separate. And if Britain had really interfered in Tibetan affairs, the history of Tibet would be quite different from what is today.

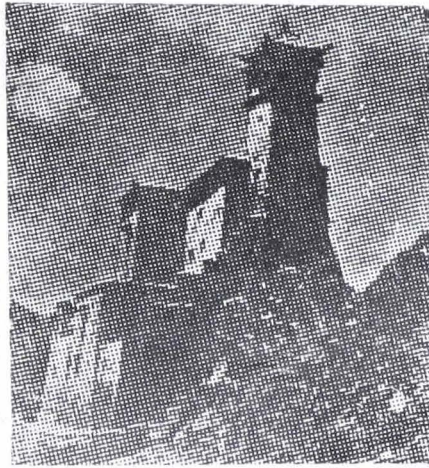
In point of fact, the various 'attempted' invasion of Tibet by Britain were of China's making. To take a case in point, in 1885, the unsuccessful commercial mission to Tibet had been illegally 'permitted' to enter Tibet by the Chinese.¹ However, the Tibetan Government did not allow them saying China possess the authority over Tibet.²

At that time, the Tibetan National Assembly also held an emergency meeting which condemned the harassment of Tibet by Britain, in collusion with China, and declared that the Emperor of China had no authority to permit any outsider to pass through Tibet. The Tsondu (Tibetan National Assembly) member also took a solemn oath never to allow the British to enter Tibetan territory.³

In this connection Charles Bell (incharge of the British



Nyatri Tsenpo, (Circa 127 B.C.) Tibet's first King



Yumbulhakang, the reputed first Fort of Tibet, built during the reign of Nyatri Tsenpo. Destroyed during the cultural revolution (1966—1969), it is now in ruins.



Songtsen Gampo, (d. 650 A.D.), the King who gave Tibet a sense of imperial greatness. Songtsen, Trisong Detsen and Ralpachen were collectively known as the Three Religious Kings. They did much for the spread of Buddhism.



Trisong Detsen (755—797 A.D.)



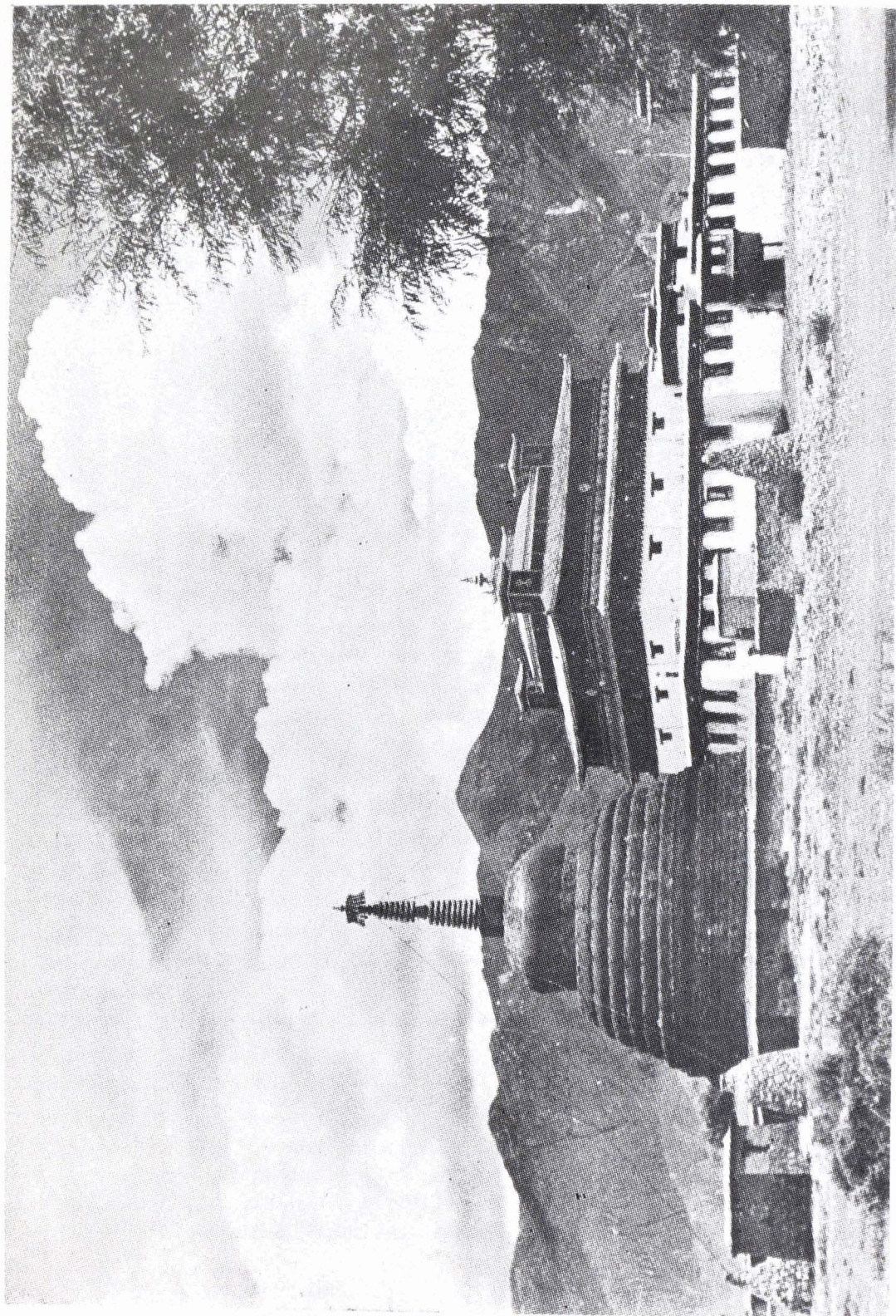
Ralpachen (817—836 A.D.)



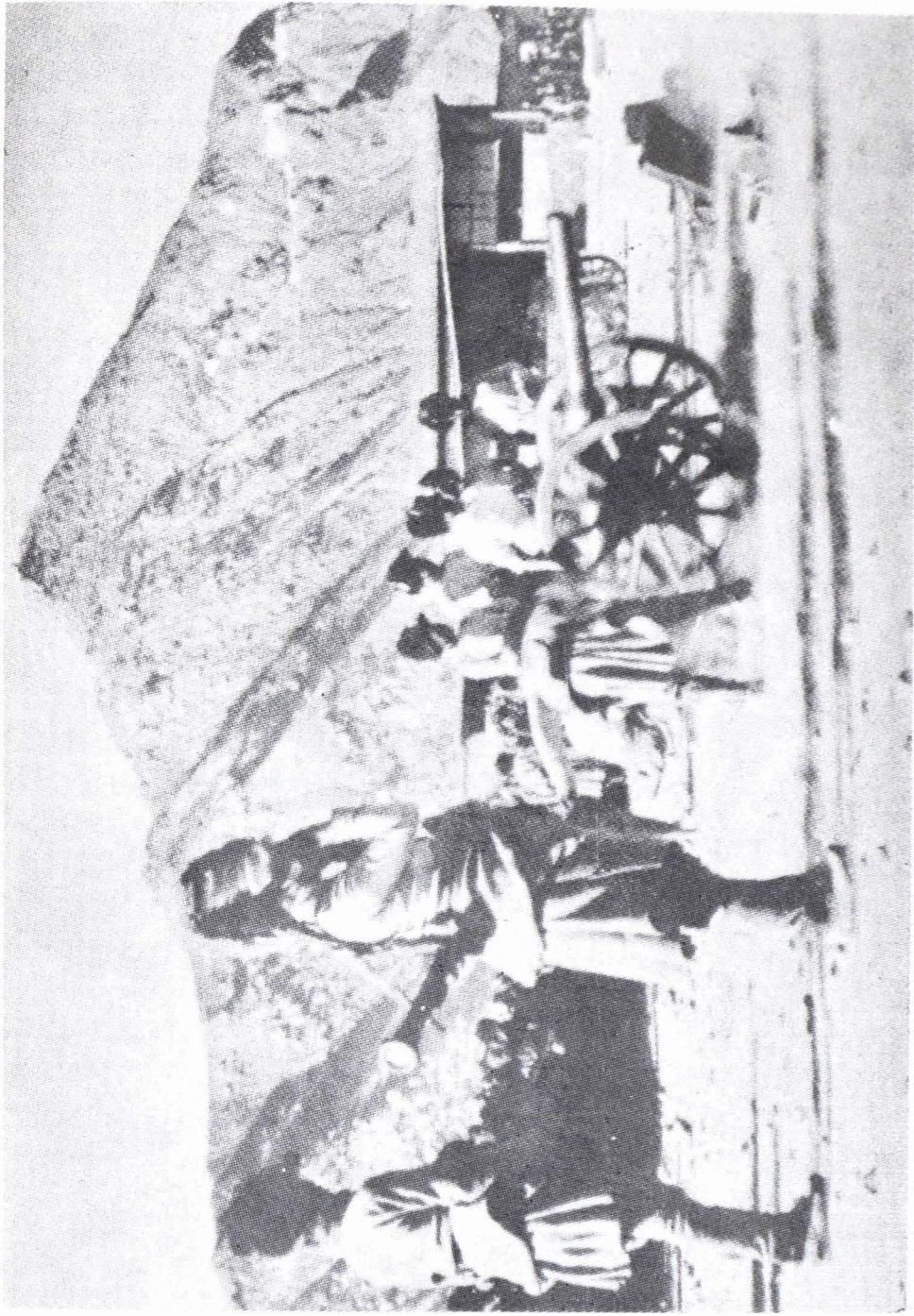
The great Sakya Pandita (1182—1253) giving audience to Mongol and Chinese officials.



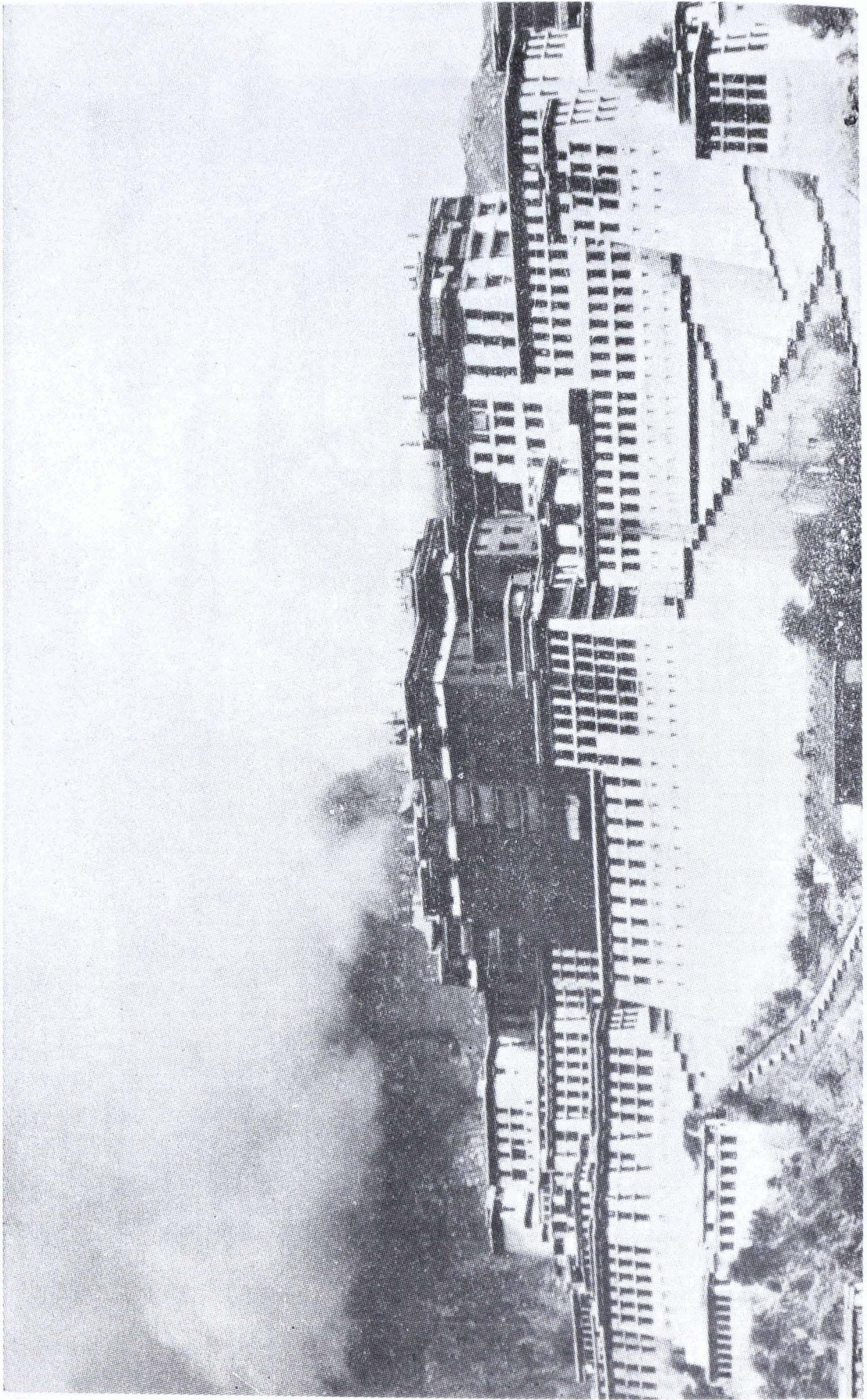
The Great Fifth or the Fifth Dalai Lama (d. 1682). Below him on the left is the Mongol Chieftain Gushri Khan



Samye, the first Buddhist temple built in Tibet (8th century). It was destroyed during the cultural revolution.



The Tibetan National Army



The Potala Palace

Agency that controls British relations with Tibet, Bhutan and Sikkim 1908-1921) states

Colman Macaulay a Secretary of the Government of Bengal, obtained Chinese assent to conduct a Mission to Lhasa. But Macaulay had not gained the consent of the Tibetan Government. The latter would have nothing to do with the idea, which was accordingly abandoned.⁴

Richardson adds, "...the Tibetans had flatly refused to accept the proposed mission and the Chinese were quite unable to compel them"⁵; and that ended the episode. Why the authors failed to admit that imperialist mission was making of China as well?

As admitted by the authors that, "In March 1888, the British army attacked Tibet's Long-tu Fort (Lunthur Checkpost). The Tibetan army and people fought back...."; (but were defeated).

These two unimpeachable historical events prove beyond any doubt that Chinese authority in Tibet was non-existent.

Again, in 1888 W.W. Rockhill (for some years American Minister to China in Peking), who later became an eminent Tibetologist wanted to visit Lhasa. The then American Government sent three consecutive requests to the Chinese asking them to compel the Tibetan Government to receive Rockhill.⁶ The Chinese did their best, even going to the extent of sending an 'order' to Lhasa, but the Dalai Lama rejected their plea.⁷

Interestingly, China concluded certain 'treaties' with Britain on Tibet in 1890⁸ and in 1893.⁹ The reason why Britain colluded with China in signing these treaties is to be found in the letter of Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India (1899 to 1905) dated January 8, 1903, to the Secretary of state for India, who was in London. The letter *inter alia* states

with regard to Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, it is a constitutional fiction—a political affection which has only to be maintained *because of its convenience to both* (Emphasis added) parties.¹⁰

However, when the time came to implement the treaties,

the Tibetans, who had not signed them, refused to recognise them. Thus the treaties were as good as dead.

Thus to keep British interest alive in Tibet, Lord Curzon had to acknowledge the truth i.e. Tibet and China were two different states and Britain's collusion with the latter proved futile. Accordingly, he secured the permission of His Majesty's Government in 1899 to communicate directly with the Tibetan Government.¹¹

The fact that Tibet had the authority to decide its own affairs was made clear when Lord Curzon attempted to communicate to them. Lord Curzon, who had failed to get a reply to his letter sent to the Dalai Lama through the governor of Gartok, had despatched another through his special envoy, Kazi Ugyen, in August 1901. However, the Dalai Lama once again refused to receive the letter which was then returned unopened.¹²

Finding no alternative to communicate with the Tibetans and being aware of the possibility of Russian as well as Chinese penetration into Tibet, Lord Curzon decided to invade Tibet. He felt that this would help him to discuss with the Tibetan the entire question of relations, commercial and otherwise with Tibet, and also to establish a permanent British Representative at Lhasa.¹³

As the invasion advanced from Khamba Jong to Gyantse, the Chinese Government affected to make a protest to Lord Lansdowne over this. However, Lord Lansdowne, rejecting the protest said

His Majesty's Government had learnt by experience that the Tibetans systematically disregarded the injunctions of the Emperor and the Chinese Government, who had no real influence in restraining them from acts such as those being complained of.¹⁴

The Tibetan army attempted in vain to resist the advance of this invasion from Gyantse and so it finally marched into Lhasa.

There in the majestic hall of the Potala palace an Anglo-Tibetan treaty was signed on September 7, 1904, in the presence of the Chinese Amban.¹⁵ At no time during the signing of the treaty, which was on an equal footing between the representatives of Tibet and British India, did the Amban make any

protest. On the contrary he had rendered all aid for the conclusion of the treaty that Sir Francis Younghusband thanked him for his help.¹⁶

The Amban Yutai had expressed his desire to visit Gyantse when the British invasion was on its way to Lhasa. However, the Tibetan Government refused his request for transport and he was forcibly prevented from leaving Lhasa.¹⁷

Now, if China had indeed sovereign right over Tibet would such a situation arise? What can the Chinese say on the internationally valid treaty of 1904?

The authors would want us to believe, “no treaty concerning Tibet after the two wars (1888, 1904) had gone into effect without negotiations with the Central Government of China. This was sufficient to prove that the Chinese had total sovereignty over Tibet.”

Perhaps they are referring to the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1906 and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. However, it is a fact that both these treaties, not having been signed by the Tibetans, could not be implemented.

On the contrary, we can see clearly the myth of Chinese ‘suzerainty’ over Tibet in the words of Sir Francis Younghusband, leader of the 1904 British invasion

It is remarkable that neither the Chinese Government nor its representative in Lhasa uttered a word of protest at the invasion or the signing of this (1904) convention in the name of the Tibetan Government. It is still remarkable that the Chinese Amban throughout the negotiation gave great assistance.¹⁸

The authors’ allegation that “Qing Government refused to support the Tibetans” has no foundation.

From this 1904 Anglo-Tibetan treaty one can conclude that Britain recognised the treaty making powers of Tibet, as well as its sovereign status in standard international law.

Thus the Manchu Emperor was rendered powerless in the face of this direct conclusion of a treaty between Britain and Tibet. According to Dr. Elliot Sperling

If a British military expedition could reach central Tibet,

it was not unthinkable that they could reach Szechwan via K'am. Whereas the south-west borders of China had previously been considered safe from the Europeans, it had now been disturbingly shown to be not so. The lack of Chinese control over Tibet had been made obvious, and it was felt that immediate steps were needed to remedy the situation. All of Tibet was now seen in a different light by the Ch'ing Court.¹⁹

Therefore, the Chinese began to adopt a dual policy; gradual invasion of Tibet as well as the exertion of pressure on the British to terminate the 1904 treaty. This led to Sino-British collusion over Tibet again resulting in the so-called 1906 treaty. Regarding this treaty Charles Bell has to say: "the old mistake of concluding a treaty with China about Tibet without consulting the Tibetan Government was repeated."²⁰

In pursuance of this policy, Chao-Er-fang, launched an invasion into Tibet in August 1905, beginning from Ba, Lithang, Chating, Gongkan Manmling monastery, Yangting monastery, Langang monastery and Tsa Menkhang. By 1908, he was able to establish a local government at Chamdo because the Younghusband's invasion, had broken down the military resistance of the Tibetans. Again, if Tibet forms an integral part of China as claimed by the authors then why this naked invasion of Tibet? Why did His Holiness had to flee to Mongolia?

However, after the Dalai Lama's arrival in Lhasa in December 1909, he appealed for help to the foreign ministers of Britain, France, Russia and Japan. In 1910 a Tibetan Foreign Ministry was created headed by Teji Phunkhang and Kenchung Gyaltzen Phuntsok.²¹

The Ministry became quite active and was appreciated by the representatives of other countries stationed in Lhasa. The British representative, Mr. Hugh Richardson, felt the Ministry made it possible for his mission to remain in constant close contact with the Tibetan Government at a high level and to have discussions on every sort of issue arising between the two countries.²²

Manchu troops had, however, reached Lhasa by 1910 which compelled His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama to take political asylum in India. Nonetheless the Dalai Lama issued instruc-

tions from his residence in India to Tsepon Norbu Wangyal Trimon and the Secretary-General, Chamba Tendar, officials in the Tibetan Government at Lhasa, to declare war against the Manchus after setting up a War Department in co-operation with Dazang Dadul.²³

After a stiff fight, the Manchus troops then agreed to surrender through the Nepalese representative. Lonchen Chankhyim, Tsawa Tritul of Seramey and Tsedron Tenzin Gyaltzen of Lhasa were appointed by His Holiness to accept the surrender at Lhasa.

The surrender ceremony took place on August 12, 1912, in the presence of the Nepalese representative.²⁴ The Manchus request for permission to return back via Kham was turned down. Instead they were directed to proceed via India and that too within fifteen days of the surrender. International Commission of Jurists, rightly comes to the conclusion that "the events of 1911-12 mark the re-emergence of Tibet as a fully sovereign state."²⁵

Meanwhile, the Nationalist Party had seized power in China with Yuan Shi-kai as the President of the Republic. The President in a message to His Holiness "apologised" for the excesses of the Manchu and "restored" to His Holiness his former rank. However, this gimmick of restoring and denouncing the rank of His Holiness had no significance beyond satisfying the Chinese themselves. This can be seen from the reply given by the 13th Dalai Lama to the President of China, in which he categorically said, "he was not asking the Chinese for any rank, as he intended to exercise both temporal and ecclesiastical power in Tibet."²⁶ This statement completed the formal declaration of independence by Tibet.

Regarding the much talked about Manchu Emperor-Dalai Lama relationship history clearly shows that it was just on the personal level: a unique "patron-priest" relationship. It is an example of the unique central Asian concept. The relationship which cannot be defined in Western political terms. This relationship in no way implied that Tibet was a part of China. The Manchu Emperor was sacked by the nationalists and with that also went Tibet's fragile link with the Manchus.

After the return of the Dalai Lama from India in 1912, a proclamation was issued in Tibet snapping diplomatic and spiritual ties with Peking and read

Now, the Chinese intention of colonising Tibet under patron-priest relationship has failed like a rainbow in the sky.... to keep up with the rest of world, we must defend our country.... In view of past invasions by foreigners.... To safeguard and maintain the independence of our country, one and all should voluntarily work hard.²⁷

As one of the first steps a treaty was signed at Urga in 1913 January between Mongolia and Tibet by the Foreign Minister of Mongolia Nikta Biliktu delama Rabdan and Gujir Tsanshib Kandhen Lubsan Agwan of Tibet.²⁸

The second priority was, then, to safeguard Tibet's borders specially those alongside the Chinese. In this regard, for the first time in the history of Tibet, an official with the rank of a Kalon (Minister), Chamba Tender, was appointed the Governor of Kham. He was accompanied by eight competent Generals and thus there began the military pressure on China.²⁹

Regarding Tibet's border with the then British-India, His Holiness convinced the British into calling a tri-partite conference of British, Tibet and China. The British, recognising Tibet's declaration of independence, informed the Chinese that they were going to meet, they (three of them) would do so on an equal footing.³⁰

The allegation that "Britain hatched up" the conference is contradicted by the action of the Chinese themselves in voluntarily participating in the deliberations from October 1913 to July 1914. This in itself shows that the Chinese Government tacitly recognised the treaty making powers of Tibet and therefore the independent sovereign status of Tibet.

The Chinese action of not signing the final document does not however, nullify the convention. The British and the Tibetan Government on their part ratified the same and also took steps for its implementation. Thus the Simla Convention abrogated the Sino-British Agreement of 1906 and the trade agreement of 1907.

So if the treaties of 1906 and 1907 'proves' Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, then the abrogation of these by the 1914 Simla Convention shatters the same belief.

Contrary to Chinese claim that the Simla Convention was recognised by "none of the later government", the statements

made by Indian Government representatives prove otherwise. The Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru categorically stated on November 20, 1950 in the Indian Parliament that "The frontier from Bhutan eastward had been clearly defined by the McMahon Line which was fixed by the Simla Convention of 1914".³¹

Another fact of the independent status of Tibet even in the early 20th century is the offer of Tibetan support to Britain during World War I. Tibet's support to Britain was communicated to the Political Officer of Sikkim by Tibet's Joint Prime Minister, Lochen Sholkhang, under instruction from the Dalai Lama. In his reply, the Political Officer, Mr. Basil Gould said that

the British Government was deeply touched and grateful to His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, for his offer to send one thousand Tibetan troops to support the British Government. Please inform His Holiness that the British Government will seek the support of Tibet whenever the need arises.³²

In 1916 the Tibetan National Flag was officially confirmed by the Tibetan Government.

China then launched renewed attacks on eastern Tibet in 1918. However, Tibetan troops under the command of Kalon Chamba Tender not only resisted them but also recaptured Rongpo Gyapthang, Khyungpo Serta, Khyungpo Tengchen, Riwoche, Chaksam Kha, Thok Drugugon, Tsawa Pakshod Lagon, Nyenda, Landa, Chamdo, Markham, Drayak, Sangyen, Gojo and Derge. As the Tibetan troops were still advancing towards Dartsedo, the Chinese became frightened and appealed for British mediation. Accordingly, the British Government directed Sir Eric Teichman (of His Britannic Majesty's Consular Service in Peking) to negotiate a truce and on August 19, 1918, a tripartite agreement was signed by the three representatives; Chamba Tender, Eric Teichman, and Liu Tsan-ting.³³

A supplementary agreement was drawn up on October 10, 1918, calling for the withdrawal of troops and the cessation of hostilities between the Chinese and the Tibetans. This agreement was signed by Khenchung Losang Dhondup, Dapon Khyungram and Dapon Tethong for Tibet and by Han Kuang-chun and the Chakla Gyalpo for China, and was witnessed by Eric Teichman.³⁴

Despite these treaties, the Chinese never lost the hope of securing a separate, more advantageous, agreement with the Tibetans. In 1920 a Chinese mission from Kansu with the proposal of such an agreement came to Lhasa.³⁵ But after more than four months stay in the Tibetan capital, they had to go back empty handed. The Tibetan Government said that the Simla Convention would suffice.

It was around this time that the British Government sent Sir Charles Bell to Lhasa, "To convey to His Holiness the Dalai Lama friendly greetings from the British Government and to explain the present political position".³⁶ Does this not signify British acceptance of the independence status of Tibetans?

In 1919, the Nepalese Government had a dispute with the Tibetan Government as to how the mutual frontier runs in an important district near Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. They wrote to the Tibetan Cabinet that unless the matter was settled quickly they would send an army against Tibet. The Dalai Lama ordered the Cabinet to reply, promising that a British officer should be appointed to arbitrate. To this the Nepalese Government replied to the following effect

We are deeply pained at your suggestion;
We are good friends and can adjust our difference without reference to outsiders.³⁷

Starting from 1921, the Tibetan Government independently started permitting expeditions to Gang-Jamo-Longma (Mt. Everest) from the Tibetan side. Groups from various countries attempted to scale the mountain from this side in 1922, 1924, 1933, 1935, 1936 and 1938.³⁸

Historical facts proving the separate status of Tibet is endless. In 1926, representatives of India and Tibet discussed border issue at Tehri Garwal near Nilang.³⁹

In 1927, His Holiness the Dalai Lama rejected Chiang Kai Shek's personal letter appealing to Tibet to join the Chinese Republic. Tibet ignored a similar request in 1928.⁴⁰

After fresh clashes between Tibetan and Chinese forces in 1930 a treaty was signed between the Tibetan and Chinese forces on June 15, 1933, at Nangchen Tetsagon in the Chinese territory which was respected till 1949.⁴¹

In 1934, a Chinese delegation under General Huang Musung, who were sent to offer condolence on the demise of the 13th Dalai Lama, had to request the Tibetan Government for permission to enter Tibet.⁴²

The condolence mission, however, turned out to be a political mission which proposed three points to the Tibetan Government that Tibet should be subordinate to China, that Tibet should cease to have direct relations with foreign countries, and that a Chinese Commissioner should be stationed in Lhasa.⁴³

The Tibetan Government remained adamant only by referring to the terms of the Simla Convention. However, through subtle tricks, Gen-Huang was able to leave back two 'liaison' officers along with a wireless set and a printing press. This group gradually gained foothold and turned into a regular diplomatic mission. Thus for the first time, since the mass expulsion of Chinese officials from Tibet, they were able to set up a new mission.

On 28th August 1937, the nationalists and the communists decided to fight unitedly against the invasion of Japan. At the same time, they framed a 10 point agreement. The Article 3, stated that the Chinese people should be alerted to the menace of the Japanese; the rich people should voluntarily donate and an urgent appeal made to the citizens of China to join the army.⁴⁴

Here, during the one decade of Sino-Japanese war, Tibet nowhere comes in the picture. Not a single Tibetan fought for Chinese. Nor was the much publicised 10 point agreement made known to the Tibetans, why?

Regarding the status of the Chinese diplomatic mission in Lhasa, Mr. Amaury De Riencourt, who visited Tibet with permission from the Tibetan Foreign Ministry in 1947, states

To the Tibetan Government, he (Amban) was nothing more than the diplomatic representative of a foreign country. . . . His political influence in Lhasa being nil, there was nothing he could do about it.⁴⁵

The claim that the Kuonmintang Government officiated at the inauguration ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama is baseless. At no time during the search and the enthronment of the Dalai Lama were the Chinese involved. The successful discovery of the

14th reincarnation was announced by the Tibetan National Assembly in July 1939. The date of enthronement (February 22, 1940) was "fixed by the Regent (Reting), in consultation with the National Assembly, according to the advice of the state astrologer".⁴⁶

Accordingly, invitations to the enthronement ceremony were sent to Tibet's neighbours; Bhutan, Sikkim, China, India and Nepal. Thus the Chinese representative, Wu Chung-hesins' presence at the ceremony had no greater significance than the presence of the representatives of the other countries. This is corroborated by the eye-witness account of the British representative, Mr. Basil Gould, in his book "*The Jewel in the Lotus*".⁴⁷

The ceremony was conducted by the Regent, Reting Rinpoche, contrary to Wu's claims. In this connection the Dalai Lama recounts the Regent's statement that

After a long search in consultation with the oracles and high lamas, I (Dalai Lama) was being installed by the Government and the people of Tibet as the spiritual and temporal ruler of the (Tibetan) state.⁴⁸

Tibet's separate status was proved by another international development which took place between 1942 and 1945, namely the World War II. During this war, Japan had sealed off all Chinese sea ports, thus forcing the Chinese to search for an overland route to get their military supplies from Britain and America. This was, however, possible only through Tibet. Therefore, Rai Bahadur Norbu Thondup, head of the British mission in Lhasa, and Kung Ching-tsung, the Chinese Liaison officer approached the Tibetan Foreign Ministry for permission to open a military route through Zayul in Tibet. The Tibetan Government, showing its neutrality in the war between Japan and China, refused permission.⁴⁹

Despite this, China 'ordered' the building of a road between Szechwan and Assam through the Lohit Valley, across a corner of South-West Tibet. As this was done without Tibetan consent, the Chinese survey party for the road was turned back at the border by Tibetan troops and thus were not allowed to enter the country.⁵⁰

Had Tibet been really a part of China, it would not have taken

such free and independent actions, which is a clear illustrations of exercising Tibet's sovereign rights.

In 1942 under the order of the Tibetan National Assembly, the Chinese Liaison officer at Lhasa was expelled from Tibet as he had violated Tibetan Law.⁵¹

The Americans, Captain Ila Tolstoy and Lt. Dolan, officials of the OSS (Office of Strategic Service); had to confer directly with the Tibetan Foreign Ministry in 1942 when they applied for permission to travel through Tibet on their way to China.⁵² This direct dealing with the Tibetan Government by US officials leaves no doubt of what the USA thought about the status of Tibet. Further, according to the letter by the head of the Far Eastern Department of the British Foreign Office to the Councillor of the American Embassy in London: "The Tibetans not only claim to be but actually are in an independent people".⁵³

In 1943 the Chinese as well as the Indian Government had to seek the permission of the Tibetan Government for the new Chinese Liaison Officer, Shen Tsung-lien to enter via India. In this connection Richardson (Officer in Charge of the British) and later Indian Mission in Lhasa and also Trade Agent in Gyantse, was resident in Tibet from 1936-40 and 1946-50) informed the Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet that such permissions "were granted or refused according to the wishes of the Tibetan Government".⁵⁴ Shen had, in a book, also admitted Tibet's independent status.⁵⁵

In January 1943, Britain and China signed a treaty abrogating all British extra-territorial rights in "all territories of the Republic of China". This, however, did not affect British rights in Tibet which they continued to enjoy till 1947 when the rights were passed on to an independent India. If Tibet had either been a vassal state or 'inalienable' part of China it follows that the contents of the 1943 Anglo-Chinese treaty should also have been binding on Tibet.

In 1945 political asylum was given by Tibet to two prisoners of war, Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufshnaiter, who escaped from the British internment camp at Dehra Dun India. They were later employed by the Tibetan Government. This action was taken without any consultation with the Chinese.⁵⁶

In March 1947, a Tibetan delegation, led by Teji Samdup Phodrang and Khenchung Lobsang Wangyal, participated on an

equal status at the First Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi. At that time, the Tibetan national flag was hoisted among the flags of other nations and a speech was delivered on behalf of the Tibetan Government.

On August 15, 1947 India became independent and the Government of Tibet was duly informed of the Transfer of power by the British Government and later by the Government of India.⁵⁷ Telegraphically, the new Indian Government was felicitated by the Tibetan Government.⁵⁸

On 16th October 1947, the Tibetan Foreign Ministry sent a telegram to the new Indian Government, regarding the return of the Tibetan territories such as

Zayul and Walung and in the direction of Pemakoe, Long, Lopa, Mon, Bhutan, Sikkim, Darjeeling and others on this side of river Ganges and Lowo, Ladakh, etc., up to the border of Yarkim.⁵⁹

To this, the Government of India replied

The Government of India would be glad to have an assurance that it is the intention of the Tibetan Government to continue relations on the existing basis until a new agreements are reached on matters that either party may wish to take up. This is the procedure adopted by all other countries with which India has inherited treaty relations from His Majesty's Government.⁶⁰

According to International Commission of Jurists, two important facts which emerge from the above are

that the Government of India was immediately in direct relations with the Tibetan Bureau of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of India regarded Tibet as a country with which they had inherited treaty relations.⁶¹

On October that year a Tibetan trade mission, led by the Finance Minister, Mr. W.D. Shakabpa, toured India, the United States, the United Kingdom, China, France, Pakistan and Italy.⁶² By accepting the travel documents of the members of this mission

the respective countries recognised Tibet as an independent country as per international law.

To maintain the independence of Tibet, the Government in July 1949, expelled the entire staff of the Chinese diplomatic mission as well as the Chinese traders in Lhasa.⁶³ This action was taken independently by Tibet and was not instigated by any foreign power.

Contrary to the authors' allegations, the United States and Britain instead of working to plot 'Tibet's independence', even failed to render political advice about the emerging Communist menace and steps that should be taken to challenge the same. Had they really aided Tibet, Chinese invasion of Tibet would not have been that smooth.

Tibet's sovereign status has been placed beyond doubt by the Chinese themselves when they 'signed' an agreement with the Tibetans in 1951. If Tibet had been under China there would have been no question of an agreement between the two. Sovereignty necessarily implies constitutional nexus, and if China did possess sovereign rights over Tibet, it would have been within her competence to issue a declaration regarding the position of Tibet under the Chinese constitution without any 'agreement'. Thus, the very fact that China found it necessary to enter into an agreement with Tibet categorically belies all her claims over it. The preamble to the so-called 17-point Agreement states

The Central People's Government appointed representatives with full powers to conduct talks on a friendly basis with the delegates with full powers of the Local Government of Tibet. As a result of the talks both parties agreed to conclude this agreement and guarantee that it will be carried into effect.⁶⁴

The preamble itself clearly shows that the agreement was between two sovereign authorities and not between a paramount and a subordinate authority. It is only in an international agreement that the question of 'Full Powers' arises and its validity depends on the fact that the representatives of two states have vested with full powers to conclude an agreement.

The terms embodied in the agreement also bear testimony to the fact it is an agreement between two sovereign powers, for they make it clear that the essential purpose of the agreement

was not the grant of power by the Chinese Government to the Government of Tibet but the transfer of certain rights by Tibet to the Chinese authorities.

Invariably, the conclusion, therefore, is that the Government of Tibet was in full possession of sovereign rights in order to be able to transfer some of them to China.

Article 14, of the said agreement states that Tibet purported to surrender her rights of external sovereignty to the Government of China. If China had sovereign rights over Tibet at the time of the conclusion of this agreement, then Tibet could not have possessed the rights which she was supposed to be surrendering.

However, the question is whether the said agreement is legal and valid conforming to the rules of conduct which prevails amongst civilised nations. The illegality of the agreement is proved beyond doubt by the fact that the consent of the Tibetan Government was secured under duress and threat of invasion. This is explicit in the statement made by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet, on June 20, 1959, soon after his arrival in India. According to His Holiness

My representatives were compelled to sign the agreement under threat of further military operations against Tibet by the invading armies of China leading to utter ravage and ruin of the country. Even the seal affixed to the agreement was not the seal of my representatives but one copied and fabricated in Peking and kept in their possession ever since.⁶⁵

This is also corroborated by Lobsang and Jin Jun who says in their article that it was only after the 'Peoples Liberation Army defeated the major force of Tibet' that the Tibetans 'agreed' to send delegations to Peking for negotiations. Thus it is clear that violence and constraints were exercised upon Tibet to accept the prepared agreement. This fact alone vitiates and annuls the consent of Tibet in accordance with the accepted rule of international law and practice.

Another point that nullifies the agreement is that China failed to ratify the same while the Tibetans did not bother to do so either.

Moreover, China violated every article of the said agreement in the next few years after its signing. In 1952, so-called the

Chamdo Liberation Committee was formed by the Chinese against the spirit of the agreement. The two Prime Ministers of Tibet: Mr. Lukhangwa and Ven. Losang Tashi, were compelled to resign, while over 5,000 Tibetan children were taken for indoctrination to Peking. In this connection, Mr. Zakaria, Indian representative while addressing the United Nations Assembly said

1. The autonomy guaranteed in the Sino-Tibet agreement of 1951 has remained from the beginning a dead letter;
2. There has been arbitrary confiscation of properties belonging to monasteries and individuals and Tibetan Government institutions;
3. Freedom of religion is denied to the Tibetans and Buddhism is being suppressed, together with the system of priests, monasteries, shrines and monuments;
4. The Tibetans are not allowed any freedom of information or expression;
5. There has been a systematic policy of killing, imprisonment and deportation of those Tibetans, who have been active in their opposition to Chinese rule;
6. The Chinese have forcibly transferred large number of Tibetan children to China in order to denationalise them, to indoctrinate them in their own ideology and to make them forget their own Tibetan religion, culture and way of life;
7. There has also been a large-scale attempt to bring Han Chinese into Tibet and thereby Sinofy Tibet and overwhelm the indigenous people by a more numerous Chinese population;
8. These atrocities, carried out ruthlessly, with utter disregard for Tibetan sentiments and aspirations and in complete opposition to universally recognised human rights, add up to a frightful programme of the suppression of a whole people; it surpasses anything the colonialists have done in the past to the peoples whom they ruled and enslaved.⁶⁶

Thus, in 1952, a Tibetan National Party known as Mimang (Peoples) took birth to protest against the Chinese misconduct.

The New York Times reported on August 28, 1954, that 40,000 farmers took part in an Uprising in east Tibet, which was brutally suppressed by the PLA.

In 1956 the preparatory committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region was formed by the Chinese without respecting the Tibetan sentiments. Gradually, the people's discontent against the Chinese began to spread. In June 16, 1958, a guerilla association known as Chushi Gangtruk (Four Rivers and Six Ranges) with over 80,000 members was formed under the leadership of Gonpo Tashi Andrutsang. This group waged regular attacks on the Chinese forces.

And also, the incident relating to the proposed visit of the Prime Minister of India provides a glaring instance of the usurpation of power and function by the Chinese authorities in flagrant breach of the agreement. Naturally when the Dalai Lama returned from India (1957), wished to invite the Indian Prime Minister to pay a visit to Tibet, the Chinese authorities tried to put every obstacle in the way and only yielded when the Dalai Lama persisted. But when the time came for the visit the Chinese authorities refused to accept the wishes of the Dalai Lama, who has been expressly acknowledged by them to be the head of the Tibetan Government, and thus succeed in preventing the visit on one pretext or other.⁶⁷

In fact, under article 6 of the Agreement the Chinese have solemnly undertaken that "the religious beliefs, customs and habits of the Tibetans people shall be respected and lama monasteries shall be protected". But this solemn engagement has been entirely disregarded by them in spite of the strong opposition and resentment of the people. They have prosecuted hundreds of religious leaders, branding them as "yellow brigands and red robbers". Thousands of innocent monks and lamas have been killed. On 22nd November, 1958 they went so far as to attack the illustrious founder of the Buddhist faith as a "reactionary".⁶⁸

Finally, on the pretext of inviting His Holiness the Dalai Lama for a cultural show at military headquarters at Lhasa, the Chinese forged a plan to kidnap His Holiness. However, their plan was foiled by a massive and spontaneous uprising by the Tibetan people numbering 100,000, who gathered outside the Norbu Lingkh a Palace in order to protect the person of His Holiness.

At the same time, while denouncing the 17-point agreement a fresh declaration of Tibetan independence was made. Thus the agreement was formally repudiated. On this matter the law is much clearer.

“The classic doctrine on denunciation of treaties is that if one side violates its obligations under a treaty, the injured party ‘may by its unilateral act terminate a treaty as between itself and a State which it regards as having violated such treaty’.⁶⁹ This view has been judicially approved in three American cases⁷⁰ and in one case before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council,⁷¹ the Supreme Court of appeal for overseas from all of these cases, that the treaty be actually repudiated, for, unless this is done, the treaty remains in force, i.e., it is voidable only.⁷²

In this way Tibet discharged herself of the obligations under the agreement, the principal one being the surrender of her independence.⁷³

Moreover, the Chinese themselves bear a witness to this when they admitted that “On March 10, 1959 they (Tibetans) colluded with imperialists and other foreign reactionaries openly discarded the 17-point agreement unleashed an all-out armed rebellion and proclaimed their separatist aims”.⁷⁴

On March 17, 1959, His Holiness left for India to seek political asylum. A Government in exile was set up in India to work for the complete independence of Tibet.

Whatever be the reason a gross distortion of Tibetan history to suit the demands of present-day Chinese politics will not have any justification. For history will always remain history.

The International Committee of Jurists, an independent association of Judges, lawyers and teachers of law supported by 30,000 lawyers from 50 countries, in its Report on Tibet states

Tibet demonstrated from 1913 to 1950 the conditions of statehood as generally accepted under international law. In 1950 there was a people and territory, and Government which functioned in that territory conducting its own domestic affairs free from any outside authority. From 1913 to 1950 foreign relations of Tibet and countries with which Tibet had foreign relations are shown by official documents to have treated Tibet in practice as an independent state.⁷⁴

To conclude, here is the indisputable statement made by His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama on Tibetan history

For many centuries (Tibet) enjoyed a relationship of mutual respect with China. It is true that there were times when China invaded Tibet; Similarly, looking further back into history, there were also times when Tibet invaded China and conquered Chinese territory. There is no basis whatever in history for the Chinese claim that Tibet is part of China.-⁷⁵

PART II

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